Nebraska Golden Sower Award Nominee Titles 2026-2027

A program of Nebraska Library Association

This nominee list is developed by a group of adult volunteers representing teachers and librarians across Nebraska. Local library or school officials are responsible for selecting books from these lists they feel are appropriate for the needs and interests of their patrons or students. **Voting eligibility requires student readers to have read or heard a minimum of four** of the current nominees from a category in which they will be voting: Little Bluestem, Honeybee, Meadowlark, or Bald Eagle.

2026-2027 Little Bluestem Nominees – Primarily intended for grades K-2.

Bear in a Bathrobe by Maddie Frost, author and illustrator. Viking Books for Young Readers, 2024. ISBN 9780593525500 [hardcover].
It's wintertime and Bear is ready to stay indoors and cozy up in his bathrobe until spring. His bathrobe is the ultimate indoor experience because it keeps his ears toasty, has pockets for all of his snacking essentials, and allows for maximum relaxation all season long.

His friends look like they're having so much fun skating outside, and he could join them if he wanted to, but he's too busy having quality indoor alone time in his bathrobe to even think about going out into the wild. Besides, what if he fell and hurt himself, or slipped through the ice, or skated too far away from home? Winter is clearly the time for hibernation, not outdoor adventures.

But when Bear's friends share what makes them feel safe when they tackle new and sometimes scary experiences, Bear might just be ready to venture into the great outdoors and risk falling on the ice.

Don't Trust Fish by Neil Sharpson, author and illustrator. Dial Books, 2025. ISBN 9780593616673 [hardcover].
Why, dear reader, must you NEVER EVER trust fish?

1) They spend all their time in the water where we can't see them.
2) Some are as big as a bus—that is not okay.
3) We don't know what they're teaching in their "schools."
4) They are likely plotting our doom.

This nature-guide-gone-wrong is a hilarious, off-the-rails exploration of the seemingly innocent animals that live in the water.

I'm Sorry You Got Mad by Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by Julie Kwon. Dial Books, 2024. ISBN 9780593462911 [hardcover].
Jack wants to apologize for hurting Zoe's feelings. He just can't seem to find the right words. Turns out there's more to an apology than just saying "I'm sorry." Elevated by equally charming illustrations and text, I'm Sorry You Got Mad is a journey in learning the importance of an apology that goes deeper than just words.

Mr. Fox's Game of No! by David LaRochelle, illustrated by Mike Wohnoutka. Candlewick, 2024. ISBN 9781536229677 [hardcover].
Can you beat Mr. Fox at his Game of No? The rules are simple: every time he asks a question, you must respond with "NO." If you accidentally say "YES," then it's back to the beginning of the book for you, where you must start all over again. Are you ready? (Oops!) Do you live on planet Earth? Are you stronger than a baby? What does Y-E-S spell? (Argh!) Kids will giggle uncontrollably as they gamely aim to avoid Mr. Fox's clever traps—but just ask them if they'd like to read this book again, and they won't be able to resist: "YES!"

Not Perfect by Maya Myers, illustrated by Hyewon Yum. Neal Porter Books, 2024. ISBN 9780823451708 [hardcover].
Dot is good at a lot of things, but good isn't perfect. Perfect is her sister's blue-ribbon painting, or her brothers' first-place tie in the spelling bee, or her mom's black belt in tae kwon do. Dot tries and tries, but all she has to show for it is funny-looking cupcakes, off-key piano squeaks, and almost-goals in soccer. Nothing she does is perfect.

When Dot and her classmates get an assignment to make a poster about a person they admire, Dot has someone in mind right away: her best friend, Sam. But draft after draft comes out looking all wrong! How will she ever make the perfect poster for her perfect friend?

Pop! Goes the Nursery Rhyme by Betsy Bird, illustrated by Andrea Tsurumi. Union Square Kids, 2025. ISBN 9781454960461 [hardcover].
The sensible Secretary Bird wants nothing more than to get on with their job of properly narrating a classic nursery rhyme book. But something is afoot in the orderly land of nursery rhymes . . . a zippy little Weasel has entered the scene! As the Secretary Bird tries to get through the rhymes—from Little Miss Muffet to Jack and Jill—the Weasel bursts in, throwing everything into a comical tailspin. Can the Secretary Bird put an end to the chaos?

