

Worlds of Words 2026

Grade 6-8 Recommended Global Fiction

Theme	Global Fiction	Level Info	Genre Date	Global Context	Themes/Plot of Global Books
Strength through Relationship	<i>Burn My Heart</i> , Beverley Naidoo	740 L 209 pp	HF 2008	Kenya 1950s	The Mau Mau rebel against unjust British rule, creating tension for two boys whose friendship cuts across racial lines.
	<i>Dragonfly Eyes</i> , Wenxuan Cao	375 pp RL 6.0	HF 2022	China Tr 20 th C	Decades of tumultuous Chinese history through the history of one family, including the Cultural Revolution and the Japanese invasion. Revolves around a grandmother and her granddaughter who move from wealth to poverty and scorn.
	<i>The Enemy's Daughter</i> , Anne Blankman	281 pp 750 L	HF 2025	Ireland 1915, WWI	Two girls become friends even though their countries are enemies when Marta hides her German identity to survive.
	<i>The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle</i> , Victoria Williamson	RL 6.6 243 pp	RF 2018	Syria Scotland	Reema, a Syrian refugee, and a lonely neighbor find an injured fox and cubs, leading to friendship and a sense of belonging in difficult circumstances.
	<i>Hikaru in the Light</i> , Mai Matsuda. Dan Luffey, Tr.	192 pp	RF GN 2026	Japan Tr Manga	Hikaru dreams of becoming a pop star. She tries out for a pop star survival camp with a friend. 4 volumes
	<i>The Kaya Girl</i> , Mamie Wolo	325 pp RL 6.1	RF 2022	Ghana	Two girls from different worlds and social classes cross paths in chaotic Makola Market and forge a bond that changes the path of both of their lives.

	<i>Like a Charm</i> , Elle McNicoll	309 pp 670 L	FAN 2023	Scotland, UK	After her grandfather's death, a dyspraxic girl discovers a world of mystery and magic and she's the only one who can see it.
	<i>Like a Curse</i>	304 pp	FAN 2025		Ramya must learn to control her powers but is in a race against time to save a friend.
	<i>The Murderer's Ape</i> , Jakob Wegelius	870 L 588 pp	FAN 2017	Germany Tr	When her best friend is falsely accused of murder, a gorilla travels the seas to try and clear Henry's name. Dark truths and deep friendships. Batchelder Award.
	<i>*Nowhere Boy</i> , Katherine Marsh	810 L 362 pp	RF 2020	Belgium	In Brussels, a Syrian refugee and an American boy, both unwanted, learn what it means to be brave and have hope.
	<i>Of Salt and Shore</i> , Annet Schaap	352 pp	HF/FAN 2020	Dutch Tr	A girl uncovers a terrifying secret inside a house at the edge of the sea. Elements of <i>The Secret Garden</i> , <i>Beauty and the Beast</i> , and <i>Little Mermaid</i> in a historical fantasy thriller.
	<i>Okchundang Candy</i> , Jung-soon Go. Aerin Park, Tr	122 pp	GN RF 2025	Korea Tr	Growing up, Jung-soon spent every moment she could at her grandparents' house, but nothing stays the same.
	<i>A Pocketful of Stars</i> , Aisha Bushby	241 pp RL 6.2	RF/FAN 2023	UK Kuwait	When Safiya's mother falls into a coma, her dreams transport her to her mother's childhood in Kuwait as Safiya struggles to come to terms with their complicated relationship.
	<i>Skellig</i> , David Almond	490L (Y) 182 pp	RF/FAN 2000	UK	Michael retreats to the garage as he struggles to cope with his baby sister's illness and finds a mysterious stranger.
	<i>The Spindle of Fate</i> , Aimee Lim	294 pp	FAN Myth 2024	China	Evie discovers that her recently deceased mother was the head of a guild of magical weavers and enters Chinese netherworld to bring her back. Mother-daughter relationships, grief.
	<i>The Thing I'm Most Afraid Of</i> , Kristin Levine	321 pp	HF 2021	Vienna Bosnia/US 1993	Becca, who struggles with anxiety, visits her father in Vienna and learns she is not alone with her fears as she interacts with a Bosnian refugee and the son of her father's girlfriend.

	<i>Twin Cities</i> , Jose Pimienta	248 pp	GN/RF 2022	Mexico/US	Luis and Luisa are twins who learn about who they are and their relationships when they are sent to different middle schools, Luis to Mexico and Teresa across the border in California.
Forced Journeys	<i>Across So Many Seas</i> , Ruth Behar	258 pp	HF 2024	Spain Turkey Cuba, Miami	Spans 400 years to tell the stories of 4 girls from different generations of a Jewish family, many of whom are forced to leave their country and start a new life.
	<i>Adi of Boutanga</i> , Alain Dzotap & Marc Daniau	60 pp 690 L	RF 2025	Cameroon French Tr	When her uncle decides she is old enough to marry at 13, Adi's parents help her escape to a safe place to live and learn.
	<i>The Assassination of Brangwain Spurge</i> , M. T. Anderson, Eugene Yelchin	760 L 516 pp	FAN 2020	Fantasy Kingdom	Political saga of warring elf and goblin kingdoms leads to double-crosses and cultural misunderstandings with differing stories in prose and illustrations of opposing ideologies.
	<i>Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna</i> , Alda Dobbs	273 pp 730 L	HF 2021	Mexico 1913	A mestizo girl's perilous journey to cross the border and lead her family to safety after losing both parents during the Mexican Revolution. <i>The Other Side of the River</i> continues Petra's story in a refugee camp in Texas and then in San Antonio.
	<i>Beasts</i> , Ingvild Bjerkeland. Rosie Hedger, Tr.	120 pp	FAN 2025	Norway Tr	Dystopia in which society has collapsed, and terrifying creatures threaten anyone who survived. Abdi and his sister are on the run, hoping to find their father.
	<i>*Boy Everywhere</i> , A. M. Dassu	397 pp (Z)	RF 2020	Syria Damascus	Sami loves his life in Damascus, but a bombing leads his parents to decide they must flee for safety in the UK. Conveys anxiety and loss, along with pride and hope. Challenges stereotypes.
	<i>Catherine's War</i> by Julia Billet & Claire Fauvel	154 pp	HF/GN 2020	France Tr 1942 WWII	Rachel changes her name to hide her Jewish identity in a school outside Paris, taking photographs to document events as she moves around France to avoid capture. Includes info endnotes.

