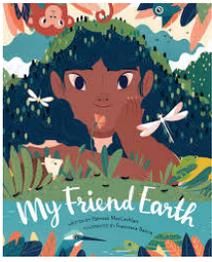




# 2020 Summer Booklist

# PICTURE BOOKS



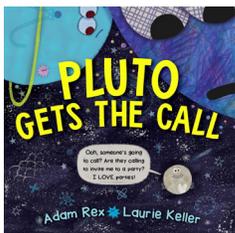
## *My Friend Earth*

by Patricia MacLachlan;  
illus. by Francesca Sanna (Preschool-Kindergarten)  
Filled with beautiful illustrations and intricate die-cut pages, this book poetically tells of all the wondrous things the Earth does each and every year. From the moment she awakens from her winter nap, we follow Earth on an enchanting journey through the seasons as she lovingly cares for creatures big and small, the land, the oceans, the winds, and the rains. A must-read for budding nature lovers and their caregivers alike.



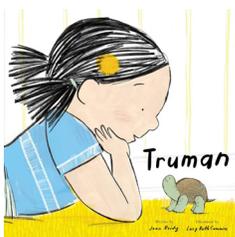
## *We are Water Protectors*

by Carole Lindstrom;  
illus. by Michaela Goade (Preschool-Grade 1)  
This powerful picture book tells the story of the Sioux Tribe in North Dakota as it stands up against an oil pipeline being built within their land. It conveys the importance of preserving sacred land in this time of environmental hazards. The brightly-colored illustrations enhance this book's story and message. *We are Water Protectors* can encourage conversation about Native Americans, their history and the environment with the youngest listeners.



## *Pluto Gets the Call*

by Adam Rex and Laurie Keller  
(Preschool-Grade 3)  
This delightfully entertaining journey through our solar system is led by little Pluto. But right as the tour beings, Pluto gets the call – he's no longer a planet. While Pluto continues visiting each planet, he comes to accept that just because a group of scientists on Earth say he's not a planet, doesn't mean he can't still have a special place in all of our hearts. An educational exploration of the planets packed with facts and a generous dose of humor, this book will delight kids and parents alike.



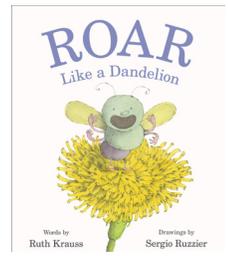
## *Truman*

by Jean Reidy; illus. by Lucy Ruth Cummins  
(Preschool-Grade 3)  
Transposing her apprehension onto her pet turtle, Truman, Sarah faces her fears about starting school with bravery and pride. It includes fabulous vocabulary such as, *pensive*, *shrieking*, *unsettling*, and *uncharted*. The illustrations truly enhance the emotions. (Be sure to take note of the words on the bus!) *Truman* is also a counting book in disguise: "Sarah placed seven green beans in Truman's dish – two more than usual!"

## *Roar Like a Dandelion*

by Ruth Krauss; illus. by Sergio Ruzzier  
(Preschool-Grade 3)

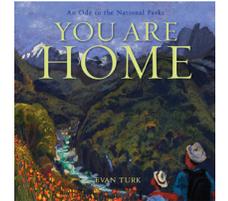
This sweet, playful picture book features creative wordplay. The illustrations are calm yet colorful and will give a child many opportunities to think out of the box. It is also a smaller size, more easily held by small hands. Each letter of the alphabet features lively instructions and funny animal illustrations.



## *You are Home:*

*An Ode to the National Parks*  
by Ben Turk (Preschool-Grade 3)

The beautiful pastel illustrations of each National Park in this book were done by the artist, often-times on sight in the parks. In the back of the book, the author/artist explains how he chose to draw interpretations of the different parks and why and describes their history, which will appeal to older readers. This is a beautiful but simple picture book giving the reader a magnificent sense of what lies in each of the National Parks the author visited. It's a great book to get kids excited about being outside in our country's most beautiful places.