The Hare Who Wouldn't Share by Steve Small, author and illustrator. Beach Lane Books, 2025. ISBN 9781665972932 [hardcover].
Hare is proud of his turnip patch and doesn't want to share it with anyone. When the rabbits move in nearby, they invite Hare for carrot soup but he's much happier being alone. Still, when a huge boar comes to the woods in search of his next meal, Hare feels he should warn his neighbors. Can they find a way to help each other stay out of danger?

The Quacken by Justin Colon, Illustrated by Pablo Pino. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2024. ISBN 9781665922487 [hardcover].
Lurking in the lake at Cucumonga Campground is a fearsome and frightening creature. Legend says that it swallows kids, canoes, and even whales whole. But all Hector sees are cute, cuddly, quacking ducks. Until he breaks the campground's most important rule—Don't Feed the Ducks—and releases…the Quacken.

That Always Happens Sometimes by Kiley Frank, illustrated by K-Fai Steele. Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2024. ISBN 9781984852434 [hardcover].
Worm and Caterpillar are friends—best friends. Worm loves how they are just alike, but Caterpillar has a feeling there is a big change coming. Then Caterpillar disappears for a while and comes back as Butterfly. Will Butterfly and Worm still be friends?

Ursula Upside Down by Corey R. Tabor, author and illustrator. Greenwillow Books, 2024. ISBN 9780063275560 [hardcover].
Ursula is a happy catfish, swimming through a shimmering river with weeds waving above and a sky full of scrumptious bugs below. Then one question turns her world upside down. Is left right? Is right wrong? Which way even is up?

2026-2027 Honeybee Nominees – Primarily intended for grades 3-5.

And Then, Boom! by Lisa Fipps, author and illustrator. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2024. ISBN 9780593406328 [hardcover].
Joe Oak is used to living on unsteady ground. His mom can't be depended on as she never stays around long once she gets "the itch," and now he and his beloved grandmother find themselves without a home. Fortunately, Joe has an outlet in his journals and drawings and takes comfort from the lessons of comic books—superheroes have a lot of "and then, boom" moments, where everything threatens to go bust but somehow they land on their feet. And that seems to happen a lot to Joe too, as in this crisis his friend Nick helps them find a home in his trailer park. But things fall apart again when Joe is suddenly left to fend for himself. He doesn't tell anyone he's on his own, as he fears foster care and has hope his mom will come back. But time is running out—bills are piling up, the electricity's been shut off, and the school year's about to end, meaning no more free meals. The struggle to feed himself gets intense, and Joe finds himself dumpster diving for meals. He's never felt so alone—until an emaciated little dog and her two tiny pups cross his path. And fate has even more in store for Joe, because an actual tornado is about to hit home—and just when it seems all is lost, his life turns in a direction that he never could have predicted.

Answer to Dog by Pete Hautman. Candlewick, 2025. ISBN 9781536244465 [paperback].
Evan doesn't seem to fit in at school or at home. He goes out of his way to avoid attention. He sits at the back of the bus, keeps his head down in class, and keeps to himself. But when a burr-covered border collie—a survivor with a gut instinct about the Boy—starts following him around and joining him on his runs, Evan's simple duck-and-dodge existence becomes a lot more complicated . . . a lot more like life. Evolving from wary companions to steadfast friends, Evan and the dog run fast and far together, thwart an abusive dog breeder and the school bully, and find the courage to stand up for themselves and to open up to those who matter most. Narrated in alternating viewpoints, this relatable contemporary novel with classic coming-of-age themes has all the hope, pathos, and emotional complexity that mark Pete Hautman's books for middle-grade readers—and is a deeply satisfying read for animal lovers.

Carter Avery's Tricky Fourth-Grade Year by Rob Buyea. Yearling, 2025. ISBN 9780593376218 [paperback].
No teacher has ever liked Carter Avery. So he doesn't expect that Ms. Olivia Krane will be any different. In fact, he heard the rumor that the new teacher—nicknamed Owl-livia, or the Owl, for short—can twist her head all the way round to catch any kid who's up to no good. And since Carter has a hard time sitting still and not blurting stuff out, he's sure he's in for rough times being sent to the principal's office. Making things worse: annoying know-it-all Missy Gerber is in his class!