	<i>A Ceiling Made of Eggshells</i> , Gail Carson Levine	371 pp 670 L	HF 2021	Spain 1483-1492	Because life for Jews in Spain is precarious, Lorna travels with her grandfather to try and keep Jews safe but finally must flee the country.
	<i>Code Name Kingfisher</i> , Liz Kessler	329 pp	RF 2024	Netherlands	Liv discovers a chest of letters and mementos from her grandmother's childhood in 1942 and the tragic loss of a sister involved in the Dutch Resistance.
	<i>The Cricket War</i> , Tho Pham	160 pp 930 L	HF 2023	Vietnam 1980	Tho tries to be brave as he sets out on a boat without his family, who fear that the Communist army will take him to be soldier.
	<i>Endangered</i> , Eliot Schrefer	900 L 264 pp	RF 2012	Congo	Sophie visits her mother's animal sanctuary in the Congo. A dangerous conflict forces her to flee with a baby bonobo.
	<i>Threatened</i> , Eliot Schrefer	910 L 278 pp	RF 2015	Gabon	Luc, an orphan, becomes a chimp observer, thrust into an adventure when his mentor disappears, and he must survive.
	<i>Orphaned</i> , Eliot Schrefer	940 L 205 pp	FAN NV 2018	Great Rift Valley	An imagined encounter 600,000 years ago between a child and a gorilla family. Free verse in voice of a young female gorilla.
	<i>Escape from Syria</i> . Samya Kullab	96 pp	RF/GN 2020	Syria	Graphic novel that follows an ordinary family who become faceless refugees due to war.
	<i>*Everything Sad is Untrue: A True Story</i> , Daniel Nayeri	356 pp RL 6.2 800 L	RF/ Myth 2020	Iran/U.S.	Khosrou, known as Daniel in Oklahoma, tells his story in this meta-memoir, weaving in Persian myths and legends to the stories of fleeing Iran and living in a refugee camp. A story about the stories that define us.
	<i>The Freedom Seeker</i> , Ruchria Gupta	298 pp	RF 2025	India Mexico	Simi's life in India is filled with love until her parents' interfaith marriage leads to attack. Their search for safety leads them to the Mexico/US border and a brutal immigration system.

<i>The Great War: Stories Inspired by Items from the First World War</i> , David Almond	820 L 289 pp	HF 2015	Global WWI	Eleven writers draw on personal objects to tell short stories about experiences during World War I. Illustrations and photos of the objects with info on their history and authors' reasons for selecting them.
<i>Grenade</i> , Alan Gratz	760 L 270 pp	HF 2018	Okinawa WWII, 1945	Hideki is drafted by the Japanese army to kill American soldiers. Told in the voices of Ray and Hideki as their worlds collide.
<i>Growing Up Cuban: Rising Past Castro's Shadow</i> , Sonia Manzano	320 pp 620 L	HF 2022	Cuba 1959	The impact of the 1959 Cuban Revolution on the lives of 4 children from very different backgrounds who must redefine themselves.
<i>Illegal</i> , Eoin Colfer & Giovanni Rigano	122 pp	RF/GN 2018	Ghana to Europe	Ebo leaves his village in search of his brother, enduring a harrowing journey of loss and hope across the desert and sea.
<i>Journey to Tomoika</i> , Laurent Galandon, Michael Crouzat Tr	94 pp	FAN GN 2026	Japan French Tr	Two children who lost their parents in the Fukushima tsunami go into the forbidden zone to return their grandmother's ashes to her home, assisted by yokai spirits.
<i>Lion of the Sky</i> , Ritu Hemnani	410 pp	HF NV 2024	Pakistan India	Raj and his family are forced to flee their home as refugees after the British Partition of India, suffering devastating losses. Based on author's family history. Includes Muslim-Hindu friendship.
<i>Lost Girl Found</i> , Leah Bassoff	770L 212 pp	HF 2018	Sudan	When war comes to her village, Poni runs for her life and begins a long and dangerous trek to Kenya.
<i>*The Lost Year</i> , Katherine Marsh	354 pp RL 5.9	Rf/HF 2023	Ukraine/US 2020 & 1930s	Matthew is stuck at home due to COVID-19 and is forced to help his great-grandmother sort her boxes of memories. Gradually her life during a terrible famine in Soviet Ukraine unfolds.
<i>Meo and Be</i> , Doan Phuong Nguyen	389 pp 770 L	HF RL 6.0 2023	Vietnam War 1964	Be has a difficult life with her stepmother and finds herself in a locked underground bunker with other young women, who escape as bombs explode around them.

