

6th - 8th Gr.

“Yet I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay.”

—Psalm 70.5

Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream. Tanya Lee Stone. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2009.

“Who do these women think they are?” The media mocked them. Male astronauts did not want them, and neither did then Vice-President Lyndon Johnson. If they were to let women into the space program, blacks and other minorities would be next.

Before We Were Free. Julia Alvarez. New York: Knopf, 2002.

In the early 1960s in the Dominican Republic, twelve-year-old Anita learns that her family is involved in the underground movement to end the bloody rule of the dictator, General Rafael Trujillo.

Birmingham, 1963. Carole Boston Weatherford. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong, 2007.

This book describes the feelings of a fictional character who witnessed the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombings in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963.

Birmingham Sunday. Larry Dane Brimner. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek, 2010.

Learn about the bomb blast that rocked the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on Sunday morning, September 15, 1963, killing four young girls.

Bread and Roses, Too. Katherine Paterson. New York: Clarion Books, 2006.

Jake and Rosa form an unlikely friendship as they try to survive and understand the 1912 Bread and Roses strike of mill workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

Chains. Laurie Halse Anderson. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2008.

When their owner dies at the start of the Revolution, Isabel and her younger sister are sold to Loyalists in New York, where Isabel is offered the chance to spy for the Patriots.

Chasing Lincoln's Killer. James L. Swanson. New York: Scholastic Press, 2009.

Recounts the escape of John Wilkes Booth, Abraham Lincoln's assassin, and follows the intensive twelve-day search for him and his accomplices.

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice. Phillip Hoose. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009.

Claudette Colvin stood up to the unfairness of the Jim Crow laws months before Rosa Parks, yet history has largely forgotten about her. Before Parks refused to give up her seat, 15-year-old Colvin stood firm and was dragged off the bus, handcuffed, and thrown into adult prison.

Code Talker: A Novel about the Navajo Marines of World War Two. Joseph Bruchac. New York: Speak, 2006.

After being taught in a boarding school run by Whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue.

Counting on Grace. Elizabeth Winthrop. New York: Wendy Lamb Books, 2006.

It's 1910 in Pownal, Vermont. At twelve-years-old, Grace and her friend Arthur must go to work in the mill, helping their mothers work the looms. Together Grace and Arthur write a secret letter to the Child Labor Board about underage children working in the mill.

Dear America: The Fences Between Us. The Diary of Piper Davis. Kirby Lason. New York: Scholastic, 2010.

Thirteen-year-old Piper Davis records in her diary her experiences beginning in December 1941, when her brother joins the Navy, the United States goes to war, and she attempts to document her life through photography.

Deep Zone. Tim Green. New York, NY: Harper, 2011.

Twelve-year-old football stars Troy White and Ty Lewis are eager to face each other in a seven-on-seven tournament being held at the Super Bowl in Miami, unaware that bad choices made by members of their families will put both boys in danger.

A Difficult Boy. M.P. Barker. New York: Holiday House, 2008.

Nine-year-old Ethan is an indentured servant in 1839, being trained to do his job on the Lyman's well-to-do farm by Daniel (called Paddy by others), an older Irish boy who is also a servant.

The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba. Margarita Engle. New York: Henry Holt, 2010.

This book draws on a little-known Cuban history to tell a stirring story in poetry.

Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Russell Freedman. New York: Holiday House, 2006.

Covers the events surrounding and including the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which ended segregation on buses.

Getting Away With Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case. Chris Crowe. New York: Phyllis Fogelman Books, 2003.

Crowe presents a true account of the murder of fourteen-year-old, Emmett Till, in Mississippi, in 1955.

Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow. Susan Campbell Bartoletti. New York: Scholastic Nonfiction, 2005.

This is the story of a generation of German young people who devoted all their energy to Hitler Youth and the propaganda that brought Hitler his power, and those who resisted the Nazi youth movement.

Let Me Play. The Story of Title IX: The Law That Changed the Future of Girls in America. Karen Blumenthal. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2005.

Can girls play softball? Can girls be school crossing guards? Can girls play basketball or ice hockey or soccer? Can girls become lawyers or doctors or engineers? Of course they can...today. But a few decades ago, opportunities for girls were far more limited, not because they weren't capable of playing or didn't want to become doctors or lawyers, but because they weren't allowed to. In 1972, Congress passed a law called "Title IX," forever changing the lives of American girls.

Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen. Michelle Roehm McCann. Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press, 2003.

This is a biography of the Jewish heroine, Luba Trzysynska, who saved the lives of more than fifty Jewish children in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp during the winter of 1944/45.

Marching for Freedom: Walk Together, Children, and Don't You Grow Weary. Elizabeth Partridge. New York, NY: Viking, 2009.

Recounts the three months of protest that took place before Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s landmark march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery to promote equal civil and voting rights for African-Americans.

Out of Bounds: Seven Stories of Conflict and Hope. Beverley Naidoo. New York: Harper Trophy, 2008.

These seven stories, spanning the time period from 1948 to 2000, chronicle the experiences of young people from different races and ethnic groups as they try to cope with the restrictions placed on their lives by South Africa's apartheid laws.

The Shepherd's Granddaughter. Anne Carter. Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2008.

Amani longs to be a shepherd like her grandfather, Seedo. Like many Palestinians, her family has grazed sheep above the olive groves of the family homestead for generations, and she has been steeped in Seedo's stories, especially one about a secret meadow called the Firdoos—and the wolf that once showed him the path there.

Shutting Out the Sky: Life in the Tenements of New York, 1880-1924. Deborah Hopkinson. New York: Orchard Books, 2003.

Photographs and text document the experiences of five individuals who came to live on the Lower East Side of New York City as children or young adults from Belarus, Italy, Lithuania, and Romania at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom. Margarita Engle. New York: Henry Holt, 2008.

Cuba has fought three wars for independence and still she is not free. This history in verse creates a lyrical portrait of Cuba.