## *Saturday*

by Oge Mora (Preschool-Grade 3)

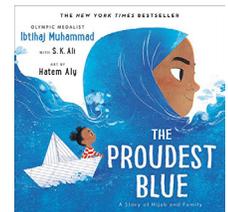
This is a charming story of a mother and young child who have plans for enjoying Saturdays together. This Saturday's plan has a few glitches, but can still be enjoyable with adaptations. The book conveys a nice message about family relationships and being creative when things need to change. *Saturday* is beautifully illustrated in bright collages.



## *The Proudest Blue:*

*A Story of Hijab and Family*  
by Ibtihaj Muhammed with S.K. Ali;  
illus. by Hatem Aly (Preschool-Grade 3)

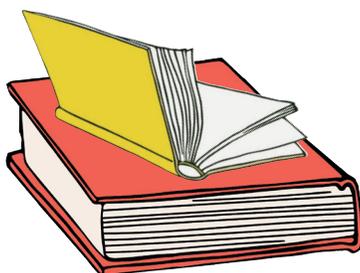
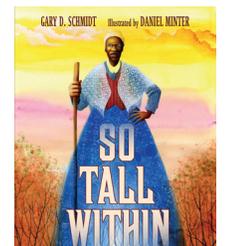
The ocean blue cover that shouts hope and determination is so alluring you can't help but open it up. This is a true celebration and empowering story of a young girl's first day wearing a hijab. "Some people won't understand your hijab, Mama had said. "But if you understand who you are, one day they will too." With her little sister looking up to her, Asiya navigates questions and ridicule that try to interfere with her pride in her tradition. Drawing strength from within, from her family, and the blue of the ocean and her hijab, Asiya moves through her day with grace.



## *So Tall Within*

by Gary D. Schmidt;  
illus. by David Minter (Grades K-3)

Gary Schmidt's powerful, lyrical prose carries the reader through Sojourner Truth's difficult beginning of being born into slavery, her eventual freedom and her exhaustive fight for women's and civil rights. Maine illustrator David Minter uses the left side of the page to create panels depicting life in her ancestral homeland of Africa, while using the right side of the page to portray Schmidt's words. This book is a must-read book to be celebrated.

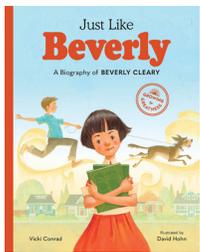


# PICTURE BOOKS



***A Computer Called Katherine***  
by Suzanne Slade; illus. by Veronica Miller  
Jamison (Grades K-Grade 3)

Katherine Johnson loved numbers. She counted everything she could from steps to miles to stars. Living in a time when not only women, especially black women, were not supposed to be scientists or mathematicians, Katherine set out to prove them all wrong. "She believed women could be anything." With persistence and accurate calculations she caught the attention of the pace team and was eventually asked to join their team to plan the first astronaut into space. Her calculations were so good that "John Glenn trusted Katherine more than a machine." The illustrations create a backdrop of mathematical equations giving us a window into Katherine's complex and active brain.



***Just Like Beverly***  
by Vicki Conrad; illus. David Hohn (Grades K-4)

This picture book biography is filled with interesting tidbits and stories of the iconic author Beverly Cleary growing up in Oregon and how she became inspired to read and then write books. The illustrations are equally wonderful and completely suited to the story, with the illustrator capturing the facial expressions and action along the way. An encouraging story for a budding writer!



# CHAPTER BOOKS & MIDDLE GRADE NOVELS



***Nina Soni, Former Best Friend***  
by Kashmira Sheth;  
illus. by Jenn Kocsmiersky (Grades 2-5)

The first in a new chapter book series introduces readers to Nina, an Indian-American girl, her family and friends. Nina loves making lists to keep track of everything going on in her life, but she forgot to include one important thing: her school project. With just one weekend left to complete the project, Nina must also prepare for her younger sister's birthday party and find a way to make things up to her best friend Jay, after she accidentally ruined his art project. *Nina Soni* features Hindi words and their definitions, and blends STEM elements as well as clever ways to include real math problems. Young readers will love and relate to Nina.