	<i>*The Night Diary</i> , Veera Hiranandani	700 L 264 pp	HF 2019	1947 India Pakistan	Nisha, forced to flee her home with her Hindu family during the partition of India, writes letters to her deceased Muslim mother. Search for home and identity. Award winner.
	<i>*Amil and the After</i>	244 pp	HF 2024	India	Nisha's brother Amil is struggling with trauma after the journey to their new home until Nisha suggests that he tell his story through drawings to cope with living in uncertain times.
	<i>Niños: Poems for the Lost Children of Chile</i> , María J. Ferrada & María E. Valdez	76 pp	Poetry COL 2021	Chile Tr	Collection explores the hopes of 34 children disappeared and killed during Pinochet's regime in Chile. One poem per child.
	<i>The Other Side of Tomorrow</i> , Tina Cho	224 pp	GN RF 2024	N. Korea	Two desperate friends undertake a perilous journey as they flee North Korea into China, fearing discovery and imprisonment.
	<i>The Partition Project</i> , Saadia Faruqi.	404 pp	RF 2024	Pakistan India, US	When her grandmother comes to live with them, Maha decides to document her experiences of the Partition of India and Pakistan for her journalism project.
	<i>*Refugee</i> , Alan Gratz	338 pp 800 L RL 6.1	HF/RF 2017	Germany 1930 Cuba 1994 Syria 2015	Parallel stories of 3 refugees from 3 countries and different time periods are intertwined to share their journeys of searching for refuge. Also available in a GN edition
	<i>Run for Your Life</i> , Jane Mitchell	251 pp	RF 2023	Ireland	Azar and her mother fled for their lives to Ireland and live in a bleak Direct Provision center, sharing a room with strangers and answering questions from authorities.
	<i>*Santiago's Road Home</i> , Alexandra Diaz	325 pp 740 L	RF 2021	Mexico to U.S.	Fleeing abusive relatives and extreme poverty in Mexico, Santiago faces many dangers, including being detained and imprisoned at the border.

	<i>*Soul Lanterns</i> , Shaw Kuzki	192 pp 850 L (Y)	HF 2021	Japan Tr 1970/1945 Hiroshima	When students in 1970 attend a Peace Memorial ceremony to remember the 1945 Hiroshima nuclear bombing, they decide to interview neighbors and family about their experiences and gather these stories in art, poems, and narratives. Loss/grief.
	<i>Son of a Gun</i> , Anne de Graaf	700L (Z) 125 pp	HF 2012	Liberia 1990s	Lucky and his sister and their classmates are kidnapped and forced to become child soldiers.
	<i>Stolen Girl</i> , Marsha G. Skrypuch	680 L RL 5.9 194 pp	HF 2020	Canada WWII, 1950	A Ukrainian girl kidnapped as a child and raised by a Nazi family is troubled by memories in her new life in Canada, unsure of her identity. Lida's sister.
	<i>Making Bombs for Hitler</i> , Marsha G. Skrypuch	760 L 230 pp	HF 2019	Germany WWII	Lida, a Ukrainian girl, is sent to a labor camp in Germany where she is forced to make bombs.
	<i>The War Below</i> , Marsha F. Skrypuch	240 pp RL 5.3	HF 2018	Ukraine WWII	Luka escapes from a German labor camp, joining the Ukrainian resistance fighting the Soviets and the Nazis and looking for Lida
	<i>Stones for My Father</i> , Trilby Kent	970L 170 pp	HF 2018	South Africa	When the British invade, Corlie is put into a cruel internment camp as a Boer and finds help from a Canadian soldier.
	<i>Sunny Days Inside and Other Stories</i> , Caroline Adderson	167 pp 710 L	RF 2021	Canada	Interconnected short stories of children in the same apartment building who must cope with strange new rules and extended time at home during the pandemic.
	<i>The Swallows' Flight</i> , Hilary McKay	271 pp	HF 2021	UK Germany 1927-1947	4 lives are changed due to WWII. The lives of 2 lonely girls in the UK who become friends and 2 best friends in Germany who are forced to become pilots intersect along with a stray dog.
	<i>Under the Broken Sky</i> , Mariko Nagai	870 L 293 pp	HF NV 2019	Manchuria China WWII	A Japanese family living in occupied Manchuria become refugees, searching for safety from the Soviet army and angry Chinese villagers. Oppression and survival.

