

**KEYSTONE TO READING SECONDARY BOOK AWARDS 2021-2022**  
**ANNOTATED HIGH SCHOOL BOOK LIST**

***Clap When You Land*** by Elizabeth Acevedo

Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people. In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance—and Papi's secrets—the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered. And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other. (Realistic Fiction , grades 9-12)

***Dear Justyce*** by Nic Stone

Vernell LaQuan Banks and Justyce McAllister grew up a block apart in the Southwest Atlanta neighborhood of Wynwood Heights. Years later, though, Justyce walks the illustrious halls of Yale University . . . and Quan sits behind bars at the Fulton Regional Youth Detention Center. Through a series of flashbacks, vignettes, and letters to Justyce--the protagonist of *Dear Martin*--Quan's story takes form. Troubles at home and misunderstandings at school give rise to police encounters and tough decisions. But then there's a dead cop and a weapon with Quan's prints on it. What leads a bright kid down a road to a murder charge? Not even Quan is sure. (Realistic Fiction, grades 9-12)

***Hood*** by Jenny Elder Moke

Isabelle of Kirklees has only ever known a quiet life inside the sheltered walls of the convent, where she lives with her mother, Marien. But after she is arrested by royal soldiers for defending innocent villagers, Isabelle becomes the target of the Wolf, the ruthless right hand of the corrupt King John. To keep her daughter safe, Marien helps Isabelle escape and sends her on a mission to find the only person who can save them now: the infamous outlaw Robin Hood, who also happens to be Isabelle's father. Isabelle races to stay out of the Wolf's clutches and find the father she's never known, thrusting her into a world of thieves and mercenaries, roguish young outlaws, new enemies with old grudges, and a king who wants her entire family dead. As she fights for her rightful place among the Merry Men in a desperate bid to stop the Wolf's merciless plans, can Isabelle find the strength to defy the crown and save the lives of everyone she holds dear?

(Historical Fiction/Legend, grades 9-12)

***Poisoned*** by Jennifer Donnelly

Once upon a time, a girl named Sophie rode into the forest with the queen's huntsman. Her lips were the color of ripe cherries, her skin as soft as new-fallen snow, her hair as dark as midnight. When they stopped to rest, the huntsman pulled out his knife . . . and took Sophie's heart. It shouldn't have come as a surprise. Sophie had heard the rumors, the whispers. They said she was too kind and foolish to rule -- a waste of a princess. A disaster of a future queen. And Sophie believed them. She believed everything she'd heard about herself, the poisonous words people use to keep girls like Sophie from becoming too powerful, too strong . . . With the help of seven mysterious strangers, Sophie manages to survive. But when she realizes that the jealous queen might not be to blame, Sophie must find the courage to face an even more terrifying enemy, proving that even the darkest magic can't extinguish the fire burning inside every girl, and that kindness is the ultimate form of strength. (Fairytale/Fantasy, grades 9-12)

***Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You*** by Jason Reynolds & Ibram X. Kendi

The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited. (Nonfiction, grades 9-12)

***The Bridge*** by Bill Konigsberg

Aaron and Tillie don't know each other, but they are both feeling suicidal and arrive at the George Washington Bridge at the same time, intending to jump. Aaron is a gay misfit struggling with depression and loneliness. Tillie isn't sure what her problem is -- only that she will never be good enough. On the bridge, there are four things that could happen: Aaron jumps and Tillie doesn't. Tillie jumps and Aaron doesn't. They both jump. Neither of them jumps. Or maybe all four things happen (Realistic Fiction, grades 9-12)

***The June Boys*** by Court Stevens

The Gemini Thief is a serial kidnapper, who takes three boys and holds them captive from June 1st to June 30th of the following year. The June Boys endure thirteen months of being stolen, hidden, observed, and fed before they are released, unharmed, by their masked captor. The Thief is a pro, having eluded authorities for nearly a decade and taken at least twelve boys. Now Thea Delacroix has reason to believe the Gemini Thief has taken a thirteenth victim: her cousin, Aulus McClaghen. But the game changes when one of the kidnapped boys turns up dead. Together with her boyfriend Nick and her best friends, Thea is determined to find the Gemini Thief and the remaining boys before it's too late. Only she's beginning to wonder something sinister, something repulsive, something unbelievable, and yet, not impossible: What if her father is the Gemini Thief?

(Mystery/Thriller, grades 9-12)

***The Rise and Fall of Charles Lindbergh*** by Candace Fleming

First human to cross the Atlantic via airplane; one of the first American media sensations; Nazi sympathizer and anti-Semite; loner whose baby was kidnapped and murdered; champion of Eugenics, the science of improving a human population by controlled breeding; tireless environmentalist. Charles Lindbergh was all of the above and more.

(Nonfiction/Biography, grades 9-12)

***Thorn*** by Intisar Khanani

Princess Alyrra has always longed to escape the confines of her royal life, but when her mother betroths her to a powerful prince in a distant kingdom, she has little hope for a better future. Until Alyrra arrives at her new kingdom, where a mysterious sorceress robs her of both her identity and her role as princess—and Alyrra seizes on the opportunity to start a new life for herself as a goose girl. But as Alyrra uncovers dangerous secrets about her new world, including a threat to the prince himself, she knows she can't remain silent forever. With the fate of the kingdom at stake, Alyrra is caught between two worlds, and ultimately must decide who she is and what she stands for.

(Fairytale, grades 9-12)

***You Should See Me in a Crown* by Leah Johnson**

Liz Lighty has always believed she's too black, too poor, too *awkward* to shine in her small, rich, prom-obsessed midwestern town. But it's okay -- Liz has a plan that will get her out of Campbell, Indiana, forever: attend the uber-elite Pennington College, play in their world-famous orchestra, and become a doctor. But when the financial aid she was counting on unexpectedly falls through, Liz's plans come crashing down . . . until she's reminded of her school's scholarship for prom king and queen. There's nothing Liz wants to do less than endure a gauntlet of social media trolls, catty competitors, and humiliating public events, but despite her devastating fear of the spotlight she's willing to do whatever it takes to get to Pennington. The only thing that makes it halfway bearable is the new girl in school, Mack. She's smart, funny, and just as much of an outsider as Liz. But Mack is also in the running for queen. Will falling for the competition keep Liz from her dreams . . . or make them come true? (Realistic Fiction, grades 9-12)

The Keystone to Reading Secondary Book Awards lists are created to give students a voice in the selection of the children's choice book awards presented each year at the annual KSLA Conference. The information presented in these books represents the thoughts and opinions of the authors and does not necessarily represent the viewpoints of the Keystone State Literacy Association. (The book descriptions have been taken from outside sources.)