But the Owl knows just how to handle Carter's energy, showing his classmates another side of him. Everything's looking up until Carter finds out that some people would like to see Ms. Krane replaced. The news spurs him on a secret mission to save his teacher. Then a disruption, heated words with Missy, and trouble outside of school test Carter's plan, heart, and courage, as he navigates an especially tricky school year.

Curveball by Pablo Cartaya. Illustrated by Miguel Diaz Rivas. Disney Hyperion, 2024. ISBN 9781368089265 [paperback].
Baseball is Elena Rueda's entire life: She may be the only girl on her team, but she's the best player and everyone knows it. Except . . . Elena has stopped having fun, and it's time to leave the sport behind.

The problem is, Elena has no idea who she is without a bat in her hand. Can a summer spent with her brother's quirky friends in an empty sandlot that offers a world of possibility show Elena who she is—and teach her to love to play again?

Majestica by Sarah Tolcser. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, 2024. ISBN 9780593696545 [hardcover].
Hattie Swift grew up at Majestica, a resort and nature preserve where visitors come face-to-face with unicorns, three-headed tigers, and even the park's famous dragon, Agatha. But Hattie's never gotten the chance to go on the hotel's famous wilderness train excursion and see the animals up close, until now. The only catch: She has to chaperone Evelyn Ridgewell, the hotel owner's haughty niece, who doesn't want to be escorted by anyone, least of all a lowly maid-in-training like Hattie.

Soon after they set out, things get complicated: Evelyn overhears some men on the train who aim to hunt the park's creatures for sport, and Hattie stumbles into Jacob Threadborne, an apprentice magician sent by a foreign government on a top-secret investigation. Then the train breaks down in the most treacherous part of the jungle, and the magical fences keeping guests safe from the animals—including fearsome Agatha—stop working. Faced with poachers, man-eating trees, and a dragon on the loose, Hattie, Evelyn, and Jacob must stick together to figure out what's gone wrong at Majestica . . . that is, if they want to make it out alive.

Old School by Gordon Korman. HarperCollins, 2026. ISBN 9780063238152 [paperback].
Dexter Foreman is twelve going on eighty. He has lived at The Pines retirement village with his grandmother since he was six years old, and as a result he gets along better with senior citizens than kids his own age. He's homeschooled by the residents up until the day the county's truancy officer shows up and announces that Dex has to go to a "real" school, to the local middle school.

At school, Dex sticks out like a sore thumb. He dresses like a grandpa (and can be just as cranky). His taste in movies and music is decades out of date. Only a few students—like Gianna Greco, a reporter at the school's newspaper—find him intriguing. For most, he is either a weirdo or a target.

Dexter would do anything to return to his old life at The Pines. But when his wish finally seems to be coming true, his old and new worlds collide in a way that surprises everyone—Dexter most of all.

Popcorn by Rob Harrell. Dial Books, 2025. ISBN 9780593697948 [paperback].
Andrew's just trying to make it through Picture Day, which is easier said than done when it seems like the whole world is out to get him—from a bully to a science experiment gone wrong to a someone else's juice snot (don't ask).

But as Andrew goes through the school day, and as one thing after another goes wrong, that little kernel of worry in his stomach is getting hotter and hotter, until it threatens to pop and turn into a public panic attack, his worst fear. He tries to keep his anxiety at bay, but the news that his grandmother with Alzheimer's is missing is too much.

The Sherlock Society by James Ponti. Aladdin, 2025. ISBN 9781665932547 [paperback].
Siblings Alex and Zoe Sherlock take their last name as inspiration when choosing a summer job. After all, starting a detective agency has to be better than babysitting (boring), lawn mowing (sweaty), or cleaning out the attic (boring and sweaty). Their friends Lina, an avid bookworm, and Yadi, an aspiring cinematographer, join the enterprise, and Alex and Zoe's retired reporter grandfather offers up his sweet aquamarine Cadillac convertible and storage unit full of cold cases.

The group's first target is the long-lost treasure supposedly hidden near their hometown Miami. Their investigation into the local doings of famed gangster Al Capone leads them to a remote island in the middle of the Everglades where they find alarming evidence hinting at corporate corruption.

