Read for a Lifetime 2012-2013 Booklist

Across the Universe
Beth Revis
416 pages
As the spaceship Godspeed travels toward a new earth, the lives of 100 cryogenically frozen settlers hang in the balance after someone endeavors to quietly murder them. The other passengers aboard the ship have never known life outside its walls and are enslaved by the machinations of Eldest, their tyrannical leader, who divides them into three distinct classes. When Amy, a frozen settler from earth, survives being thawed in a murder attempt, she immediately bonds with Elder, Godspeed's lone teen and future leader. Amy's individuality, her rebellion, and her fierce desire for freedom, inspire Elder to act on his own doubts and defy Eldest--his mentor and keeper--with shocking results.

Angela's Ashes
Frank McCourt
368 pages
Having waited 40 years to tell his story, Frank McCourt doesn't pull any punches in his account of growing up dirt poor in Limerick, Ireland. Having immigrated to America earlier in life, McCourt's family returned to Ireland after his sister died in Brooklyn. It is there that things turn from bad to worse. According to McCourt, there is nothing worse than Irish Catholic poverty: his family moves to a row house in Limerick that is located next to the street's lavatory. Covering the ages spanning three to 19, Angela's Ashes is the story of Frank McCourt's struggle to escape from poverty and a tale of Ireland still seemingly in the dark ages. Barred from the good schools because of his class, teeth falling out from malnutrition, and facing life with a shiftless alcoholic father, McCourt nevertheless survives on his wits and manages to return to America to start his life over.

Art of Racing In The Rain, The
Garth Stein
336 pages
If you've ever wondered what your dog is thinking, Stein's third novel offers an answer. Enzo is a lab terrier mix plucked from a farm outside Seattle to ride shotgun with race car driver Denny Swift as he pursues success on the track and off. Denny meets and marries Eve, has a daughter, Zoë, and risks his savings and his life to make it on the professional racing circuit. Enzo, frustrated by his inability to speak and his lack of opposable thumbs, watches Denny's old racing videos, coins koanlike aphorisms that apply to both driving and life, and hopes for the day when his life as a dog will be over and he can be reborn a man. When Denny hits an extended rough patch, Enzo remains his most steadfast if silent supporter.

Before I Die
Jenny Downham
336 pages
Tessa has just months to live. Fighting back against hospital visits, endless tests, drugs with excruciating side-effects, Tessa compiles a list. It's her To Do Before I Die list. And number one is Sex. Released from the constraints of 'normal' life, Tessa tastes new experiences to make her feel alive while her failing body struggles to keep up. Tessa's feelings, her relationships with her father and brother, her estranged mother, her best friend, and her new boyfriend, all are painfully crystallized in the precious weeks before Tessa's time finally runs out.

Beneath a Meth Moon
Jacqueline Woodson
192 pages
Laurel Daneau has moved on to a new life, in a new town, but inside she's still reeling from the loss of her beloved mother and grandmother after Hurricane Katrina washed away their home. Laurel's new life is going well, with a new best friend, a place on the cheerleading squad and T-Boom, co-captain of the basketball team, for a boyfriend. Yet Laurel is haunted by voices and memories from her past. When T-Boom introduces Laurel to meth, she immediately falls under its spell, loving the way it erases, even if only briefly, her past. But as she becomes alienated from her friends and family, she becomes a shell of her former self, and longs to be whole again. With help from an artist named Moses and her friend Kaylee, she's able to begin to rewrite her story and start to move on from her addiction.

Between Shades of Gray
Ruta Sepetys
344 pages
Lina is just like any other fifteen-year-old Lithuanian girl in 1941. She paints, she draws, she gets crushes on boys. Until one night when Soviet officers barge into her home, tearing her family from the comfortable life they've known. Separated from her father, forced onto a crowded and dirty train car, Lina, her mother, and her young brother slowly make their way north, crossing the Arctic Circle, to a work camp in the coldest reaches of Siberia. Here they are forced, under Stalin's orders, to dig for beets and fight for their lives under the cruelest of conditions. Lina finds solace in her art, meticulously-and at great risk-documenting events by drawing, hoping these messages will make their way to her father's prison camp to let him know they are still alive. It is a long and harrowing journey, spanning years and covering 6,500 miles, but it is through incredible strength, love, and hope that Lina ultimately survives.
It began with the best of intentions. Worried about the effects of alcohol on American families, mothers and civic leaders started a movement to outlaw drinking in public places. Over time, their protests, petitions, and activism paid off—when a Constitutional Amendment banning the sale and consumption of alcohol was ratified, it was hailed as the end of public drunkenness, alcoholism, and a host of other social ills related to booze. Instead, it began a decade of lawlessness, when children smuggled (and drank) illegal alcohol, the most upright citizens casually broke the law, and a host of notorious gangsters entered the public eye. Filled with period art and photographs, anecdotes, and portraits of unique characters from the era, this fascinating book looks at the rise and fall of the disastrous social experiment known as Prohibition.

Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition   160 pages   Karen Blumenthal

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**Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children**

A mysterious island. An abandoned orphanage. A strange collection of very curious photographs. It all waits to be discovered in *Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children*, an unforgettable novel that mixes fiction and photography in a thrilling reading experience. As our story opens, a horrific family tragedy sets sixteen-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children. As Jacob explores its abandoned bedrooms and hallways, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. They may have been dangerous. They may have been quarantined on a deserted island for good reason. And somehow—impossible though it seems—they may still be alive.

**Night Circus, The**

The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. Within the black-and-white striped canvas tents is an utterly unique experience full of breathtaking amazements. It is called *Le Cirque des Rêves*, and it is only open at night. But behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway—a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. Unbeknownst to them, this is a game in which only one can be left standing, and the circus is but the stage for a remarkable battle of imagination and will. Despite themselves, however, Celia and Marco tumble headfirst into love—a deep, magical love that makes the lights flicker and the room grow warm whenever they so much as brush hands. True love or not, the game must play out, and the fates of everyone involved, from the cast of extraordinary circus performers to the patrons, hang in the balance, suspended as precariously as the daring acrobats overhead.

**Paper Covers Rock**

At the beginning of his junior year at a boys’ boarding school, 16-year-old Alex is devastated when he fails to save a drowning friend. When questioned, Alex and his friend Glenn, who was also at the river, begin weaving their web of lies. Plagued by guilt, Alex takes refuge in the library, telling his tale in a journal he hides behind *Moby-Dick*. Caught in the web with Alex and Glenn is their English teacher, Miss Dovecott, fresh out of Princeton, who suspects there’s more to what happened at the river when she perceives guilt in Alex’s writing for class. She also sees poetic talent in Alex, which she encourages. As Alex responds to her attention, he discovers his true voice, one that goes against the boarding school bravado that Glenn embraces. When Glenn becomes convinced that Miss Dovecott is out to get them, Alex must choose between them.

**Perfect**

Everyone has something, someone, somewhere else that they’d rather be. For four high-school seniors, their goals of perfection are just as different as the paths they take to get there. Cara’s parents’ unrealistic expectations have already sent her twin brother Conner spiraling toward suicide. For her, perfect means rejecting their ideals to take a chance on a new kind of love. Kendra covets the perfect face and body—no matter what surgeries and drugs she needs to get there. To score his perfect home run—on the field and off—Sean will sacrifice more than he can ever win back. And Andre realizes that to follow his heart and achieve his perfect performance, he’ll be living a life his ancestors would never have understood. Everyone wants to be perfect, but when perfection loses its meaning, how far will you go? What would you give up to be perfect?

**Pick-up Game: A Full Day of Full Court**

It’s one steamy July day at the West 4th Street Court in NYC, otherwise known as The Cage. Hotshot ESPN is wooing the scouts, Boo is struggling to guard the weird new guy named Waco, a Spike Lee wannabe has video rolling, and virgin Irene is sizing up six-foot-eight-and-a-half-inch Chester. Nine of YA literature’s top writers, including Walter Dean Myers, Rita Williams-Garcia, Adam Rapp, Joseph Bruchac, and Sharon Flake reveal how it all goes down in a searing collection of short stories, in which each one picks up where the previous one ends. Characters weave in and out of narratives, perspectives change, and emotions play out for a fluid and fast-paced ode to the game.