***A Field Guide to Getting Lost***  
by Joy McCollough (Grades 3-6)

Sutton is a coder who loves facts, and Luis is a fiction writer who loves fantasy and sci-fi. Do they have anything in common? One thing, at least – their parents are dating each other, and both Sutton and Luis are a little uncomfortable about it. After a first family date to a museum doesn't go according to plan, they try a hike in Discovery Park instead. After Luis and Sutton enter a tunnel and are separated from their parents, they must face the challenge of being lost together. Can they use open-mindedness, kindness and their individual talents to find their way home?



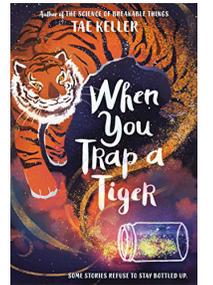
***Here in The Real World***  
by Sara Pennypacker (Grades 3-7)

Through the summer Ware and Jolene turn an abandoned lot into a fantasy world, with the ruins of a church becoming his castle and the yard her garden. The lot is threatened when the city planners put it up for auction. Ware thinks he can save the lot that has become their refuge, but Jolene says he lives in "magic fairness land" and dismisses his plans. She gives up hope, but he still wants to be a hero and makes a beautiful gesture to help his friend. As Ware says, "Bad stuff happens. But the real world is also all the things we do about the bad stuff."



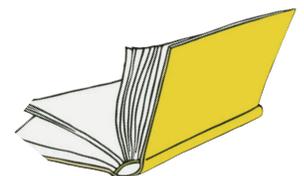
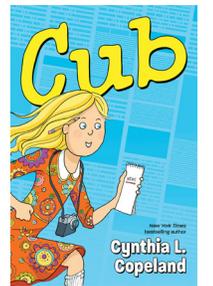
***When You Trap a Tiger***  
by Tae Keller (Grades 3-7)

This story is about two sisters who, with their mother, reluctantly move to their elderly grandmother's home to care for her. When they realize she is dying, each tries desperately to save her. The book's general theme is familial love and the universal struggle to know and tell your own story. This book is great for those who enjoy problem solving with a touch of mysticism.

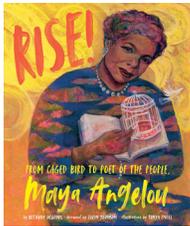


***Cub***  
by Cynthia L. Copeland (Grades 3-7)

This autobiographical graphic novel takes readers into Cindy's world as a tween growing up in the 70's. An aspiring writer and artist, Cindy's teacher connects her with a local journalist who mentors her as she becomes a cub reporter for a regional paper, which is focused on subjects that might be familiar with kids today: bullying, a nation in conflict, women's rights and environmental issues. Kids will appreciate the ability to identify with this story on many levels and get a little taste of the changing times that were the 70's. Adults will get a chuckle, too, as they reminisce on the era.



# CHAPTER BOOKS & MIDDLE GRADE NOVELS



**Rise! From Caged Bird to Poet of the People, Maya Angelou**  
by Bethany Hegedus;  
illus. by Tonya Engel (Grades 4-6)

Colin Johnson writes a moving forward to this amazing tribute to his grandmother, Maya Angelou. He shares that she came to believe, "My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor and some style." Wise words to guide us all. Bethany Hegedus uses the power of words to honor the wordsmith herself as she describes her life story. "Her heart aches to survive; her mind whispers to itself as she reads and reads and reads. Books offer solace. Books offer safety." May this book offer a bit of each for our readers.