Together with Grandpa's know-how and the kids' intelligence—plus a slick gadget or two—can the Sherlock Society root out the conspiracy?

Trouble at the Tangerine by Gillian McDunn. Bloomsbury Childnren's Books, 2024. ISBN 9781547611003 [hardcover].
Simon's family is always on the move. Every few months, they load up their van, "Vincent Van Go," and set off for a new adventure. According to his dad, you can't live an extraordinary life by staying in one place. But all Simon wants is to settle down, so he's hatched a plan: to make their latest apartment in the Tangerine Pines building his forever home.

When a priceless necklace is stolen, clues indicate the thief might actually be another neighbor. Simon worries he'll have to move again if the thief isn't caught. He usually doesn't go looking for trouble, but if retrieving the necklace means establishing home, Simon is willing to risk it. With the help of his neighbor Amaya, pet sitter, plant-waterer, and podcaster extraordinaire, Simon is determined to crack the case and finally put down roots.

Will's Race for Home by Jewell Parker Rhodes. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2026. ISBN 9780316299435 [paperback].
It's 1889, barely twenty-five years after the Emancipation Proclamation, and a young Black family is tired of working on land they don't get to own.

So when Will and his father hear about an upcoming land rush, they set out on a journey from Texas to Oklahoma, racing thousands of others to the place where land is free—if they can get to it fast enough. But the journey isn't easy—the terrain is rough, the bandits are brutal, and every interaction carries a heavy undercurrent of danger.

And then there's the stranger they encounter and befriend: a mysterious soldier named Caesar, whose Union emblem brings more attention—and more trouble—than any of them need.

All three are propelled by the promise of something long denied to them: freedom, land ownership, and a place to call home—but is a strong will enough to get them there?

2026-2027 Meadowlark Nominees – Primarily intended for grades 6-8.

Bye Forever, I Guess by Jodi Meadows. Holiday House, 2025. ISBN 9780823461844 [paperback].
Thirteen-year-old Ingrid's been living a double life. At school, she's the Girl With Dead Parents, her popular friend Rachel's charity case. Online, things are different: she crushes it in her favorite MMORPG, geeks out in her favorite fantasy fandom, and runs a popular social media account. If only real life were that easy.

But when Ingrid finally stands up to Rachel and "starts drama," it suddenly feels like she has no life at all . . . and nowhere to sit at lunch.

Until she gets a supersweet wrong-number text from a mystery boy at her school, and everything starts to go right. Spending time together playing Ancient Tomes Online as "Stitches" and "Traveler" makes her feel like she's really connecting with someone. But when she begins to suspect that Traveler may be a popular classmate who is WAY above her in the cool-kid food chain—and whose original text was actually intended for Rachel—she faces a difficult choice. Can they be friends IRL? She wants to open up, but getting close to people has hurt her before.

Is making real friends only fantasy after all?

Exit Nowhere by Juliana Brandt. Aladdin, 2025. ISBN 9781665948296 [paperback].
The creepiest place in Barret Eloise's small town is the abandoned Raithfield Manor, a decrepit house surrounded by rumors of ghosts and kids going missing. So she certainly never planned on stepping foot inside. But when her history teacher gives her a group project to research a local landmark, the manor is the location her group chooses. Determined to ace the project and fix her awkward first impression on her assigned partners—which include her former friend Helena, smart and confident Wayne, and school basketball star Ridge—Barret Eloise isn't about to let some tall tales scare her off.

When the kids first enter the house, it seems to be nothing more than an empty building. But when the sun goes down, the doors and windows lock, sealing them inside. Even worse, the room they're in transforms into an all-too-real game of The Floor Is Lava. It doesn't take long for the group to realize the mansion is a maze of childhood games. Win the game and you keep moving forward, lose and you disappear. And complicating it all is a worrying revelation—they are not alone in the house.

If Barret Eloise wants to make it home, she and her dysfunctional group are going to have to become a real team…quickly.

Not Nothing by Gayle Forman. Aladdin, 2025. ISBN 9781665943284 [paperback].
Alex is twelve, and he did something very, very bad. A judge sentences him to spend his summer volunteering at a retirement home where he's bossed around by an annoying and self-important do-gooder named Maya-Jade. He hasn't seen his mom in a year, his aunt and uncle don't want him, and Shady Glen's geriatric residents seem like zombies to him.