**Playing With the Enemy**

15-year-old Gene Moore was a farm boy living with his family in Sesser, Illinois. When he wasn’t in school or helping his Pop with chores on the farm, Gene was playing baseball with the guys on the town team. Some were twice his age. The older fellows didn’t mind having the Moore kid on their team because he could hit the ball farther than anyone else, he was the best catcher anyone had ever seen, he could throw men out from his knees, and not a ball ever got past him and could hit the ball a country mile. Headed for baseball stardom with the Brooklyn Dodgers, Gene’s destiny was interrupted by Pearl Harbor. After playing ball for the Navy in the Azores and North Africa, Gene and his team were sent to the States for a special-and top secret-mission: guarding German sailors captured from U-505. Unable to field a team, Gene convinced his commander to allow him to teach the enemy how to play baseball while he and his teammates waited for the war to end so they could be called up into the Major Leagues. But Gene’s future changed irrevocably in Louisiana. Inspired by true events, Playing with the Enemy, written by Gene’s son Gary Moore, is the riveting story of a depression-era youth and his brush with destiny.
Prayer for Owen Meany, A  
543 pages  
John Irving

In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys—who are best friends—are playing in a Little League baseball game in Gravesend, New Hampshire. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy’s mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn’t believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God’s instrument. What happens to Owen, after that 1953 foul ball, is extraordinary and terrifying.

Running Dream, The  
352 pages  
Wendelin Van Draanen

Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She’s not comforted by the news that she’ll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? As she struggles to cope with crutches and a first cyborg-like prosthetic, Jessica feels oddly both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don’t know what to say, act like she’s not there. Which she could handle better if she weren’t now keenly aware that she’d done the same thing herself to a girl with CP named Rosa. A girl who is going to tutor her through all the math she’s missed. A girl who sees right into the heart of her. With the support of family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may actually be able to run again. But that’s not enough for her now. She doesn’t just want to cross finish lines herself—she wants to take Rosa with her.

Scorpio Races  
416 pages  
Maggie Stiefvater

It happens at the start of every November: the Scorpio Races. Riders attempt to keep hold of their water horses long enough to make it to the finish line. Some riders live, others die. At age nineteen, Sean Kendrick is the returning champion. He is a young man of few words, and if he has any fears, he keeps them buried deep, where no one else can see them. Puck Connolly is different. She never meant to ride in the Scorpio Races. But fate hasn’t given her much of a choice. So she enters the competition - the first girl ever to do so. She is in no way prepared for what is going to happen.

Unwind  
352 pages  
Neal Shusterman

In America after the Second Civil War, the Pro-Choice and Pro-Life armies came to an agreement: The Bill of Life states that human life may not be touched from the moment of conception until a child reaches the age of thirteen. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, however, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called “unwinding.” Unwinding ensures that the child’s life doesn’t “technically” end by transplanting all the organs in the child’s body to various recipients. Now a common and accepted practice in society, troublesome or unwanted teens are able to easily be unwound. With breath-taking suspense, this book follows three teens who all become runaway Unwinds: Connor, a rebel whose parents have ordered his unwinding; Risa, a ward of the state who is to be unwound due to cost-cutting; and Lev, his parents’ tenth child whose unwinding has been planned since birth as a religious tithe.

Where Things Come Back  
240 pages  
John Corey Whaley

Just when seventeen-year-old Cullen Witter thinks he understands everything about his small and painfully dull Arkansas town, it all disappears. In the summer before Cullen’s senior year, a nominally-depressed birdwatcher named John Barling thinks he spots a species of woodpecker thought to be extinct since the 1940s in Lily, Arkansas. His rediscovery of the so-called Lazarus Woodpecker sparks a flurry of press and woodpecker-mania. Soon all the kids are getting woodpecker haircuts and everyone’s eating “Lazarus burgers.” But as absurd as the town’s carnival atmosphere has become, nothing is more startling than the realization that Cullen’s sensitive, gifted fifteen-year-old brother Gabriel has suddenly and inexplicably disappeared. While Cullen navigates his way through a summer of finding and losing love, holding his fragile family together, and muddling his way into adulthood, a young missionary in Africa, who has lost his faith, is searching for any semblance of meaning wherever he can find it. As distant as the two stories seem at the start, they are thoughtfully woven ever closer together and through masterful plotting, brought face to face in a surprising and harrowing climax.

Why We Broke Up  
368 pages  
Daniel Handler

Min Green and Ed Slaterton are breaking up, so Min is writing Ed a letter and giving him a box. Inside the box is why they broke up. Two bottle caps, a movie ticket, a folded note, a box of matches, a protractor, books, a toy truck, a pair of ugly earrings, a comb from a motel room, and every other item collected over the course of a giddy, intimate, heartbreaking relationship. Item after item is illustrated and accounted for, and then the box, like a girlfriend, will be dumped.