Teenagers' favorite new books

The 1998 Young Adults' Choices list is the 12th that U.S. teenagers (Grades 7–12) have helped create. This project began in 1986, funded by a special grant given to the International Reading Association (IRA) and supervised by the Association’s Literature for Young Adults Committee.

The goals of the project are to encourage young people to read; to make teens, teachers, librarians, and parents aware of new literature for young adults; and to provide middle and secondary school students with an opportunity to voice their opinions about books being written for them.

The 30 books on this year's list are the result of voting by students in five different regions of the United States. Trade books (books other than textbooks) published in 1996 were submitted by more than 50 publishers. Each book had to have at least two positive reviews from recognized sources such as The Horn Book, School Library Journal, Journal of Reading, Booklist, Language Arts, or Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA). Submitted books were read by students in Grades 7–12 between September 1997 and February 1998 in selected school districts throughout the U.S. More than 11,000 ballots were counted for the books submitted for this year's project. Students marked, “I liked the book,” “It was okay,” or “I
didn’t like the book.” The results were announced in May at the 1998 Annual Convention of the International Reading Association in Orlando, Florida, USA.

Publishers sent the books to the five team leaders in different regions in the U.S. Team leaders’ responsibilities included selecting the school districts and schools in which the project would take place, making sure the books were distributed to the schools, and working with the teachers, librarians, supervisors, and principals to implement the program. They were also responsible for collecting the ballots and mailing them to the International Reading Association headquarters for the final tally.

The following schools participated in the 1998 project:

Team 1: Laura Watson (team leader): Elk Grove, California; Sacramento, California; 2 high and 2 middle schools; all urban.

Team 2: Stan Steiner (team leader): Boise, Idaho; Eagle, Idaho; Nampa, Idaho; 2 high schools, 1 middle school, 1 junior high school; 3 rural/suburban schools, 1 urban school.

Team 3: Margaret Inman and Sharron Regan (team leaders): Lumberton, North Carolina; Fairmont, North Carolina; Orrum, North Carolina; 4 middle schools, 1 junior high school, 1 senior high school; all rural.

Team 4: Carol Reinhard (team leader): West Des Moines, Iowa; Clive, Iowa; Des Moines, Iowa; Fourmile Township, Iowa; 3 high schools, 3 middle/junior high schools; 1 urban, 4 suburban, 1 rural.

Team 5: Ruth Walther (team leader): Edwardsville, Illinois; Collinsville, Illinois; Wood River, Illinois; E. Alton, Illinois; Granite City, Illinois; Bethalto, Illinois; Alton, Illinois; 4 high schools, 2 elementary schools, 2 parochial junior high schools; 3 urban, 3 suburban, 2 rural schools.

The participating schools represented various types of students, economic levels, cultural groups, and geographic regions. The team leaders were enthusiastic and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this worthwhile and exciting project.

The committee wishes to thank Alida von Krogh Cutts and Mary Cash of the International Reading Association staff for helping to coordinate the project. Thanks are also extended to Natalie Babbitt for her logo design and to the International Reading Association for its continued support of the project. Gratitude and appreciation go to all of the students, teachers, librarians, school district administrators, and team leaders who participated in the project and made it a success.

The members of the Literature for Young Adults Committee, chaired by Virginia Bryg, and the team leaders have written annotations for each title. Annotations written by individual committee members are indicated by their initials. Reviewers include Virginia Bryg, Eileen M. Burke, Sherry M. Erwin, Louise M. Hammond, Margaret Inman, Nina Little, Jo-Ann Lynn Mullin, Elizabeth A. Poe, Sharron Regan, Carol J. Reinhard, Stan Steiner, Ruth Walther, and Laura Watson.

Bibliographic data are supplied for each title including ISBN (International Standard Book Number), number of pages, and price. If a publisher has both a library and trade edition, the ISBN for the library edition is included. Publishers furnished information in May 1998, but prices are subject to change. Annotations may include IL (interest level), GL (grade level), or RL (reading level).

Single copies of offprints of this annotated 1998 Young Adults’ Choices are available for US$1.00 postage and handling and a self-addressed 9" x 12" envelope from the International Reading Association, Department EG, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA, Attention YA Choices. To order bulk copies by phone with a credit card, call (in the U.S. and Canada only) 1-800-336-READ, ext. 266, or send order to Order Department, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA.

**Alice In Lace.** Phyllis Reynolds Naylor.

In an eighth-grade health class, Alice and friends are given hypothetical situations to help them learn to make good decisions. Alice and Patrick plan a wedding and learn more than they wanted to know about life experiences. The book is fun, exciting, and almost impossible to put down once you start reading. IL 7–12. RW.

**Beyond the Western Sea: Book One, TheEscape From Home.** Avi.

Irish peasants Patrick and Maura O’Conner and young English lord Sir Laurence Kirkle want desperately to sail to America. Writing in Victorian-novel style, Avi furnishes sympathetic protagonists, despicable villains, exciting chase scenes, family scandals, and supportive relationships. Historical insights and excellent writing make this a deliciously complex adventure story. EAP.


**Brian’s Winter.** Gary Paulsen.

In this twist on Paulsen’s previous book Hatchet, Brian isn’t rescued until after he survives the winter in the north country wilderness. Sometimes Brian makes mistakes in his efforts to stay alive, but he succeeds. SME.


**Danger Zone.** David Klass.

Exciting, realistic fiction about basketball. Family relationships, young love, 3-pointers, international terrorists, and racing are all woven into this awesome novel. SME.