Josey is 107 and ready for his life to be over. He has evaded death many times, having survived ghettos, dragnets, and a concentration camp—all thanks to the heroism of a woman named Olka and his own ability to sew. But now he spends his days in room 206 at Shady Glen, refusing to speak and waiting (and waiting and waiting) to die. Until Alex knocks on Josey's door…and Josey begins to tell Alex his story.

As Alex comes back again and again to hear more, an unlikely bond grows between them. Soon a new possibility opens up for Alex: Can he rise to the occasion of his life, even if it means confronting the worst thing that he's ever done?

Not Quite a Ghost by Anne Ursu. Walden Pond Press, 2025. ISBN 9780062275165 [paperback].
The house seemed to sit apart from the others on Katydid Street, silent and alone, like it didn't fit among them. For Violet Hart—whose family is about to move into the house on Katydid Street—very little felt like it fit anymore. Like their old home, suddenly too small since her mother remarried and the new baby arrived. Or Violet's group of friends, which, since they started middle school, isn't enough for Violet's best friend, Paige. Everything seemed to be changing at once. But sometimes, Violet tells herself, change is okay.

That is, until Violet sees her new room. The attic bedroom in their new house is shadowy, creaky, and wrapped in old yellow wallpaper covered with a faded tangle of twisting vines and sickly flowers. And then, after moving in, Violet falls ill—and does not get better. As days turn into weeks without any improvement, her family growing more confused and her friends wondering if she's really sick at all, she finds herself spending more time alone in the room with the yellow wallpaper, the shadows moving in the corners, wrapping themselves around her at night.

And soon, Violet starts to suspect that she might not be alone in the room at all.

Quagmire Tiarello Couldn't Be Better by Mylisa Larsen. Clarion Books, 2026. ISBN 9780063324671 [paperback].
Quagmire Tiarello prides himself on not needing anything from anybody. Sure, his mom is skipping work again and showing signs of going into one of her full-out spins, but it's nothing he can't handle. He's used to her up-and-down moods, even if this time it feels a little different.

Then his mom disappears, and Quag must find shelter with an uncle he didn't know he had. Should he come clean about his mother's mental health challenges? Or can he use his carefully honed skills to bluff long enough to find his mom and get home? Readers will root for Quag as he finds himself rethinking his world and learning to accept help from the people who love him.

The Bletchley Riddle by Ruta Sepetys and Steve Sheinkin. Viking Books for Young Readers, 2025. ISBN 9780593527559 [paperback].
Summer, 1940. Nineteen-year-old Jakob Novis and his quirky younger sister, Lizzie, share a love of riddles and puzzles. And now they're living inside of one. The quarrelsome siblings find themselves amid one of the greatest secrets of World War II—Britain's eccentric codebreaking factory at Bletchley Park. As Jakob joins Bletchley's top minds to crack the Nazi's Enigma cipher, fourteen-year-old Lizzie embarks on a mission to solve the mysterious disappearance of their mother.

The Battle of Britain rages and Hitler's invasion creeps closer. And at the same time, baffling messages and codes arrive on their doorstep while a menacing inspector lurks outside the gates of the Bletchley mansion. Are the messages truly for them, or are they a trap? Could the riddles of Enigma and their mother's disappearance be somehow connected? Jakob and Lizzie must find a way to work together as they race to decipher clues that unravel a shocking puzzle that presents the ultimate challenge: How long must a secret be kept?

The No-Brainer's Guide to Decomposition by Adrianna Cuevas. HarperCollins, 2024. ISBN 9780063285545 [hardcover].
No one has ever called Frani Gonzalez squeamish. Seriously, whether it's guts (no big deal), bugs (move aside, she's got this), or anything else that you might find at the Central Texas Forensic Anthropology Research Facility, to her and her dad, the university's body farm is just home.

Having bodies buried in her backyard doesn't exactly make Frani the most popular kid in school, and the imaginary spider that lives in a web in her brain isn't helping either. Arañita's always to blame for the distracted thoughts weaving through Frani's mind. But when a hand reaches out of the ground and grabs her ankle, Frani realizes that she's got bigger problems.