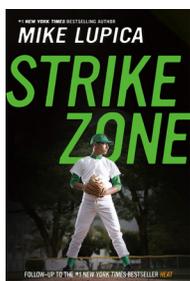
**Greetings from Witness Protection**  
by Jake Burt (Grades 4-7)

Nikki Demere, the protagonist in this highly-engaging story, will win readers over pretty quickly. She is funny and sharp witted and kind to the core. After bouncing from foster home to foster home, Nikki finds herself back at the "center" where she has some friends and a few familiar faces that provide some comfort. But when U.S. Marshalls show up with a big ask, Nikki finds herself on a mission both dangerous and meaningful. This is a uniquely fun and intriguing story that will have you in stitches one minute and with your jaw dropping the next.



**A Home for Goddesses and Dogs**  
by Leslie Connor (Grades 5-6)

After her mom dies, Lydia moves to a farm with her aunt and her wife and an elderly landlord. In their company, she deals with the loss of her mother and with her father's absence. The themes of love and loss, kindness and trust are explored as Lydia finds unexpected support from a new family, new friends and a dog. The great writing, charming characters and authentic conflicts make this a great read.



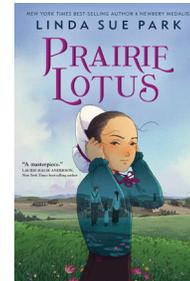
**Strike Zone**  
by Mike Lupica (Grades 5-6)

Nick, a 12-year-old baseball pitcher, lives near Yankee Stadium and dreams of becoming his summer league MVP. If he does, he will get to pitch in Yankee Stadium and meet his hero. His other dreams are of a cure for his sister's disease and avoiding problems with his family's immigration status. Lots of baseball action will appeal to sports fans.

**Prairie Lotus**

by Linda Sue Park (Grades 5-7)

When she and her father move to a new town in the Midwest, Hanna hopes to be able to finish her schooling and help her dad in his mercantile. Her real dream is to become a dressmaker like her mother had been, but she must convince her father she is capable. Because she is half Chinese, she has to deal with prejudice in this newly-established prairie town. Her strength and sense of justice help her to persevere when things seem unfair. If you like *Little House* books, this gives that setting a new perspective.



**Snapdragon**

by Kat Leyh (Grades 5-9)

When the town witch turns out to be a croc-clad old lady who sells roadkill skeletons on the Internet, Snap is less disappointed than she is intrigued. Jacks agrees to help Snap care for the baby opossums she saves. In exchange, Snap will help Jacks with her work. As they get to know each other, Snap discovers maybe there is some truth to the rumors about Jacks and also a connection to Snap's own family. A heartfelt story of people, young and old, finding their place in a world that expects them to fit into a certain mold.



**The Kingdom of Back**

by Marie Lu (Grades 7 and up)

Everyone in the modern Western world has heard of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but barely anyone has heard of his older sister Nannerl. Even though Nannerl is just as much a child prodigy as Wolfgang, she is unable to write her own compositions or play music as a career, just because she's female. Nannerl hates it; she wants to be remembered for her talent just like her brother. When a strange boy arrives and offers to help Nannerl get what she wants, she must enter an entirely new realm, one of upside-down trees, music in the air, and a sad history she is far closer to than she ever imagined.

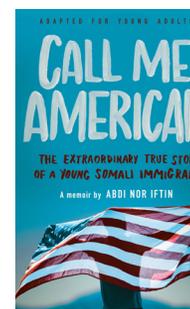


**Call Me American:**

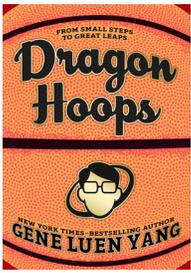
**The Extraordinary Story of a Young Somali Immigrant**

by Abdi Nor Iftin (Grades 7 and up)

Adapted for young adults from his adult memoir *Call Me American*, Abdi shares the courageous tale of escaping from his war-torn home of Mogadishu to Kenya and finally, America, where he dreamed of living as a child. Now a resident of Maine, Abdi's story is one of hope and perseverance towards building a bright future – themes that can resonate with young adults of all backgrounds. Available June 16.