**Don’t You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphrey.** Margaret Peterson Haddix.

Tish Bonner finds unexpected solace in Mrs. Dunphrey’s journal writing assignment. Her journal becomes a safe place to relate the appalling realities of life with an abusive father and opens a desperately needed avenue of escape for her and her younger brother. A natural extension activity is for students to write journal entries in pairs about a novel of their choice. CJR.


**The Dreams of Mairhe Mehan.** Jennifer Armstrong.

Mairhe Mehan struggles to find her identity in the Irish slums of Washington, D.C. Nightly, her fingers and dreams fly, one weaving fine Irish lace, the other a web of safety for her brother. Combine with other U.S. Civil War novels to heighten understanding of the nationalities caught in this grim war. CJR.


**Echohawk.** Lynda Durrant.

Raised by the Mohicans who killed his family, Echohawk is Mohican in language, thought, and practice. A successful vision quest could put to rest the haunting memories of his life as a white settler. This adventure provides a glimpse of life in the Hudson Valley in the late 1700s. LMH.

This book is Marion Blumenthal Lazan’s compelling memoir of her family’s fight for survival during the rise and fall of Hitler’s Nazi Germany. Several photographs are included. A welcome addition to social studies and literature classes. IL 6–10. SS.

Get It While It’s Hot. Or Not. Valerie Hobbs.
This teen problem fiction book covers pregnancy, friendship, lies, adoption, censorship, and HIV. Megan, a writer for the high school paper, and her friends Mia and Elaine try to help Kit, their pregnant friend. This story is a chance to explore the limits and demands of teen relationships. GL 9–12. CJR.

A very funny look at what could have been added to Bible stories if God had had a warped sense of humor like the author. VB.

A collection of poems and stories about angels written by renowned author Jane Yolen. The illustrations, done in pencil by David Wilgus, have a stunning photographic clarity. A gentle read for a quiet afternoon or evening, the collection might be considered multicultural in nature. GL 7–9. NL.

Imitate the Tiger. Jan Cheripko.
Christopher, a high school athlete, refuses to admit his problem with alcohol. With the help of his new school and its tough-love policy, he finally realizes that he has the courage to help himself. True to life account of a problem facing many of today’s teenagers. VB.
Johnny Voodoo. Dakota Lane.

Deirdre, age 16, is suffering from culture shock and the loss of her mother. In trying to redefine her family structure, she meets the mysterious Johnny Voodoo, who teaches Deirdre and readers about love, family, and trust. Use for predicting plausible outcomes. LW.


An engaging story of a modern-day poet and novelist. The details of Maya’s childhood and later life make the reader respect her. Wonderful for would-be poets. Use in the classroom for a springboard to writing. LW.


A very readable biography of the famous boxer. Includes photographs, bibliography, and an index. VB.


On Board the Titanic. Shelley Tanaka. Ill. by Ken Marschall.

A gripping account of the maiden voyage of the greatest ship of its day and its disastrous end, as told from the point of view of two survivors. Beautifully illustrated. VB.


The eighth volume in the popular Redwall series asks the question, “Can someone be born completely evil?” The story of Veil, abandoned at birth by evil father Swartt and reared by the good Briony, demonstrates that questions of right and wrong aren’t always simply answered. GL 4–9. MI.


Prelutsky serves nuggets of word play, chunks of strong rhythm, and riots of rhymes, with heaps of humor. Over 100 poems treat food, animals, growing up, siblings, and everyday joys and dilemmas with zest and zip. First forms vary, and word play predominates. EMB.


The Princess and the God. Doris Orgel.

A very romantic tale based on the Greek myth of Psyche, the human girl, who had to undergo many trials in order to win back her god-lover Cupid. The thoughts of Psyche and Cupid are given in alternating chapters. VB.


Slam! Walter Dean Myers

Walter Dean Myers has done it again! This is another exciting book in which the author ad-

SOS Titanic. Eve Bunting

To See With the Heart: The Life of Sitting Bull. Judith St. George.
This biography examines the life of Sitting Bull as a courageous, compassionate, honorable leader and a keen Sioux warrior. It is an enticing, informative book that is rich with detail and well documented, and gives direct quotes from Sitting Bull’s contemporaries. SR. Putnam. 192 pp. ISBN 0-399-22930-2. US$17.95. CAN$24.50.

This book is the unforgettable telling of a 14-year-old black girl’s journey on the Underground Railroad to Canada. The author contrasts her life with that of another 14-year-old girl, who is white, wealthy, and indulged. Their paths cross on the way to Canada, and their lives are forever changed. This is a magnificent book. VB. Blue Sky Press/Scholastic. 288 pp. ISBN 0-590-20523-4. US$14.95.

Twisted Summer. Willo Davis Roberts.

The Voice on the Radio. Caroline B. Cooney.
**Washington City Is Burning.** Harriette Gillem Robinet.


**When I Was Your Age: Original Stories About Growing Up.** Amy Ehrlich, editor.

These true stories by award-winning writers familiar to young adult readers are accompanied by explanations of why authors chose to write about these particular memories. Some humorous, some heart-wrenching, and some a bit of both, these stories help readers to connect to their own memories of childhood and enrich their own developing writing. JM. Candlewick Press. 160 pp. ISBN 1-56402-306-0. $15.99. CAN$18.99.

**The Window.** Jeanette Ingold.