Not everything is as it seems at the body farm, and now Frani must help the teenage zombie that crawled out of the dirt…before he gets too hungry. But as more and more zombies begin to appear—and they seem to get less and less friendly—can Frani embrace the true nature of her brain and count on new friendships to solve the body farm's mystery before it's overrun with the undead?

The Secret Language of Birds by Lynne Kelly. Yearling, 2025. ISBN 9781524770303 [paperback].
Nina is used to feeling like the odd one out, both at school and in her large family. But while trying to fit in at summer camp, she discovers something even more peculiar: two majestic birds have built a nest in the marsh behind an abandoned infirmary. They appear to be whooping cranes, but that's impossible—Nina is an amateur bird-watcher, and all her resources tell her that those rare birds haven't nested in Texas for over a hundred years.

When Nina reports the sighting to wildlife officials, more questions arise. Experts track all the endangered birds, but they can't identify the female bird that Nina found. Who is she, and where did she come from?

With the help of some fellow campers, Nina sets out to discover who the mystery bird really is. As she gets closer to the truth, will she find a flock of her own?

The Wrong Way Home by Kate O'Shaughnessy. Yearling, 2025. ISBN 9780593650769 [paperback].
Fern's lived at the Ranch, an off-the-grid, sustainable community in upstate New York, since she was six. The work is hard, but Fern admires the Ranch's leader, Dr. Ben. So when Fern's mother sneaks them away in the middle of the night and says Dr. Ben is dangerous, Fern doesn't believe it. She wants desperately to go back, but her mom just keeps driving.

Suddenly thrust into the treacherous, toxic, outside world, Fern can think only of how to get home. She has a plan, but it will take time. As that time goes by, though, Fern realizes there are things she will miss from this place—the library, a friend from school, the ocean—and there are things she learned at the Ranch that are just...not true.

Now Fern will have to decide. How much is she willing to give up to return to the Ranch? Should she trust Dr. Ben's vision for her life? Or listen to the growing feeling that she can live by her own rules?

Very Bad at Math: A Graphic Novel by Hope Larson, author and illustrator. HarperAlley, 2025. ISBN 9780063311282 [paperback].
She's student body president, debate club whiz, and first chair clarinetist. You could say she's pretty much the best at everything…Well, almost everything. Everything except math.

And it's not like she doesn't try. Math just doesn't make sense in her brain. But it better start soon, or else she can kiss her presidency—and her campaign promises—goodbye. Soon Verity finds herself enrolled in a remedial math class where, despite her best efforts, failure persists. All seems lost until a teacher helps her discover the truth: Verity has dyscalculia, a learning disability that causes her to mix up numbers.

Armed with a new diagnosis and improved grades, Verity is confident her math struggles will remain secret. But when a gossipy podcaster dismantles her perfect image, Verity must choose: remain part of a broken system or fight to fix it.

2026-2027 Bald Eagle Nominees – Primarily intended for grades 9-12.

Bright Red Fruit by Safia Elhillo. Make Me a World, 2025. ISBN 9780593381236 [paperback].
Bad girl. No matter how hard Samira tries, she can't shake her reputation. She's never gotten the benefit of the doubt—not from her mother or the aunties who watch her like a hawk.

Samira is determined to have a perfect summer filled with fun parties, exploring DC, and growing as a poet—until a scandalous rumor has her grounded and unable to leave her house. When Samira turns to a poetry forum for solace, she catches the eye of an older, charismatic poet named Horus. For the first time, Samira feels wanted. But soon she's keeping a bigger secret than ever before—one that that could prove her reputation and jeopardize her place in her community.

Diet Soda Club by Chaz Hayden. Candlewick, 2024. ISBN 9781536223125 [hardcover].
Have you ever made all the wrong choices for all the right reasons?

Reed Beckett's little sister, Beatrice, has never been awakened by the smell of breakfast or a school-day alarm clock. Instead, she wakes to hospital beeps and poking doctors. Seventeen-year-old Reed has been there for Bea all along, especially since their dad died. But when their burned-out mom goes on an extended vacation with her new boyfriend, the siblings are left with only an empty pantry and each other. With no job prospects on the horizon, Reed begins making and selling fake IDs so he and Bea can survive. But the problems keep piling up, from an angry landlord demanding rent to looming medical bills. As Reed expands his business, taking increasingly bigger risks, the potential consequences for Reed's future, Bea's health, and Reed's budding friendship with his classmate Helena become graver. But what choice does he have? The joy and complexity of both caregiving and sibling relationships are at the heart of this authentic and moving novel.