	<i>Uprooted</i> , Ruth Chan	285 pp	RF GN 2024	Hong Kong Toronto	Ruth loves life in Toronto and feels lonely and uprooted when the family moves to Hong Kong, where her parents have ties.
	<i>We are Wolves</i> , Katrina Nannestad	294 pp	HF 2022	Germany Tr WWII	When the Russian army marches into East Prussia near the end of WWII, three children are separated from their mother as they flee and must do dangerous things to survive.
	<i>When the World was Ours</i> , Liz Kessler	337 pp 630 L	HF 2021	Austria WWII	The lives of 3 friends in Vienna take different paths in WWII. Elsa is transported to Auschwitz, Leo's father is imprisoned, and Max joins the Hitler Youth. Told in 3 alternating points of view.
	<i>The Wind Rises</i> , Timothee Fombelle	397 pp 730 L	HF 2022	France Tr 1786	Anna lives in an isolated valley in W. Africa but leaves to find her brother, facing the dangers of the slave trade. Joseph sneaks on a slave ship in Lisbon to hunt treasure. Adventure and trauma.
	<i>Wings to Soar</i> , Tina Athaide	352 pp	HF NV 2024	UK Uganda	Novel in verse about the hatred that Viva's Indian family faces in Britain when they are expelled from Uganda in 1972. Focus is on coping with racism and the separation of her family. See also <i>Orange for the Sunsets</i> about their experiences in Uganda.
	<i>World in Between</i> , Kenan Trebincevic	375 pp RL 5.7	RF 2021	Bosnia	Fictionalized memoir of Kenan who loves to draw and play soccer, until the Bosnian war ruins everything and his Muslim family must flee. Adaptation of adult novel.
Taking Action	<i>Akata Witch</i> , Nnedi Okorafor	590 L (Z) 349 pp	FAN 2017	Nigeria	An albino child of Nigerian parents learns she has magic powers that she and friends use to catch a serial killer. Her powers in the Leopard Society continue in <i>Akata Warrior</i> & <i>Akata Woman</i> .
	<i>Berani</i> , Michelle Kadarusman	211 pp	RF 2022	Indonesia	Wealthy Malia faces consequences for circulating an anti-palm oil petition, while Ali leaves his impoverished village to play chess but worries about the caged orangutan kept by his uncle.

	<i>The Boy Who Dared</i> , Susan Campbell Bartoletti	760L (Y) 202 pp	HF 2018	Germany WWII	A novel based on the true story of a boy who was imprisoned for distributing Anti-Nazi leaflets.
	<i>Borders</i> , Thomas King & Natasha Donovan	171 pp	RF/GN 2021	Canada/US Blackfoot	A family from a Blackfoot reservation in Alberta travels to the border. They become stuck unable to enter either the US or Canada when asked for their citizenship and reply "Blackfoot."
	<i>The Breadwinner</i> , Deborah Ellis	630L (Z) 170 pp	HF 2015	Afghanistan	Parvana disguises herself as a boy to earn money so that her family can survive after father's arrest.
	<i>My Name is Parvana</i> , Deborah Ellis	670L (Z) 201 pp	HF 2012		Parvana recounts the past four years of her life as she awaits military forces to determine her fate.
	<i>One More Mountain</i> Deborah Ellis	192 pp	RF 2022		Based on the 2021 take-over by the Taliban as Parvana and Shauzia flee to escape new dangers from an old enemy.
	<i>Burying the Moon</i> , Andre Poulin & Sonali Zohra	119 pp 620 L	RF 2021	India Tr	Illustrated novel in verse about an Indian girl who tackles the need for public toilets and the negative impact on females in her village who must wait until night to visit a field due to taboos.
	<i>Catch Me if I Fall</i> , Barry Jonsberg	258 pp RL 6.5	FAN 2023	Australia	In near future Australia ravaged by climate change, one of two twins begins to question their privilege and the role of AI.
	<i>Catherine Called Birdy</i> , Karen Cushman	1170L (X) 169 pp	HF 2018	UK Middle Ages	The daughter of an English knight keeps a journal to record the events of her life, longing for adventure beyond the usual role of women and trying to avoid being married off.
	<i>Global</i> , Eoin Colfer, Andrew Donkin, Giovanni Rigano	144 pp	GN/RF 2023	Bay of Bengal Canada	Alternating voices of boys tell the story of damage brought on by climate change in a fishing village along the Bay of Bengal and in a town in the North of Canada threatened by polar bears.

	<i>The Elephant Girl</i> , James Patterson and Ellen Banda-Aaku	261 pp	RF 2022	Kenya	A Maasai girl's bond with a baby elephant leads into the world of wildlife conservation when she suspects that the new wildlife ranger is working with poachers.
	<i>Fight Back</i> , A. M. Dassu	377 pp	RF 2022	UK	Aaliyah is attending a concert when a bomb goes off, leading to a rise in Islamophobia. As a Muslim, she and her friends from many backgrounds search for a way to combat racism.
	<i>Dawn Raid</i> , Pauline V. Smith	217 pp RL 5.1	HF 2021	New Zealand 1970s	Through diary entries, biracial Sofia writes about dawn raids and abuses of Pacific Islanders and the resistance movement of the Polynesian Panthers. Also Māori activism on land and language.
	<i>The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, Blue Death, and a Boy called Eel</i> , Deborah Hopkinson	660L (X) 249 pp	HF 2015	UK 1854	Eel and his best friend Florrie must help Dr. John Snow prove that cholera is spread through water in London.
	<i>Moongarden</i> , Michelle Barry – Plotting the Stars Book 1	361 pp RL 6.6	Sci Fi 2023	2448 Moon	Retelling of The Secret Garden. After plants turned toxic, people took to space. Under pressure at an elite school on the moon, Myra discovers a secret lab of plants and a secret garden. Trilogy
	<i>Music for Tigers</i> , Michelle Kadarusman	730 L 189 pp	RF 2020	Tasmania Australia	Louise, a violinist, is sent to spend the summer with Australian relatives and learns her family protects hidden "extinct" Tasmanian tigers. Strong conservation theme.
	<i>My Brigadista Year</i> , Katherine Paterson	RL 6.1 196 pp	HF 2019	Cuba 1961	A young teen volunteers for Fidel Castro's national literacy campaign in the countryside, finding herself as she teaches.
	<i>Nura and the Immortal Palace</i> , M.T. Khan	263 pp RL 6.5	FAN 2022	Pakistan	After a mine collapse, Nura goes through a portal to the opulent realm of jinn, searching for a way to find her missing friends and escape forced labor in the realm.

