

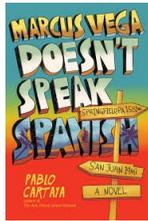


Sunshine State Young Readers Award Books 2020-2021 List for Grades 6-8



Charlie Hernandez and the League of Shadows by Ryan Calejo

After sprouting horns and feathers, Charlie Hernandez realizes that all those myths his grandmother has told him might just be real. This happens right at the same time that his home burns down and his parents have gone missing. Charlie and his friend Violet embark on a journey discovering that Charlie's life is linked to the balance between the Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead. Charlie encounters characters from Mexican-American, Guatemalan, and Brazilian myths and he travels through parts of Florida and the mythological world. He is trying to hide all the things changing about himself from his friends while searching for his parents, code switching his language between monsters, translating for Violet, and trying desperately to find and save his parents.



Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish by Pablo Cartaya

The Terrible Tower, the Springfield Skyscraper are just two of the names that Marcus Vega is called as a result of being 180 pounds and six feet tall in 8th grade. Kids clear out of his way when he walks down the hall. But in reality, if they could see Marcus with his little brother Charlie, who has Down's Syndrome, they would see a gentle giant. Marcus helps feed Charlie when their single mother is working late. He helps bathe him, get him ready for bed, and he lets Charlie tickle him until he can hardly breathe. So when the school bully calls Charlie the "R" word, Marcus punches him in the face and is suspended. This leads his mother to take the family on a trip to Puerto Rico to meet their father's family although their father abandoned them ten years ago. Marcus sees this as an opportunity to search for his father, but he'll find much more as he journeys across the beautiful island with the support of his loving family



New Kid by Jerry Craft

Jordan wants to go to art school. Jordan's parents want him to get the best education possible. Unfortunately for Jordan this means going to a fancy school in a wealthy neighborhood with kids whose family members have buildings named after them. Jordan has to learn how to adjust to his new environment where he is one of a handful of minorities, and also how to navigate between his two worlds - the mostly minority neighborhood he lives in and the upper class community where his school is located. At school he has to handle stereotypes, racism, bullying, and figuring out where and how he fits in both in school and at home. Will Jordan find his place or will he look for a new school?



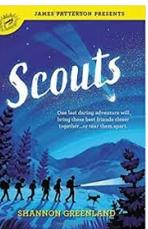
Spark by Sarah Beth Durst

Twelve year old Mina lives on her family's farm in Alorria, a land where there's never extreme weather like tornadoes, hurricanes and thunderstorms. Weather is controlled by storm beasts, dragon-like creatures with the face of a lizard and the personality of a puppy. The five types of storm beasts are sun, rain, wind, snow, and lightning. Mina is so quiet, everyone assumes her storm beast will be a sun, rain, or snow beast when it finally hatches. When Pixit hatches, he's a lightning beast which "must be a mistake," since lightning guardians are loud and brave. However, Mina stands her ground and won't even consider giving up her beast. Though quiet and sometimes self-doubting, Mina discovers her inner strength when she leaves home to start Lightning School. Learning how to fly into storms and grab lightning with their hands is incredibly exciting. When she discovers that Alorria's perfectly balanced weather comes at a horrific cost to the people on the other side of the mountains, she's horrified. Though Mina has never been one to speak up, lives are at stake and she's determined to get her fellow students to rise up against powers that be.



The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise by Dan Gemeinhart

12 year old Coyote Sunrise and her father, Rodeo, have been living in a renovated school bus for the past five years since Coyote's mother passed away. They travel all over the country following their whims--the only place they won't go is back home. All of a sudden, Coyote's grandmother calls to let her know that the place where Coyote, Coyote's mom, and her sisters buried a memory box is about to be dug up and destroyed. Coyote is desperate to get home to save their box but she has to find a way to steer her dad back home without him knowing where they are going. Along the way they pick up several new friends.



Scouts by Shannon Greenland

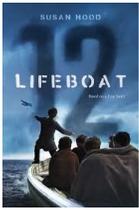
The Scouts are best friends who have done everything together since kindergarten. But now it's the summer before their 7th grade year begins and everything is changing. Annie is the glue that is holding their friendship together and she plans a camping trip to watch the meteor shower in an attempt to keep the friends from drifting apart. When one of the meteors lands close by, they decide to set out on an adventure to find it. Their overnight trip quickly runs into trouble when they figure out that these are no ordinary meteors and they have to run for their lives from the crazy Mason mountain clan.



Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald

An accident at the end of preseason football practice leaves 13-year-old Teddy Youngblood with a brain injury and in a coma...or was it an accident? Rumors swirl as Teddy, the team, and the town try to recover, and while Teddy is unable to share what he knows, there are plenty of others who just aren't willing to. What really happened at the Rookie Rumble? Will anyone find the courage to tell the truth?

