Bajaj, V. (2022). *Thirst*. New York: Nancy Paulsen Books. 179 p. (Grades 4-7). Bajaj weaves a tale of dire need and extremes in access to water. Minni lives with her parents and brother in a poor village where the quest for water consumes most of the day. Several circumstances cause further difficulty and struggles for their family. Minni questions the contrast in her world versus what she sees Pinky waste without a thought. *Thirst* does an amazing job of creating a complete story with realistic characters and community with current global issues in a brief number of pages!

Castellanos, Alexis. *Isla to Island*. New York City: Atheneum Book for Young Readers, 2022. 192p. (Grades 5 and up). This incredible wordless graphic novel follows young Marisol who immigrated from Cuba to the United States in the 1960s and must redefine what home means to her. Marisol loves everything about her vibrant homeland, Cuba, but it is no longer safe. Her parents have decided to send her to America - alone. Compared to colorful Cuba, Brooklyn is cold, gray, and drab. It is hard to feel at home when there is a language barrier. But Marisol begins to realize that home is more than just a place, and with the help of her kind foster parents, and staying true to herself, her world begins to fill with color once again.

Culley, Betty. *The Name She Gave Me*: HarperTeen, 2022. 400 p. (Grades 8-12). Rynn has lived on a garlic farm in Maine since her adoption. She was born with a hole in her heart, and though it was fixed, she feels like it’s still there when she wonders about her biological family. All Rynn knows about her birth mother is that she gave Rynn the name Scheherazade when she was born and that she had – and kept – another daughter. In this poignant journey, told in prose form, Rynn learns that in finding her family, she discovers how healing family can be.

King, Amy Sarig. *Attack of the Black Rectangles*. New York City:Scholastic Inc., 2022. 272 p. (Grades 4-7). Attack of the Black Rectangles is an amazing book for any reader about standing up for what you believe in.  Mac is a 6th grade student at Independence Elementary when he and his classmates encounter a case of censorship in their reading class.  If you have ever been interested in expressing your freedom to read, you have to read this book!

Latham, Irene and Waters, Charles. *African Town*. New York City:Penguin Young Readers Group., 2022. 448 p. (Grades 7-9). African Town is a book of loss, hope, and redemption. Follows the lives of slaves and freemen who were connected to the last journey of slaves aboard the Clothida. A strong work of poetic prose, readers will connect to the detailed descriptions of a historical time, place, and feelings.  Celebrate fictional and real stories alike with Africa Town!

Lloyd, Natalie. *Hummingbird*. New York City: Scholastic, 2022. 348p. (Grades 5-8). Twelve-year-old Olive has been homeschooled all her life due to her brittle bones. But upon hearing of a magical hummingbird who grants wishes, Olive is determined to attend public school and find the best friend she has always longed for. With the whole town on the hunt for this wish granting bird, will Olive be able to make her dreams come true?

Luqman-Dawson, A. *Freewater*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2022. 403 p. (Grades 5-8). Luqman-Dawson’s rich detail of the clandestine town of Freewater, which was settled by self-emancipated Black people, allows readers to learn about alternative escape option for
enslaved people other than the underground railroad or the North. Lead by the legendary plantation raider, Suleman, twelve year Homer and his seven year old sister, Ada, are able to escape their lives of slavery and find their way to a secret community made up of other formerly enslaved people, indigenous people, and even children who were born free within the hidden community. However, in the chaos of their frenzied escape, Homer and Ada’s mother gets separated from them, recaptured by the Trackers, and returned to the plantation. Homer now has to make the hard choice of going back to the plantation to save his mom or stay in the safety of his new found home. The noteworthy setting of the Great Dismal Swamp makes this story of courage and resistance one that engages readers.

Nielsen, Jennifer A. *Lines of Courage*. New York City: Scholastic Press, 2022. 400 p. (Grades 4-6). Five children living in Europe during World War I must all face the horrors of war, as their stories twine together, pull them apart, and tumble them through the historical events of the war.

Purnell, Sonia. *Agent Most Wanted: The Never-Before-Told Story of the Most Dangerous Spy of World War II*. New York City: Viking, 2022. 200p. (Grades 5-7). Virginia Hall was an American spy who changed the course of World War II. She would become the first Allied woman secret agent deployed behind enemy lines in France, and she did so despite having a prosthetic leg. Her work during World War II revolutionized what it meant to be a spy.

Stanton, Doug. Tougias, Michael J. *In Harm’s Way: The Sinking of the USS Indianapolis and the Story of Its Survivors, Young Readers Adaptation*: Henry Holt & Company, 2022. 205 p. (Grades 4-6). On July 30, 1945, the U.S.S. Indianapolis was torpedoed in the South Pacific by a Japanese submarine. An estimated 300 men were killed upon impact; close to 900 sailors were cast into the Pacific Ocean, where they remained undetected by the navy for nearly four days and nights. Battered by a savage sea, they struggled to stay alive, fighting off sharks, hypothermia, and hallucinations. By the time rescue arrived, all but 316 men had died. The captain's subsequent court-martial left many questions unanswered: How did the navy fail to realize the Indianapolis was missing? And how did these 316 men manage to survive against all odds?

Schwab, V.E. Gallant. New York City. HarperCollins, 2022. 344 p. (Grades 6-8). Olivia receives a mysterious letter from a long lost cousin inviting her to come home. However, when she arrives no one has any knowledge of her or the letter and secrets abound as she discovers more about herself and her family.

Soontornvat, C. *The Last Mapmaker*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2022. 359 p. (Grades 5-8). An elaborate tale of destiny, dreams, and endurance, *The Last Mapmaker* weaves a beautiful setting with an intricate plot that is sure to entertain readers. Renowned mapmaker, Paiyoon Wongyai, is looking to retire. When Sai is at the right place at the right time, she embarks on becoming his replacement. When they both become part of a quest to map the world beyond their own, Sai dreams of making a name for herself beyond what her family’s status would dictate for her. Given the imaginative tale, there are also some deep themes in the story...
like social systems (caste system, colonization) which Sai wrestles with. The story is truly engaging.

Summer, Jamie. *The Summer of June*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2022. 188 p. (Grades 5-9). June has decided to become who she was always meant to be. The problem is that there are a few (large) obstacles in her way. With the help from a few unexpected friends, June will have her new beginning.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Peach Rebellion*. New York: Penguin Random House, 2022. 416p. (Grades 7-8). Ginny Rose has had a hard life. She started working at a young age, lost her little brothers, and has been living with the grief ever since. Determined to help her family, Ginny Rose sets out to do the unthinkable and with Peggy and Lisette helping she just might succeed.

Wan-Long Shang, Wendy. *The Secret Battle of Evan Pao*. New York City: Scholastic Press, 2022. 272p. (Grades 3-7). The Pao family needs a fresh start after Evan’s father commits a crime that runs the family out of town. So they flee from California all the way to Haddington, Virginia. Haddington is a town rich in history and tradition, but not so much diversity. Evan makes friends quickly, but one boy, Brady Griggs, seems determined to make sure that Evan feels like he does not belong in this town. Evan finds a unique way to fit in to the school’s annual Civil War celebration, and Brady’s reaction turns violent. Evan must decide whether to react with the same cruelty shown to him or to choose a different road.