	<i>The Samosa Rebellion</i> , Shanthi Sekaran	341 pp	FAN 2021	India Pacific Island	A boy and his friends must rescue his Indian grandmother from a relocation camp in a fictional Pacific Island nation that has divided citizens into Butterflies, who have lived in Mariposa for 3 generations, and new immigrants, Moths, without rights.
	<i>Save Our Forest!</i> Nora Gasnes	229 pp	HF/GN 2024	Norway Tr	A Vietnamese Norwegian girl bands together with friends to save their forest from becoming a parking lot.
	<i>Seabird</i> , Michelle Kadarusman	199 pp	HF 2025	Indonesia 1892	A young noble girl is confined for an arranged marriage, but longs for freedom and to make decisions to shape her life.
	<i>Shadow on the Mountain</i> , Margi Preus	730L 290 pp	HF 2018	Norway WWII	During Nazi occupations, a teen joins the resistance movement, eventually becoming a spy.
	<i>Strong as Fire, Fierce as Flame</i> , Supriya Keikar	3314 pp (Z)	HF 2021	India 1957	As a child widow, Meera flees to escape death and finds safety as a servant in a British household, eventually joining the underground resistance to British colonizers.
	<i>Thirst</i> , Varsha Bajaj	179 pp 700 L	RF 2022	India	Minni lives in the poorest part of Mumbai with limited access to water that someone is stealing. The inequity becomes clear when she works in a high-rise where water is in abundance.
	<i>Threat of the Spider</i> , Michael Spradin	176 pp	HF 2022	Germany WWII	Ansel aspires to be a detective and so investigates when his father, who is anti-Nazi, disappears and Ansel is threatened by a Hitler Youth leader. See also, Web of the Spider.
	<i>Village of Scoundrels</i> , Margi Preus	RL 6.6 (Y) 305 pp	HF 2020	France WWII 1940s	An entire French village works together and takes great risks to shelter Jewish refugees and smuggle them to safety.
	<i>War of the Wind</i> , Victoria Williamson	228 pp	RF 2024	Scotland UK	On a remote island, a boy adjusting to losing his hearing takes action when a new wind farm conducts secret tests. Eco-thriller

	<i>Words Matter: The Story of Hans and Sophie Scholl</i> , Anita Pazner & S. Casson	72 pp	HF NV 2025	Germany WWII	Hans and Sophie led the White Rose Resistance, a student movement to write and distribute leaflets against the government's actions, leading to their execution.
Locating Self in the World	<i>Amal Unbound</i> , Aisha Saeed	RL 6.9 226 pp	RF 2020	Pakistan	Amal holds onto her dreams even after becoming an indentured servant to pay off her family's debt.
	<i>Omar Rising</i> , Aisha Saeed	216 pp	RF 2022	Pakistan	Companion novel of Amal's friend Omar who is treated as second-class when he gets a scholarship to an elite school.
	<i>Amber & Clay</i> , Laura Amy Schlitz	532 pp	HF/NV Myth 2021	Ancient Greece	An enslaved boy and a wealthy girl are linked together by the gods. Combines Greek history, mythology, and epic stories in a tale of friendship, creativity and being true to yourself. Includes Socrates and references to Homer. Greece as a slave society.
	<i>Auma's Long Run</i> , Eucabeth Odhiambo	297 pp 740 L	HF 2020	Kenya 1980s	When AIDS devastates Auma's village, she must choose between staying to help her family or working toward a track scholarship that will take her far from home.
	<i>Biggest Fake in the Universe</i> , Jordan Rundberg. E. Apelqvist Tr	174 pp	RF 2025	Sweden Tr	Mo pretends to be a skateboarder to impress a girl. He learns the meaning of being true to yourself after accidentally performing a difficult trick and setting up expectations.
	<i>Call Me Ali</i> , Wali Shah	256 pp	RF 2024	Pakistan Canada	Ali finds his voice by writing poetry about his crush, parental expectations, and the racism he faces as a Muslim immigrant.
	<i>Cross My Heart and Never Lie</i> , Nora Dasnes	239 pp	GN RF 2023	Norway Tr	Graphic diary in which Tuva struggles with feeling like she doesn't belong in middle school and her first crush on a girl.
	<i>Danilo Was Here</i> , Tamika Burgess	298 pp	HF 2025	Panama 1989	After the US military invasion of Panama, Danilo goes to CA to play baseball and find a way to save his family in a refugee camp