Dragonfruit by Makiia Lucier. Clarion Books, 2024. ISBN 9780358272106 [hardcover].
In the old tales, it is written that the egg of a seadragon, dragonfruit, holds within it the power to undo a person's greatest sorrow. But as with all things that offer hope when hope had gone, the tale came with a warning. Every wish demands a price.

Hanalei of Tamarind is the cherished daughter of an old island family. But when her father steals a seadragon egg meant for an ailing princess, she is forced into a life of exile. In the years that follow, Hanalei finds solace in studying the majestic seadragons that roam the Nominomi Sea. Until, one day, an encounter with a female dragon offers her what she desires most. A chance to return home, and to right a terrible wrong.

Samahtitamahenele, Sam, is the last remaining prince of Tamarind. But he can never inherit the throne, for Tamarind is a matriarchal society. With his mother ill and his grandmother nearing the end of her reign. Sam is left with two choices: to marry, or to find a cure for the sickness that has plagued his mother for ten long years. When a childhood companion returns from exile, she brings with her something he has not felt in a very long time—hope.

But Hanalei and Sam are not the only ones searching for the dragonfruit. And as they battle enemies both near and far, there is another danger they cannot escape…that of the dragonfruit itself.

Everything is Tuberculosis: The History and Persistence of Our Deadliest Infection by John Green. Random House Large Print, 2025. 9798217168422 [paperback].
"The real magic of Green's writing is the deeply considerate, human touch that goes into every word." –The Associated Press

"Told with the intelligence, wit, and tragedy that have become hallmarks of the author's work.... This is the story of us." –Slate

"Earnest and empathetic." –The New York Times

Tuberculosis has been entwined with humanity for millennia. Once romanticized as a malady of poets, today tuberculosis is seen as a disease of poverty that walks the trails of injustice and inequity we blazed for it.

In 2019, author John Green met Henry Reider, a young tuberculosis patient at Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone. John became fast friends with Henry, a boy with spindly legs and a big, goofy smile. In the years since that first visit to Lakka, Green has become a vocal advocate for increased access to treatment and wider awareness of the healthcare inequities that allow this curable, preventable infectious disease to also be the deadliest, killing over a million people every year.

Looking for Smoke by K.A. Cobell. Heartdrum, 2025. ISBN 9780063318687 [paperback].
When local girl Loren includes Mara in a traditional Blackfeet Giveaway to honor Loren's missing sister, Mara thinks she'll finally make some friends on the Blackfeet reservation.

Instead, a girl from the Giveaway, Samantha White Tail, is found murdered.

Because the four members of the Giveaway group were the last to see Samantha alive, each becomes a person of interest in the investigation. And all of them—Mara, Loren, Brody, and Eli—have a complicated history with Samantha.

Despite deep mistrust, the four must now take matters into their own hands and clear their names. Even though one of them may be the murderer.

Six Truths and a Lie by Ream Shukairy. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2025. ISBN 9780316564601 [paperback].
Six Muslim teens are falsely accused of a deadly attack in this timely and harrowing examination of America's justice system, perfect for fans of Angie Thomas and Samira Ahmed.

As fireworks pop off at a rowdy Fourth of July bonfire party, an explosion off the California coast levels an oil rig—resulting in chaos and worse, murder.

At the center are six Muslim teens - six patriots, six strangers, and six suspects.

An old soul caught in the wrong place. An aspiring doctor. An influencer with a reputation to protect. A perfect daughter with secrets to hide. A soccer star headed for Stanford. An immigrant in love. Each with something to hide and everything to lose.

Faced with accusations of terrorism, The Six are caught in a political game that will pit them against each other in exchange for exoneration. They must choose: frame each other to guarantee their own independence or expose their secrets to earn back freedom for them all.

Such Charming Liars by Karen M. McManus. Delacorte Press, 2025. ISBN 9780593485088 [paperback].
For all of Kat's life, it's just been her and her mother, Jamie—except for the forty-eight hours when Jamie was married and Kat had a stepbrother, Liam. That all ended in an epic divorce, and Kat and Liam haven't spoken since.

Now Jamie is a jewel thief trying to go straight, but she has one last job—at billionaire Ross Sutherland's birthday party. And Kat has figured out a way to tag along. What Kat doesn't know, though, is that there are two surprise guests at the dazzling Sutherland compound that weekend. The last two people she wants to run into. Liam and his father—a serial scammer who has his sights set on Ross Sutherland's youngest daughter.

Kat and Liam are on a collision course to disaster, and when a Sutherland dies, they realize they might actually be in the killer's crosshairs themselves. Somehow Kat and Liam are the new targets, and they can't trust anyone—except each other.

Or can they? Because if there's one thing both Kat and Liam know, it's how to lie. They learned from the best.

Twelfth Knight by Alexene Farol Follmuth. Tor Teen, 2025. ISBN 9781250884916 [paperback].
Viola Reyes is annoyed.

Her painstakingly crafted tabletop game campaign was shot down, her best friend is suggesting she try being more "likable," and her school's star running back Jack Orsino is the most lackadaisical Student Body President she's ever seen, which makes her job as VP that much harder. Vi's favorite escape from the world is the MMORPG Twelfth Knight, but online spaces aren't exactly kind to girls like her—girls who are extremely competent and have the swagger to prove it. So Vi creates a masculine alter ego, choosing to play as a knight named Cesario to create a safe haven for herself.

But when a football injury leads Jack Orsino to the world of Twelfth Knight, Vi is alarmed to discover their online alter egos—Cesario and Duke Orsino—are surprisingly well-matched.

As the long nights of game-play turn into discussions about life and love, Vi and Jack soon realize they've become more than just weapon-wielding characters in an online game. But Vi has been concealing her true identity from Jack, and Jack might just be falling for her offline…

Twenty-Four Seconds from Now...: A Love Story by Jason Reynolds. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2024. ISBN 9781665961271 [hardcover].
Twenty-four months ago: Neon gets chased by a dog all around the parking lot of a church. Not his finest moment. And definitely one he would have loved to forget if it weren't for the dog's owner: Aria. Dressed in sweats, a t-shirt, hair in a ponytail. Aria. Way more than fine.

Twenty-four weeks ago: Neon's dad insists on talking to him about tenderness and intimacy. Neon and Aria are definitely in love, and while they haven't taken that next big step…yet, they've starting talking about… that.

Twenty-four days ago: Neon's mom finds her—gulp—bra in his room. Hey! No judging! Those hook thingies are complicated! So he'd figured he'd better practice, what with the big day only a month away.

Twenty-four minutes ago: Neon leaves his shift at work at his dad's bingo hall, making sure to bring some chicken tenders for Aria. They're not candlelight and they definitely aren't caviar, but they are her favorite.

And right this second? Neon is locked in Aria's bathroom, completely freaking out because twenty-four seconds from now he and Aria are about to…about to… Well, they won't do anything if he can't get out of his own head (all the advice, insecurities, and what ifs) and out of this bathroom!

With Love, Miss Americanah by Jane Igharo. Square Fish, 2025. ISBN 9781250873361 [paperback].
Enore Adesuwa doesn't dive into things, she walks in carefully. So when she, her mother, and her sister move from Nigeria shortly after her father's death, she wants to be extremely prepared before attending high school in America. Her cousin doesn't have time to explain the ins and outs to her but, luckily, he recommends the perfect research tool: teen movies.

Still dealing with grief but armed with a set of rules of survival gathered from these movies (including the crucial rule of keeping a low profile), Enore is ready for her senior year. But when she meets Davi Santiago, it may be much harder than she thought to keep to her rules. Because not only is he super thoughtful (and okay, very good looking), he constantly encourages her to share her incredible singing talent. Enore prefers the background but it just might be time for her to take center stage, even in spite of her mother's strict expectations.

It would be easier to follow all the rules, the ones Enore set for herself and the ones her mom imposes, but as every teen movie has taught her, a coming-of-age is nothing without a little rebellion. And with help from her crush, her sister, and some new friends who don't quite play the roles she expects, Enore's senior year might indeed be cinematic!