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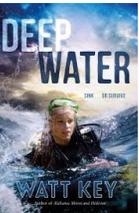
Lifeboat 12 by Susan Hood

It's 1940, the beginning of the Blitz, and 13-year-old Kenneth Sparks is selected to go to Canada as part of a program to send ninety British children to the safety of the U.K.'s overseas dominions. Life aboard the luxury ship is grand-- rich food, new toys, soft beds, and new friends distract them from the constant reminder that war is happening all around them. When his ship is torpedoed, Kenneth, five other boys from the program, and about 40 adults make it aboard Lifeboat 12, one of the only lifeboats remaining after the evening's gale-force winds. Will they run out of supplies? Will they survive long enough to be found?



Song For a Whale by Lynee Kelly

Twelve-year-old Iris is the only Deaf student in her school. She has a keen interest in electronics, and spends her time fixing old radios for a local antiques store. In science class, Iris learns about Blue 55, the loneliest whale in the world. The whale swims about without a pod, and cannot communicate with other whales. In some ways, Iris identifies with the lonely whale, and she is determined to create a song for him. Once the song is composed, Iris and her grandmother secretly embark on a three-thousand-mile journey that takes them to the coast of Alaska, where Blue is swimming. Along the way, they undergo life-changing experiences.



Deep Water by Ashley Watt Key

If it doesn't feel right, don't go down is what Julie's Dad has told her ever since she learned to dive. But when they have booked a dive trip for four times the going rate, she is forced to take over for him. What should have been a normal dive turns into a living nightmare for Julie along with Hank & Shane Jordan, their clients. The Jordans, a father and son team of reckless divers, make mistakes on the seafloor that goes from bad to worse. The dive boat has vanished, Hank has bends, and they are lost and drifting toward blue water where large predators lurk. Sharks, jellyfish, hypothermia and exhaustion - and Mother Nature at her worst challenge Julie and Shane to overcome their fears and take on each challenge. Deep Water is a fast-paced action based story with plenty of suspense and dangers.



Float by Laura Martin

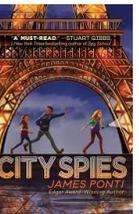
Emerson is in for the summer of his life at Camp Outlier- if he survives the summer. Camp Outlier is a special camp for RISK {Reoccurring Incidents of the Strange Kind} kids. The last place Emerson wants to be is at a government-mandated summer camp for RISK kids like him, so he's shocked when he actually starts having fun at camp—and he even makes some new friends.

But it's not all canoeing and capture the flag at Camp Outlier. The summer of fun takes a serious turn when Emerson and his friends discover that one of their own is hiding a deadly secret that puts all of their lives in danger.



Inklings by Kenneth Oppel

When ink from Ethan's father's sketchbook comes to life and jumps off the page, Ethan, his sister Sarah, and his father find that Inklings helps each of them in unique ways as they deal with grief and struggle to move forward following the death of Ethan's mother.



City Spies by James Ponti

Puerto Rican born, Sara Martinez (real name, Brooklyn) finds herself in jail after hacking into the city's computer system in order to expose her foster parents as abusive frauds. Her inept court-appointed lawyer is no help, but she is offered a wild proposition she honestly can't refuse--join Britain's M16 as a kid operative. After her release from prison, she is flown to Scotland, where she meets the rest of the City Spies...kids from around the world who have their own unique set of skills in logic, puzzles, sneakiness, etc. Of course, there's also Mother, a white Englishman who has taken in the "city spies" sending them to boarding school part of the day and helping them fine tune their "skills" the rest of the time. He has a special mission for them in Paris involving a competition they need to do just well enough to make the top ten. Their real objective is to protect the eccentric billionaire sponsor from an evil villain. Fun book for thrill seekers looking for adventure!



We're Not From Here by Geoff Rodkey

When the last humans from Earth need a new home, it looks like Planet Choom would be perfect. There's only one problem, the Zhuri already live there! One family is chosen to represent humanity to the Zhuri to evaluate if the two species can live together. Unfortunately, that means Lan and Ila will have to go to Zhuri school! Will they be able to fit in? Can they make a good impression on the Zhuri? And what if there are some Zhuri who don't want them there in the first place? Find out all the answers in this sci-fi story from Geoff Rodkey!



The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman

In India, 11-year-old Viji and her 12-year-old sister, Rukku, run away to Chennai after their violent father strikes out at them. On the city streets, the sisters find shelter by a bridge, adopt a stray dog, and meet brothers Mathu and Arul, who quickly become a kind of family to them. They all soon form a family of sorts, sharing food and supplies and laughing together about the absurdities of life. Rukku's intellectual disability has made her dependent on Viji, who gradually learns that her sister is more capable than she had thought. Despite their determination, hunger and sickness eventually take their toll on the children. Viji must lean on her new family to learn to cope with grief and move on.