	<i>The Day the World Stopped Turning</i> , Michael Murpurgo	284 pp 900 L RL 8.3	HF 2020	France WWII	Lorenzo, an autistic boy, lives on the salt flats connected to nature and routine. When the Germans invade, everything in his life is threatened.
	<i>A Face Like Glass</i> , Frances Hardinge	487 pp 920 L	FAN 2017	UK	In an underground city, Neverfell's facial expressions are dangerous in a dark world of people with blank faces.
	<i>A Faraway Island</i> , Annika Thor	680 L (Y) 247 pp.	HF 2009	Sweden Tr WWII.	Two Jewish sisters are evacuated from Vienna to a remote Swedish island where they live with Christian foster families, struggling with identity and family. 4 book series.
	<i>Fever Crumb</i> , Phillip Reeve	1000 L 325 pp	FAN 2011	UK	Fever Crumb is raised as an engineer in future London, where women are not considered capable of rational thought. She learns about her past while facing danger to her world. Series.
	<i>Fly</i> , Alison Hughes	197 pp RL 7.3	NV/RF 2022	Canada	Felix, who has cerebral palsy, is captivated by the tales of Don Quixote and noble knighthood and embarks on a quest to save a classmate from a school bully.
	<i>Heart of a Samurai</i> , Margi Preus	301 pp	HF 2012	Japan 1841	A Japanese boy rescued by an American whaler becomes the first Japanese person to set foot in the U.S., making his way back to Japan after many years, only to be imprisoned as an outsider.
	<i>How Do You Live?</i> Genzaburo Yoshino, Bruno Navasky, Tr.	280 pp 7.2 RL	HF 2021	Japan 1937	A Japanese classic, originally published in 1937, that is being animated by Hayao Miyazaki, about a boy who reflects with his uncle on life, history, and humanity.
	<i>Hurricane Child</i> , Kacen Callender	214 pp RL 6.0	RF/FAN 2019	U.S. Virgin Islands	Considered bad luck and rejected, Caroline falls in love with a girl and undertakes a dangerous journey. Magical realism.
	<i>Ida in the Middle</i> , Nora Lester Murad	223 pp	RF 2024	Palestine US	A magic olive transports a Palestinian American into the life she might have had in her parent's village as she explores identity.

	<i>Island of Whispers</i> , Frances Hardinge & Emily Gravett	107 pp	FAN 2024	UK	When his father is killed, Milo must take his place as the Ferryman and guide his father's spirit and other Dead on a dangerous journey, unsure of whether he wants this role.
	<i>The Midwife's Apprentice</i> , Karen Cushman	1240L (X) 122 pp	HF 2019	UK Medieval	In medieval England, a nameless homeless girl is taken in by a sharp tempered midwife and develops a sense of self.
	<i>Movies Showing Nowhere</i> , Yorick Goldewijk	247 pp	FAN 2024	Netherland Tr	An angry girl becomes a time travel assistant in movie theater that people back to specific moments in their lives.
	<i>Open Mic: Riffs on Life Between Cultures</i> , Mitali Perkins	810 L 129 pp	RF 2016	US/Global	Ten YA authors share their stories about growing up between cultures. Humor. Fiction/Nonfiction.
	<i>Pashmina</i> , Nidhi Chanani	161 pp	GN FAN 2017	India	Pri has many questions about her mother. A mysterious pashmina takes her to the India of movies, not the real India. Gender restrictions.
	<i>The Peach Thief</i> , Linda Joan Smith	274 pp	HF 2025	UK 1853	A starving orphan disguises herself as a boy to obtain work in an estate garden, searching for a sense of belonging.
	<i>Pearl</i> , Sherri L. Smith	132 pp	GN/HF 2024	Japan 1941	Amy, who lives in Hawai'i, is visiting family in Hiroshima. When Pearl Harbor occurs, she is trapped, struggling with loyalty.
	<i>Plain Jane and the Mermaid</i> , Vera Brosgol	351 pp	FAN GN 2024	UK	In an alternate Victoria-era fantasy that upends "The Little Mermaid," Jane goes into the depths of the ocean full of mermaids and toxic beauty to take control of her life.
	<i>What the Moon Saw</i> , Laura Resau	750 L 257 pp	RF 2008	Mexico	Clara visits her grandparents in Mexico, learning about her grandmother's life as a healer, her father's decision to leave home for the US, and her own place in the world.

	<i>Wild Bird</i> , Diane Zahler	308 pp	HF 2023	Norway/ Europe 14 th C	After the Black Plague destroys Rype's entire village, she journeys across Europe with the son of an English ship captain and a band of troubadours searching for a new home and future
Adventure and Survival	<i>Adrift</i> , Tanya Guerrero	344 pp RL 6.0	RF 2022	Philippines US	The resilience of two Filipina cousins is tested when one is lost at sea on a deserted island and the other remains at home, hoping her cousin is still alive. Survival and coping with grief.
	<i>*The Barren Grounds</i> , David Robertson	247 pp 680 L	FAN 2020	Canada Cree	Two Cree children are forced into a foster home in Winnipeg, finding a portal in an attic to frozen barren grounds. They must save Misewa, a starving community of animal beings, before winter. Misewa Saga series (6 books).
	<i>Dreamslinger</i> , Graci Kim.	289 pp	FAN 2025	Korea	Aria lives in a home for children with a genetic mutation that transports them to a powerful magical realm while they sleep. The magic is unpredictable, so she faces prejudice. Series opener
	<i>The Dreamweavers</i> , G. Z. Schmidt	261 pp RL 6.1	FAN 2021	China 1500s	In this historical fantasy set during the Ming dynasty, twin brothers set out to rescue their grandfather from a royal prison. Combines Chinese mythology and folklore with history.
	<i>*The Golden Compass</i> , Philip Pullman	930 L (Z) 399 pp	FAN 2004	UK	Lyla journeys from Oxford to the North on a quest to save kidnapped children and rescue her father. Trilogy.
	<i>La Belle Sauvage</i> , Philip Pullman	770 L 449 pp	FAN 2017	UK	New series, Book of Dust. First book focuses on Lyra's infancy, and Book 2, <i>The Secret Commonwealth</i> , takes place when Lyra is 20 so is positioned after the trilogy.
	<i>How to Free a Jinn</i> , Raidah Shah Idil	245 pp	FAN 2025	Malaysia	When Insyirah moves back to Malaysia to care for her grandmother, she discovers she has the power to control jinn.