# YOUNG ADULTS



## *Dragon Hoops*

by Gene Luen Yang (Grades 8 and up)

This graphic novel succeeds on so many levels because of its multi-faceted approach to basketball, from focusing on Yang's own experience learning more about his local high school basketball team to delving into the team's history, the sport's history, the players' own stories, and how the small but courageous steps of many led the Dragons to the California State Championships. Yang's art yanks readers through the book's colorful panels and he captures both the finesse and frenzy of basketball so well, it's easy to feel that you're at the game, sitting in the bleachers, ready to cheer on your home team.

## *The Art of Dumpster Diving*

by Jennifer Anne Moses (Grades 9 and up)

This first-person account of how quickly a teenager's life can change, and the consequences, is excellent if not uplifting. James lives with his little brother Danny, his first cousin Lila, and his parents and grandmother. Lila leaves home, and his parents and grandmother soon die, leaving James and Danny alone in the family home, trying to find a way to stay together and out of foster care. The rest of the book describes what it's like trying to feed themselves, stay together, and deal with life without any real adult guidance.

## *Lucky Caller*

by Emma Mills (Grades 9 and up)

This young adult novel tells the story of a group of seniors in high school who are teamed up in a radio broadcasting class to produce a radio show for the semester. They are an unlikely group to be friends in the beginning but the team develops a good working relationship with beneficial consequences. There are several good themes in the book (acceptance, team building, and relationships).

## *The Strange Fascinations of Noah Hypnotik*

by David Arnold (Grades 9 and up)

A book for those who revel in cultural references, *Noah Hypnotik* is both fascinating and bizarre. It's a story of friendship and testing the bonds that hold them together. Noah's friend group is one I'd want to be a part of. They "get" each other when they're in sync. But when fear impedes decision making they get out of sync. This is a laugh-out-loud kind of story that has you, at moments, nodding along!

## *Three Things I Know Are True*

by Betty Culley (Grades 9 and up)

This debut novel written in verse (don't shy away, as it is done very well) by Maine author Betty Culley is full of complex and rich characters. Written from the perspective of the younger sister of a teen boy who accidentally shot himself and now can't, talk, walk, or take care of himself, Culley explores gun violence with grace. She tackles a really hot and contentious issue but manages to provoke thought without raising ire politically, not an easy task. As the reader you get a window into the lives of those involved in a tragedy and how the impact of an altered reality can shift attitudes and beliefs. This is a brilliant book.

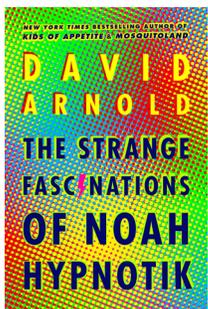
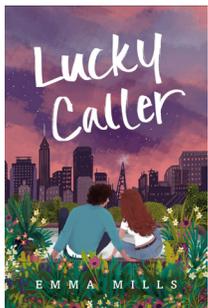
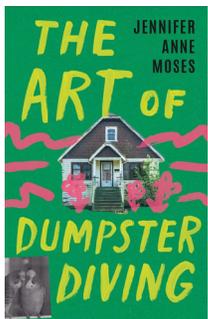
## *Most Likely*

by Sarah Watson (Grades 10 and up)

It's inauguration day in the year 2049 and one of four best friends – Ava, CJ, Jordan or Martha – is being sworn in as the President of the United States. But who will it be? This sweet novel focuses on the girls' friendship during their senior year of high school in 2019 with a little mystery thrown in as the reader searches for clues on which of these four bright and strong-willed girls will one day become president. Female friendship and figuring out one's place in life are the primary themes here. Cinematic in its storytelling, *Most Likely* could easily be written as a teen movie and it might just become one, since Watson is a veteran television producer and writer. Don't miss this fun, engaging read.

## Volunteer Readers

Jenna Beaulieu  
David Evans  
Ruth Feldman  
Melissa Haas  
Susan Harris  
Lisa Herrington  
Mary Highberger  
Alison Johnson  
Beverly Lamoureux  
Taylor Mace



To become a volunteer reader, contact us at  
[info@islandreadersandwriters.org](mailto:info@islandreadersandwriters.org)