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LIS 527

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Annotated Bibliography: Young Adult Literature

Almond, David. (1996). *Skellig*. New York, NY: Putnam & Grosset.

Modern Fantasy, Ages 9-12. Michael and his family move into a dilapidated house that his parents have visions of remodeling into the perfect family home. His mother goes into labor early and has his baby sister before her due date. She is very sick and spends a lot of time in the hospital. Michael is left with his father. In the meantime, Michael explores the broken down garage where he finds a man living there. A cross between a bird and man, he begins to form a friendship with the man. Seeking out additional help with the man, he shares his secret with a new neighborhood friend Mina. They work together to move the man to a safer location where he shares his extraordinary secret with them. This coming of age story is about conquering your fears, building relationships, and seeing the world in a different light.

Alvarez, Julia. (2001). *How Tia Lola came to visit* stay. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Multicultural, Ages 10-14. Change is the keyword for Miguel as he enters his tenth year. His parents are getting divorced and his mom decides to move him and his sister to a small town in Vermont from the bustle of New York City. To help with the transition, she invites Tia Lola to visit. Having never met their Aunt Lola before, she comes in with a whirlwind

of Dominican Republic flair and adds color and culture into their small town Vermont lives. Everyone who meets Tia Lola is enchanted with her personal flair for life, silly antics, and the ability to make everyone smile.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. (2009). *Speak*. New York, NY: Farrar.

Reality Fiction, Ages 14-18. Melinda is a typical teenage outcast at her high school. She made the mistake of calling the cops on a party at the end of summer and it has now followed her into the school year. She shuts down and then it seems like everyone is trying to get her to speak her mind and share. Friendless and looking for her place, Melinda slowly begins to recognize who she is and how to find her voice. She realizes that she must be brave and speak up for herself and any other people that might have been hurt in the same way she was on that horrible night last summer.

Appelt, Kathi. (2002). *Poetry from homeroom: A writer's place to start*. New York, NY: Holt.

Poetry, Ages 12-18. This unique book of poetry about adolescence is written in two parts called "Homeroom" and "Study Hall". The first is a set of twenty mainly free verse poems about the ups and downs of being a young person in today's society. The second half is a mirror to what the author was thinking about during the creative process of writing the poem. The reflection also includes exercises and ideas for young writers to develop their craft. Insightfully written, it is sure to light a spark of creative wordplay for young writers with her practical advice and thought provoking questions.

Creech, Sharon. (2007). *Replay*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Plays, Ages 11-15. Leo finds himself daydreaming or replaying most of the events that happen in his daily life to get away from the noisy crowd of siblings and teasing at home. His family calls him “fog boy” because he is always somewhere else in his mind. He creates little escapes from his everyday world where he doesn’t feel special or appreciated. He finds an autobiography written by his father when he was about the same age as himself and reflects on how much people change. Leo is cast in the school play and anxious to see how it, as well as his own life unfolds.

Fleming, Candace. (2011). *Amelia lost: The life and disappearance of Amelia Earhart*. New York, NY: Schwartz & Wade.

Biography, Ages 9-14. Many books have been written about the disappearance of Amelia Earhart, however Fleming takes it to a new level with tons of photographs, stories and handwritten notes in this biography about one of the most famous women in aviation history. The writer’s writing structure takes you back and forth through time with each chapter flipping from the events of the fateful flight to endearing stories of her upbringing. The author is keen on letting the reader understand how the challenges Earhart faced growing up shaped her into the woman that she became. Simple facts are woven into a wonderful story that allows the reader to decide for themselves what exactly did happen to Earhart during her fateful journey.

Selznak, Brian. (2011). *Wonderstruck*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Historical Fiction, Ages 12-15. In this book, parallel stories are told from two main characters, set in two different times and told in two different ways. Rose lives in the 1920s and is obsessed with scrapbooking the life of her favorite silent movie star and tells her story through pictures. Ben lives in the 1970s and tells his story of his search for his father after his mother dies through words. This tale follows two young adults on a mission to find meaning in their lives in this uniquely structured novel. Themes of family, friendship and a longing to fit in ring true in this work. Fans of New York City will appreciate the hat tip to discovering the city as these two stories cross paths decades apart.

Turner, Pamela. (2009). *The frog scientist*. New York, NY: Houghton.

Informational, Ages 11-14. This is one of the many books in the “Scientists in the Field” series. This selection chronicles the studies of amphibian scientist, Tyrone Hayes. Hayes not only loves to collect frogs but has noticed there is a decline around the world and frogs are dying. He wants to figure out why. Hayes takes readers through the scientific method as he researches the frog decline. There is also personal reflection on how he became interested in science and studying frogs. The text coupled with the amazing photos gives the reader a very balanced idea of what is going on in the story and also adds to understanding the different characteristics of a variety of frogs. The information about the frogs and the global crisis of their declining populations is factually accurate and presented in a way that it makes a difficult topic very easy to understand.

Westerfeld, Scott. (2005). *Uglies*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Science Fiction, Ages 12-18. Sixteen year old Tally lives in a futuristic, dystopian society. This upcoming birthday is the magical age where all of the girls undergo intensive plastic surgery to turn their genetically given “ugly” appearance into something society would deem more “pretty”. All set and excited for her surgery, Tally meets a new girl, Shay, who introduces her to another house of thought on what it means to be beautiful. Shay is going against the grain and refuses the surgery to become “pretty” and runs away to avoid the forced surgery. Before leaving, she leaves Tally a set of cryptic directions and if she wants to come too, she must crack the code. Tally is given a set of choices in this book to explore and discover what her own definitions of “pretty” and “ugly” are and she discovers who she is too.

Woodson, Jacqueline. (2007). *Feathers*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam’s Sons.

Multicultural, Ages (10-14). It’s 1971 and 11-year old Frannie and her family live on the “other” side of the tracks. When a boy moves into her school who calls himself “Jesus”, she doesn’t know what to make of his light skin and long hair that is not dark like hers. Change is abundant in Frannie’s life. In addition to the regular growing pains of life, her mom is pregnant and her father is not always around. Her deaf brother is being chastised by the girls at school and constantly thinking of ways to build bridges and get out of his repressive life. Pressure from her best friend to find Jesus and get saved is only confusing Frannie more. The overlying theme of home symbolized with the feather floats in and out of the

story as the characters develop their own beliefs, questions and friendships. Family relationships and racism are also key themes to the development of this story.