

MIDDLE GRADES



Absolutely Almost (Lisa Graff)

2014. Philomel. ISBN: 9780399164057. Gr. 4–6.

A young boy with learning challenges navigates a new school with help from a new sitter and others in this heartfelt novel.

All Alone in the Universe (Lynne Rae Perkins)

1999. Greenwillow. ISBN: 9780380733026. Gr. 5–8.

When her best friend starts spending time with another girl, Glenna feels alone, but she finds support from caring adults who help her realize that her life is her own to shape.

As Brave as You (Jason Reynolds)

2016. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy. ISBN: 9781481415903. Gr. 5–8.

An inquisitive young boy and his older brother find deeper family understanding when they leave their Brooklyn home for a summer in Virginia with their grandmother and grandfather, who is blind.

The Birchbark House (Louise Erdrich)

1999. HarperCollins. ISBN: 9780786814541. Gr. 4–8.

Daily life for Omakayas, a young Ojibwa child in the mid-nineteenth century, includes doing chores and caring for beloved pets in this start to an award-winning series of historical novels.

Hoot (Carl Hiaasen)

2002. Knopf. ISBN: 9780375821813. Gr. 5–8.

A 12-year-old newcomer to his South Florida neighborhood becomes an animal activist when he joins with other kids to save an owl habitat in this Newbery Honor Book.

Inside Out & Back Again (Tanhha Lai)

2011. HarperCollins. ISBN: 9780061962783. Gr. 4–8.

Based on the author's experiences, this award-winning novel follows a Vietnamese refugee's adjustment to life in Alabama, where she's bullied at school and finds help from a caring teacher.

Just Grace (Cherise Mericle Harper)

2007. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. ISBN: 9780618646425. Gr. 2–4.

In this first title in a winning series, a third-grader's well-intentioned plans go awry as she tries to help a neighbor and solve a mystery.

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Lend a Hand

(John Frank. Illus. by London Ladd)

2014. Lee & Low. ISBN: 9781600609701. Gr. 3–6.

In everyday words, the 14 poems in this accessible, illustrated title show young people engaged in acts of caring and kindness.

Non-Random Acts of Kindness

(Lauren Myracle)

2014. Dutton. ISBN: 9780525422662. Gr. 2–4.

This entry in the Life of Ty series follows the seven-year-old through a week in which he tries to complete a classroom assignment to perform acts of kindness.

The Misfits

(James Howe)

2001. Atheneum. ISBN: 9780689839559. Gr. 5–8.

A seventh-grader and three "outsider" friends challenge their classmates and teachers to rethink class elections in this warm friendship story about inclusivity and speaking up.

The One and Only Ivan

(Katherine Applegate. Illus. by Patricia Castelao)

2012. HarperCollins. ISBN: 9780061992254. Gr. 3–6.

This Newbery Medal–winner tells a story of life-changing friendship, humane treatment of animals, and the power of art—all from a gorilla's perspective.

Out of My Mind

(Sharon Draper)

2010. Atheneum. ISBN: 9781416971702. Gr. 5–8.

A special computer and keyboard allow a young girl with cerebral palsy to communicate with the world in a new way in this sensitive, affecting novel.

The Promise

(Nicola Davies. Illus. by Laura Carlin)

2014. Candlewick. ISBN: 9780763666330. Gr. 2–4.

In this picture book for older readers, a young thief in a gritty city fulfills a promise to plant acorns she finds in a stolen purse, and a community develops around the growing trees.

Pictures of Hollis Wood

(Patricia Reilly Giff)

Random House/Wendy Lamb. ISBN: 9780385326551. Gr. 5–7.

Hollis, a 12-year-old who has been through many foster homes, slowly begins to open up and discover her voice and talents when she's placed with a new caregiver.

Raymie Nightingale

(Kate DiCamillo)

2016. Candlewick. ISBN: 9780763681173. Gr. 4–7.

Three girls, each navigating her own heartbreak, form a fierce, unlikely friendship over the course of a summer in this moving novel.

Rules

(Cynthia Lord)

2006. Scholastic. ISBN: 9780439443821. Gr. 4–7.

A 12-year-old girl creates "rules" to help her brother, who has autism, navigate life in this novel that acknowledges the complicated feelings of growing up with a differently abled sibling.

Wonder

(R. J. Palacio)

2012. Knopf. ISBN: 9780375869020. Gr. 5–8.

This enormously popular title, about a boy with profound "facial anomalies" who starts attending a new school, upends ideas of "normal," right up to its powerfully uplifting ending.