	<i>Houses with a Story</i> , Seiji Yoshida	123 pp	FAN 2023	Japan Tr	More than 30 imagined houses and the people who make them offer unexpected worlds to explore. Each house has a story to tell. Lush illustrations and diagrams. Batchelder Award.
	<i>Last Gate of the Emperor</i> , Kwame Mbalia & Prince Joel David Makonnen	289 pp RL: 6.3	FAN 2021	Ethiopia	Ethiopian-inspired adventure about a boy involved with augmented-reality gaming who finds himself in a fight to save his world and uncover his past. Afro-futurist space romp.
	<i>The Lightening Dreamer</i> , Margarita Engle	1070 L 182 pp	HF/NV 2015	Cuba 1800s	Novel in verse in the voice of a book-loving writer, feminist and abolitionist who fought injustice and the oppression of slavery.
	<i>The Longest Night of Charlie Noon</i> , Christopher Edge	860 L 167 pp	HF 2020	UK 1933	Einstein's theory of relativity is integrated into a creepy, surreal tale of three kids lost in the woods, one of whom is the class bully. Plays with time. Historical thriller.
	<i>The Monsters of Rookhaven</i> , Padraig Kenny	319 pp RL 6.0 720 L	FAN 2021	UK 1940s	Two orphans break through a magic shield that keeps an extraordinary family of monsters safe from harm and leads to grave danger for all. Family, loss, empathy. Series
	<i>The Night Raven</i> , Johan Rundberg <i>The Queen of Thieves</i>	181 pp 195 pp	HF 2023 2024	Sweden Tr 1880	Mikia lives in an orphanage, where sinister events occur and everyone fears the serial killer, the Night Raven. Murder my Mika must solve the mystery of a string of thefts to keep her friends safe. Stockholm.
	<i>The Picture Visitors</i> , Christina Wolff	217 pp	FAN 2024	London German Tr	Vincent can jump into paintings, so when a painting is stolen, he joins forces to solve the mystery. Art history, detective agency.
	<i>The Shadow Prince</i> , David Anthony Durham	393 pp RL 5.8	FAN 2021	Egypt	In an alternate Egyptian universe, Ash must compete and survive to become the shadow protector of the prince. Trilogy. Solarpunk.

	<i>Refugee 87</i> , Ele Fountain	247 pp 720L (Y)	RF 2020	Enitrea	Shif and his friend are captured by soldiers who take boys as soldiers and are taken to prison in a remote desert.
Traditional Literature and Mythology	<i>City of the Plague God</i> , Sarwat Chadda	383 pp	FAN 2021	Mesopotamian mythology	Iraqi American Sikander teams up with the hero Gilgamesh to stop the ancient god of plagues from killing off Manhattan. Modern adventure based in Mesopotamian mythology. Sequel – <i>Fury of the Dragon Goddess</i> (2024)
	<i>Dragon Pearl</i> , Yoon Ha Lee <i>Tiger Honor</i>	310 pp 780 L	FAN 2019	Korean	A science fantasy combines sci fi with Korean mythology. Min is a fox-spirit who presents as a Korean girl and stows away on a spaceship to find her missing brother. <i>Tiger Honor</i> is a tiger spirit whose uncle hijacks a battle cruiser. Companion novel.
	<i>Fearless Girls, Wise Women & Beloved Sisters</i> , Kathleen Ragan	1060 L 450 pp	Trad Lit COL 2000	Global	100 folktales from different parts of the world that feature a heroine at the center of the story.
	<i>Gamayun Tales 1, The King of Birds</i> by Alexander Utkin	63 pp	Trad Lit GN COL 2018	Russia	Haunting graphic novel retellings of Slavic myths and folklore guided by Gamayun, a magical human-faced bird, with each tale nested in the next one. Bright colorful illustrations.
	<i>The Girl and the Ghost</i> , Hanna Alkaf	288 pp	FAN 2021	Malaysia	Based in Malaysian culture and myths on ghosts and death, a story of family, trauma, and friendship as a girl tries to survive.
	<i>The House of the Lost on the Cape</i> , Sachiko Kashiwaba & Y. Saito	204 pp RL 6.0	FAN 2023	Japan Tr	Modern and mythological worlds collide following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami as three lone people come together to deal with trauma and battle an ancient threat. Batchelder Honor
	<i>Japanese Yokai</i> , Fleur Daugey & S. Thommen	48 pp	Myth 2024	Japan French Tr	Explores the magic world of monsters, demons, and creatures who are part of Japanese mythology.

