

Sepetys, Ruta—*I Must Betray You*

Seventeen-year-old Cristian Florescu stands toe to toe with the utter depravity of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu when he is blackmailed by secret police into becoming an informer. Even as Cristian strives to maintain some integrity, his family, his friendships, and the world around him crumble. (YA)

Tahir, Sabaa—*All My Rage*

Sal and Noor, estranged best friends growing up in Juniper, California, are pulled back into a shared orbit by the catastrophic death of Sal’s mother, Misbah. Interwoven tragedy and family obligation creates bonds so tight that their very survival is at stake. **Winner of the 2023 Printz Award for Excellence in Young Adult Literature.** (YA)

Taylor, Will

The Language of Seabirds

Jeremy is not pleased to be forced to spend the summer with his father and uncle in a beach cabin in Oregon. When he meets Evan during a walk on the beach, things take a turn for the better as they explore a friendship that becomes something more than either boy expected—and just what each has secretly been hoping for. (Oregon author; MG)

Thomas, Aiden—*The Sunbearer Trials*

The Sunbearer Trials are an elite competition for teen semidioses—one that ends in great honor or the ultimate sacrifice. Teo, the trans son of Quetzal, goddess of birds, is utterly surprised to be chosen to compete along with Xio, the child of the god of bad luck. They must fight for survival through five mysterious trials against opponents far better trained and more powerful. (Oregon author; MG)

**White, Andrew Joseph
*Hell Followed with Us***

In a society shattered by a vicious cult’s bioweapon, 16-year-old trans boy Benji is on the run and trying to avoid mutating into what the cult has forced him to be—a monster capable of wiping humanity from the earth. Welcomed by teens from the Acheson LGBTQ+ Center, Benji joins their fight to survive. (YA)

NONFICTION

Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults: A Guide to the Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer

An update of a classic of Indigenous literature that explores how living things provide us with gifts and lessons about life. (MG)

Queer Ducks (and Other Animals): The Natural World of Animal Sexuality by Eliot Schrefer

Humor and science blended to provide the animal kingdom is brimming with examples of same-sex activity. (MG/YA)

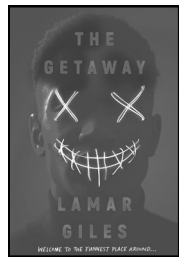
Star Child: A Biographical Constellation of Octavia Estelle Butler by Ibi Zoboi

In a blend of poetry and prose, contemporary novelist Ibi Zoboi explores the young life and influences that shaped and influenced visionary science-fiction storyteller Octavia Butler. (MG)

**2023
Book
Rave**

Best books for middle and high school-aged readers, chosen by Oregon’s young adult librarians.





MG=Middle
grade selection

YA=Young
adult selection

FICTION

Chee, Traci

A Thousand Steps Into Night

Miuko is an ordinary girl in the realm of Awara, until a curse turns her into a demon. Seeking to reverse the curse connects her with her clever trickster side and a world of new experiences. Maybe returning to life as an innkeeper's daughter is not her fate after all. (YA)

Emezi, Akwaeke—***Bitter***

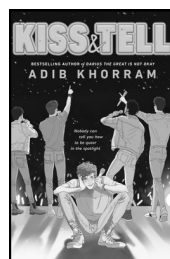
Bitter is thrilled to be pulled from foster care into Eucalyptus, a special school where she can focus on her painting. Her new friends push her to see the deep injustices around them in the community of Lucille. Bitter isn't sure whether to hide in her studio or join the protests. (YA)

Giles, Lamar—***The Getaway***

Everyone is happy in Karloff County, the ultimate resort getaway. Even the workers, like Jay and his friends, are happy because they are insulated from the deteriorating world and food riots on the outside. That is, until the come-and-go crowds are replaced by elite permanent guests who will take everything so they want for nothing. (YA)

Hanna Alkaf—***Queen of the Tiles***

The last time Najwa Bakri attended a Scrabble competition, she witnessed the death of her friend and Scrabble queen, Trina Low. When Trina's Instagram account come back to life with hints that there was more to her death, Najwa steps into the role of investigator and learns more than she'd like to know about the other players in the Scrabble circuit. (MG/YA)



Ibañez, Isabel

Together We Burn

A disaster in the dragon-fighting arena leaves Zarela Zalvidar's father horribly injured. To save the arena and her family, