

2017 Best Fiction for Young Adults

This year's list consists of 63 titles * denotes the title was selected as a [top ten](#).

Alexander, Kwame. *Booked*. HMH Books for Young Readers. 2016. 320p. ISBN: 978-0544570986. Nick, an eighth-grade soccer star, would like to concentrate on an upcoming tournament, but life gets in the way. Can he handle changing family dynamics, a first crush, bullying, a sidelining injury, and being forced to read a dictionary? Find out how he manages in this verse novel.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Ashes*. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books. 2016. 304p. ISBN: 9781416961468. Isabel thought that freeing her sister from a South Carolina plantation would be the hard part, but as they surreptitiously make their way north, she sees more clearly that neither the Redcoats nor the Patriots sees value in freedom for people of color.

Arnold, David. *Kids of Appetite*. Viking Books for Young Readers. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9780451470782. Vic's father died two years ago. Unable to accept his mother's new relationship, he flees with his father's urn. An unlikely gang of misfits brings Vic into their fold, helping him fulfill his dad's final instructions regarding disposal of the ashes. A triumphant celebration of the many kinds of family.

* **Berry, Julie. *The Passion of Dolssa*. Viking Books for Young Readers. 2016. 496p. ISBN: 9780451469922.** In thirteenth-century Provence, Dolssa, branded a heretic after claiming to speak with God, flees her hometown. She's rescued by Botille, a matchmaker who runs a tavern with her sisters. Their lives become inexorably linked when Dolssa's gifts as a healer and miracle worker bring the church's wrath to the village.

Braxton-Smith, Ananda. *Merrow*. Candlewick. 2016. 240p. ISBN: 9780763679248. Living on the isolated Irish coastland with her aunt has always been a harsh existence for Neen. But when a stranger washes ashore, she renews her quest to discover if her mother abandoned her for a different life in a new town, or rejoined her mermaid family in the sea.

Budhos, Marina. *Watched*. Wendy Lamb Books. 2016. 272p. ISBN: 9780553534184. In trouble with the law, 18-year-old Naeem goes to work as an informer for the NYPD, all the while grappling with his Islamic roots, his loyalties and sympathies, and inner conflict over ratting on a friend.

Cavallaro, Brittany. *A Study in Charlotte*. Katherine Tegen Books. 2016. 336p. ISBN: 9780062398901. In this reimagining of Sherlock Holmes, Charlotte Holmes is a distant relative of Sherlock and a high school student in America. James Watson, a distant relative of Dr. John Watson, is student at the same school, and Watson and Holmes eventually meet up to solve a murder.

* **Chee, Traci. *The Reader*. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. 2016. 464p. ISBN: 9780399176777.** With overlapping stories of swashbuckling pirates and merciless assassins, this stunning series opener introduces a world where reading is unheard of and a young orphan struggles to discover her family's secrets.

Cordova, Zoraida. *Labyrinth Lost*. Sourcebooks Fire. 2016. 336p. ISBN: 9781492620945. Alex is a bruja, the most powerful witch in a generation--and she hates magic. At her Deathday celebration, she performs a spell to rid herself of her power. But her whole family gets transported into Los Lagos instead. Now, she must travel to the in-between land with a brujo to rescue them.

Diederich, Phillippe. *Playing for the Devil's Fire*. Cinco Puntos Press. 2016. 232p. ISBN: 9781941026298. Flashy drug runners bring brutal deaths into Boli's quiet Mexican village. When Boli's parents disappear without a trace, the 13-year-old enlists the help of an unlikely hero--a washed-up luchador in town for a traveling show--and together they come face to face with the horrors of today's narco wars.

Dooley, Sarah. *Free Verse*. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9780399165030. An orphaned middle schooler struggles with anxiety after her older brother tragically dies, finally finding hope in a newfound family and poetry.

Downham, Jenny. *Unbecoming*. David Fickling Books. 2016. 384p. ISBN: 9780545907170. Three generations of women--a grandmother, a mother, and a daughter, all of whom are dealing with issues of family, femininity, and identity--try to understand each other and their own pasts while also trying to better understand themselves.

Duyvis, Corinne. *On the Edge of Gone.* Amulet Books. 2016. 464p. ISBN: 978-1419719035. A biracial teen with autism living in Amsterdam prepares for an incoming comet that threatens to destroy all human life on Earth by vying to get her family on a spaceship destined to leave Earth.

Federle, Tim. *The Great American Whatever.* Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2016. 288p. ISBN: 9781481404099. Quinn hasn't left his room in six months since the death of his sister and filmmaking partner. After reluctantly going out with his best friend Geoff, Quinn falls in love, uncovers secrets, and come to terms with his sister's death.

Friend, Natasha. *Where You'll Find Me.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2016. 272p. ISBN: 9780374302306. After her mother's recent suicide attempt, Anna moves in with her father, his new wife, and their new baby. Meanwhile, her BFF Dani has dumped her for the popular crowd. Anna must learn to navigate middle school drama while coping with her mother's bipolar disorder and her new family.

Garvin, Jeff. *Symptoms of Being Human.* Jeff Garvin. Balzer + Bray. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9780062382863. Riley Cavanaugh is struggling to balance a new school, new relationships, and a father who's running for re-election in a conservative congressional district, all while wrestling with being a gender-fluid teen. When Riley's blog becomes a national sensation, an internet stalker threatens to expose Riley's secret to the world.

Gephart, Donna. *Lily and Dunkin.* Delacorte Books for Young Readers. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9780553536744. Tim and Norbert are both starting eighth grade and prefer to be known as "Lily and Dunkin." Lily knows that she is really a girl, despite having boy parts. Dunkin just wants to fit in, despite his struggle with bipolar disorder.

Girard, M-E. *Girl Mans Up.* HarperCollins. 2016. 384p. ISBN: 9780062404176. Pen (don't call her Penelope) has always been more comfortable wearing her brother's clothes, playing video games, and hanging out with guys. She knows what kind of girl she wants to be, but now that she's 16, why are so many other people having a problem with that?

Glasgow, Kathleen. *Girl in Pieces.* Delacorte Press. 2016. 416p. ISBN: 9781101934739. Charlie, a cutter and an artist, lands in Tucson after she has to leave rehab. Alone, insecure, and scared, she gets a job where she finds both supportive and destructive relationships. In spite of bad decisions, disappointments, and backsliding, she doggedly struggles to find herself and her place.

Hand, Cynthia and Ashton, Brodi and Meadows, Jodi. *My Lady Jane.* Harper Teen. 2016. 512p. ISBN: 9780062391742. The historical version of the story of the teenage Lady Jane Grey, England's queen for nine days, is given a fantastical twist and a much happier ending for all involved.

Hapgood, Harriet Reuter. *The Square Root of Summer.* Roaring Brook Press. 2016. 304p. ISBN: 9781626723733. Margot shifts through space-time as she grieves the loss of her grandfather, the heartbreak over a first love, and the tenuous relationships with her best friends, all while using quantum physics and scientific method to determine what triggers the wormholes and how to remain in real time.

* **Hardinge, Frances.** *The Lie Tree.* Amulet Books. 2016. 384p. ISBN: 9781419718953. In 1868, Faith's father is providing expertise at an archaeological dig, and when his body is found, most assume suicide amid the allegations of falsified discoveries. Only Faith suspects murder--and her determination to find his killer leads her to dark secrets about her father and his priceless Mendacity Tree.

Hartley, A.J. *Steeplejack.* Tor Teen. 2016. 336p. ISBN: 9780765383426. When the magnificent Beacon is stolen, white politicians seek the services of the best steeplejack in Bar-Selehm to shed light on the heist--and 17-year-old Ang Sutonga is drawn into intrigue, mired in cultural and racial tension, that goes far beyond the theft.

Heilig, Heidi. *The Girl from Everywhere.* Greenwillow Books. 2016. 464p. ISBN: 9780062380753. Nix, her drug-addicted father, and a ragtag crew travel through time on a pirate ship and become entangled in a plot to steal the king's gold in nineteenth-century Hawaii.

Hepperman, Christine. *Ask Me How I Got Here.* Greenwillow Books. 2016. 240p. ISBN: 9780062387950. Over the course of a year, Addie falls in love, quits the track team, falls out of love, processes guilt and forgiveness, and gives herself permission to make the choices that seem best for her.

Hesse, Monica. *Girl in the Blue Coat*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. 2016. 320p. ISBN: 9780316260602. In 1943 Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, Hanneke helps her family survive by procuring and distributing black-market goods for customers, one of whom is hiding a Jewish girl. When the girl vanishes mysteriously, Hanneke takes up the case, unwittingly joining the Resistance as her eyes are opened to the war's horrors.

Hoffmeister, Peter Brown. *This is the Part Where You Laugh*. Knopf Books for Young Readers. 2016. 336p. ISBN: 9780553538106. Travis' decisions often have grave consequences. With a dying grandmother, a homeless and heroin addicted mom, a beautiful new neighbor, and a best friend who's a poet on and off the basketball court, this summer promises to be one that has the potential to change everything for Travis.

Hutchinson, Shaun David. *We Are the Ants*. Simon Pulse. 2016. 464p. ISBN: 9781481449632. Henry's struggling trying to come to terms with his boyfriend's suicide, his loser brother's impending fatherhood, and his grandmother's Alzheimer's while trying to find love and determining if this world is worth saving from the alien sluggers who deem him worthy to decide Earth's fate.

Kiely, Brendan. *The Last True Love Story*. Margaret K. McElderry Books. 2016. 288p. ISBN: 9781481429887. Teddy and Corrina team up to take his "Gpa" on a road trip from L.A. to Ithaca to help him anchor down the memories of his wife before he loses them to Alzheimer's. Along the way, music, old and new, builds bridges between generations, between past and possible loves.

King, A.S. *Still Life with Tornado*. Dutton Books for Young Readers. 2016. 304p. ISBN: 9781101994887. Philly teen artist Sarah has lost her will to create ever since an incident occurred at school. As she is visited by younger and older versions of herself, Sarah begins to piece together why her family and her creative life has become so fractured.

Lake, Nick. *Whisper to Me*. Bloomsbury USA Childrens. 2016. 544p. ISBN: 9781619634565. Cassie is trying to explain it all in a letter: about the heartbreak, the betrayal, the secrecy, and especially about the voice she hears in her head telling her to do awful things. Will it be enough to will back the boy she loves?

Larbalestier, Justine. *My Sister Rosa*. Soho Teen. 2016. 320p. ISBN: 9781616956745. Che and his 10-year-old sister Rosa are nearly inseparable. Is that because they move frequently with their parents? Or is it because Che is convinced Rosa is a psychopath and is terrified of what she will do if he isn't watching?

Lee, Stacey. *Outrun the Moon*. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. 2016. 400p. ISBN: 9780399175411. Mercy Wong is ambitious and determined to get into an exclusive school in order to break free from the poverty of her native Chinatown. But this is 1906 San Francisco and one of the world's deadliest earthquakes is about to throw Mercy's world into chaos.

Levithan, David and LaCour, Nina. *You Know Me Well*. St. Martin's Griffin. 2016. 256p. ISBN: 9781250098641. During Pride Week in San Francisco, Kate and Mark come together after their respective original plans are derailed, and begin to navigate both the week and the world. Their unexpected friendship deepens as they travel through new experiences, tears and laughter, and a sudden burst of media fame.

Lindstrom, Eric. *Not If I See You First*. Poppy. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780316259859. Sixteen-year-old Parker Grant, blind since the car accident that killed her mother when Parker was seven and reeling from her father's recent death, questions past decisions, current friendships, and her own self-centeredness as she finds that the greater strength is in letting go, reaching out, and letting others in.

Lord, Emery. *When We Collided*. Bloomsbury USA Children's. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9781619638457. Jonah Daniels and Vivi Alexander fall in love despite his grief at his father's death and her struggles with mental illness in this tear- and swoon-inducing romance.

Lubar, David. *Character, Driven*. Tor Teen. 2016. 304p. ISBN: 9780765316332. Cliff is almost out of high school and he's never had much luck with girls--or anything else. But when Jillian moves to town, he determines to have the girlfriend of his dreams and figure out what to do with his messed-up life.

* **McGinnis, Mindy.** *The Female of the Species.* Katherine Tegen Books. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9780062320896. The social hierarchy of a small-town high school is revealed through the voices of Alex, Jack, and Peekay, who are still haunted by the brutal rape and murder of Alex's sister years ago. Alex, however, is on a quest for vengeance.

McLemore, Anna-Marie. *When the Moon Was Ours.* St. Martin's Press. 2016. 288p. ISBN: 9781250058669. Lush magical realism is a backdrop for this exploration of sexual identity. Samir and Miel, best friends as children and now lovers, each carry their own secrets and guilt. Meanwhile, the four Bonner sisters plan to sacrifice both teens to control the magic of the roses that mysteriously grow from Miel's wrist.

* **Medina, Meg.** *Burn Baby Burn.* Candlewick. 2016. 320p. ISBN: 9780763674670. Nora López graduates from her Queens, New York, high school in the summer of 1977--a summer marked by a heat wave, arson, and the Son of Sam murders. But there are things to fear at home, too, as her family disintegrates amid the overwhelming power of her brother's violent streak.

Meyer, Marissa. *Heartless.* Feiwel & Friends. 2016. 464p. ISBN: 9781250044655. In this faithful-to-the-original prequel to *Alice in Wonderland*, the one-day Queen of Hearts is just Cath, a talented and creative young baker with dreams of opening up her own shop. This heartbreaking love story explains how sweet Cath becomes the ruthless Queen.

O'Giulin, Peadar. *The Call.* David Fickling Books. 2016. 320p. ISBN: 9781338045611. Every Irish teenager gets The Call: without warning, they're transported to the nightmarish Grey Lands for one day, trying to survive while the vengeful Sidhe faeries hunt them for sport. Nessa trains hard so she'll survive when her time comes, but with her disability, the odds aren't good.

O'Neill, Louise. *Asking for It.* Quercus. 2016. 336p. ISBN: 9781681445373. A popular Irish mean girl gets raped by her peers and fights to bring them to justice, even as her friends, family, and community turn their backs on her.

Patel, Sonia. *Rani Patel in Full Effect.* Cinco Puntos Press. 2016. 224p. ISBN: 9781941026496. After her Gujarati Indian family's move to a remote Hawaiian island suspends them in cultural isolation, 16-year-old Rani Patel uses rap to forge an identity amid family drama, cultural restrictions, and abuse. Soon Rani gets involved in a relationship with an older man with addiction issues.

Perkins, Stephanie (editor). *Summer Days and Summer Nights: Twelve Love Stories.* St. Martin's Griffin. 2016. 400p. ISBN: 9781250079121. In turns humorous, touching, and atmospheric, this collection of short stories by 12 prominent, popular, and up-and-coming young-adult authors offers diverse tales of love and summertime in genres ranging from science-fiction and fantasy to realistic fiction.

Porter, Sarah. *Vassa in the Night.* Tor Teen. 2016. 304p. ISBN: 9780765380548. Porter tells the Russian fairy tale "Vasilisa the Beautiful" by resetting it as an urban fantasy set in a dark, working-class Brooklyn.

Pung, Alice. *Lucy and Linh.* Knopf Books for Young Readers. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9780399550485. Lucy, a Chinese Australian teen from a poor suburb, must navigate the cutthroat, very rich, and very white world of private school when she is offered a scholarship to Laurinda.

Quick, Matthew. *Every Exquisite Thing.* Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. 2016. 272p. ISBN: 9780316379595. Nanette has a nice normal life--friends, high school, soccer. But after she discovers a cult-classic novel, "nice and normal" becomes instantly unappealing. Ditching everyday life for the book's reclusive author and another obsessive teenage fan, Nanette explores her rebellious nonconformist side--and the risks that come with it.

Reeve, Philip. *Railhead.* Switch Press. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9781630790486. In the distant future, sentient trains carry passengers across the universe on the Great Network, and Zen Starling, a petty thief and "railhead," darts from planet to planet in search of his next score until the mysterious Raven enlists his help for a mysterious mission.

* **Reynolds, Jason.** *Ghost.* Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books. 2016. 192p. ISBN: 9781481450157. His dad shot a gun at him, and "Ghost" Crenshaw has been running ever since. When Ghost challenges a runner to a race, he ends up on the team himself. But it's one step forward and two steps back as Ghost channels his anger to become part of the team.

Russo, Meredith. *If I Was Your Girl.* Flatiron Books. 2016. 288p. ISBN: 9781250078407. After a harrowing incident following gender-reassignment surgery, Amanda moves to another state to live with her father and finish high school. Here, Amanda searches for the friends and acceptance for which she has longed her entire life.

Schmidt, Gary. *Orbiting Jupiter.* Clarion Books. 2015. 192p. ISBN: 9780544462229. Jack, 12, is not thrilled when his parents take in a troubled 14-year-old boy. However, as he gets to know and care about Joseph, Jack becomes involved in his own determined search for his baby daughter.

Self, Jeffery. *Drag Teen.* Push. 2016. 261p. ISBN: 9780545829939. JT, his boyfriend, and his best friend set off on a road trip from Florida to New York to compete in the Drag Teen competition, finding unlikely help and inspiration along the way.

* **Sepeyts, Ruta.** *Salt to the Sea.* Philomel Books. 2016. 400p. ISBN: 9780399160301. It's near the end of WWII and four refugees travel on foot during January to board the Wilhelm Gustloff, a ship bound for safety. This is the story of the lesser known tragedy of the doomed ship.

* **Shusterman, Neal.** *Scythe.* Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2016. 448p. ISBN: 9781442472426. In a distant future in which humanity has practically conquered death, the population is controlled by Scythes, the only beings capable of causing death--and teens Citra Terranova and Rowan Damisch have just been chosen as Scythe apprentices.

Starmer, Aaron. *Spontaneous.* Dutton Books for Young Readers. 2016. 368p. ISBN: 9780525429746. Members of the senior class at Covington High School suddenly begin to spontaneously explode. Who will be next? Why is it happening? And can the bloody mayhem be stopped? Mara and her friends think they're onto an answer.

Stork, Francisco. *The Memory of Light.* Arthur A. Levine Books. 2016. 336p. ISBN: 9780545474320. After attempting suicide, Vicky joins Mona, Gabriel, E.M., and their therapist at Lakeview Hospital. There, she develops deep friendships, works to understand her depression, and discovers unrealized strengths. Will the moments of hope and light be enough to help her through her return home and the crises her friends face?

Sullivan, Tara. *The Bitter Side of Sweet.* G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. 2016. 320p. ISBN: 9780399173073. Amadou and Seydou have been tricked into slavery on the Ivory Coast cutting down Cacao leaves day after day. They're resigned to their fate until Khadija, the first girl brought to the farm, immediately attempts an escape that changes everything and risks all of their lives.

Umminger, Alison. *American Girls.* Flatiron Books. 2016. 304p. ISBN: 9781250075000. After "borrowing" her mother-in-law's credit card to escape some trouble in Atlanta, Anna lands in Los Angeles where she spends the summer with her sister, an aspiring actress trying to shake her B-movie status. Anna, meanwhile, researches the Charles Manson family and hangs out on the Disney-esque *Chips Ahoy* television show set.

Whaley, John Corey. *Highly Illogical Behavior.* Dial Books. 2016. 256p. ISBN: 9780525428183. Agoraphobic Solomon has not stepped outside his home for three years. Then Lisa decides to write a scholarship essay on her experience with mental illness, and makes "curing" Sol her project, dragging boyfriend Clark into the plot. Gradually her plan takes a backseat to the real friendships that develop.

Winters, Cat. *The Steep and Thorny Way.* Abrams. 2016. 352p. ISBN: 9781419719158. Hanalee is a biracial girl living in dangerous times. Oregon in the 1920s isn't a safe place for anyone who is different, and now the ghost of Hanalee's father is telling her he was murdered. With nods to *Hamlet*, Hanalee must find answers so he can rest in peace.

* **Yoon, Nicola.** *The Sun is Also a Star.* Delacorte Press. 2016. 384p. ISBN: 9780553496680. Daniel decides to let fate dictate his life and NaTasha doesn't believe in fate. But today, NaTasha will believe in anything if it allows her to avoid deportation. Either by fate or coincidence, Daniel and NaTasha meet and fall in love in a single day--but will it all end if Natasha has to go back to Jamaica?

* **Zentner, Jeff.** *The Serpent King.* Crown Books for Young Readers. 2016. 384p. ISBN: 978-0553524024. One is the son of a snake-handling preacher serving time in prison. One is a fashionista with New York dreams. One escapes an abusive life in fantasy novels. These high-school seniors in a small Tennessee town consider the options for their future.