<i>Kingdom Over the Sea</i> , Zohra Nabi	336 pp	FAN 2023	Iraq/UK	When her mother dies, Yara is drawn into an alternative world where sorcerers are threatened in an Arab-coded world that simmers with magic. <i>The City Beyond the Stars</i> (2).
<i>The Magic Paintbrush</i> , Kat Zhang & Phoebe Zhong	234 pp 630 L	FAN 2024	China	Reimagining of a /Chinese tale in which an ancient paintbrush unleashes a Chinese American girl's power to make her art real as well as dangerous. Highly illustrated tale of adventure.
<i>Norse Myths: Tales of Odin, Thor and Loki</i> , Kevin Crossley-Holland	830 L 225 pp	Trad Lit 2017	Norway	Well-researched prose and dramatic illustrations provide powerful retellings of Norse mythology and Viking gods.
<i>Once There Was</i> , Kiyash Monsef	406 pp RL 6.6	FAN 2023	Iran US	Marjan discovers her murdered father was secretly a veterinarian to magical creatures and that she must take up his duties, despite the dangers. Persian culture.
<i>Paola Santiago and the River of Tears</i> , Tehlor Kay Mejia	350 pp RL 6.6	FAN 2020	Mexico U.S.	Science enthusiast Paola and her friend Dante enter the world of her nightmares of La Llorona to rescue her friend Emma from the monsters of Latinx folklore and her mother's stories. Trilogy
<i>Percy Jackson's Greek Gods</i> , Rick Riordan and John Rocco	790 L 404 pp	Myth 2014	Greece	Introduction to the 12 major gods and goddesses of Greek mythology with engaging retellings of their stories.
<i>Percy Jackson's Greek Heroes</i>	710 L 516 pp	Myth 2017	Greece	Introduction to 12 heroes within Greek mythology.
<i>Pilar Ramirez and the Escape from Zafa</i> , Julian Randall	285 pp	FAN Myth 2022	Dominican Republic	Violeta is transported to Zafa while doing research on a cousin who disappeared 50 years ago during the Trujillo dictatorship. Zafa is an island where Dominican myths and legends come to life and where her cousin is held captive. Duology.
<i>Reckless</i> , Cornelia Funke	RL 6.8 352 pp	FAN 2021	Germany Tr	Jacob secretly enters Mirrorworld, putting his brother in danger. Series in which each book is a different global folktale world.

	<i>The Sea-Ringed World: Sacred Stories of the Americas</i> , Maria Garcia Esperon, Amanda Mijangos, & David Bowles	231 pp RL 6.6	Trad Lit COL 2021	Indigenous Americas Mexico Tr	Collection of traditional literature from 18 Indigenous cultures across North and South America. These sacred stories explain their place in the universe, the nature of their relationships with the divine, and the origin of the world. Short, illustrated retellings and informational backmatter.
	<i>Serwa Boateng's Guide to Vampire Hunting</i> , Roseanne Brown	386 pp RL 6.3	FAN 2022	Ghana	Serwa's parents are hunters of vampire shape-shifters, but a vicious attack results in Serwa living with an aunt in Maryland. She must survive middle school and help her classmates become monster fighters when vampires invade her school. Duology.
	<i>Shadow Spinner</i> , Susan Fletcher	710L 219 pp	FAN 2000	Iran	In ancient Persia, Marjan gathers stories to share with Shahrazad, the queen, to save her life.
	<i>The Storm Keeper's Island</i> , Catherine Doyle	RL 6.2 308 pp	FAN 2020	Ireland	Fionn, who fears the sea, spends his summer on a mysterious island. Irish mythology. Trilogy
	<i>Tales from Beyond the Rainbow</i> , Pete. J. Wood	250 pp	Trad Lit 2025	Global	Ten traditional stories from world cultures are adapted through a queer lens. Stories of adventure, love, and resilience.
	<i>Whiskers, Tails & Wings</i> , Judy Goldman	930 L 58 pp	Trad Lit 2019	Mexico	Traditional animal tales of 5 Indigenous groups in Mexico. Also includes info on each culture's history, customs, and traditions.

Examples of Possible Pairings of Classic Novels with Global YA Literature

Theme	Classic Novel	Global YA Literature
Relationships within family, passage into adulthood, roles of women	<i>Little Women</i> , Louisa May Alcott	<i>Amal Unbound</i> , Aisha Saed <i>We Are Wolves</i> , Katrina Nannestad <i>Dragonfly Eyes</i> , Wenxuan Cao
Strength of family within societal oppression and racism	<i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i> , Mildred Taylor	<i>The Vine Basket</i> , Josanne La Valley <i>A Ceiling Made of Eggshells</i> , Gail Carson Levine <i>The Night Diary</i> , Veera Hiranandani <i>The Samosa Rebellion</i> , Shanthi Sekaran <i>Adi of Boutango</i> , Alain Dzotap
Epic struggle of good and evil	<i>The Dark is Rising</i> , Susan Cooper	<i>Akata Witch</i> , Nnedi Okorafor <i>City of the Plague God</i> , Sarwat Chadda <i>Pilar Ramirez and the Escape from Zafa</i> , Julian Randall <i>Nura and the Immortal Palace</i> , M.T. Kahn <i>Kingdom Over the Sea</i> , Zohra Nabi

Tr = translated from that language and country into English

Under Levels, the letters, e.g. (O), in parentheses are Fountas and Pinnell levels

8/21/2026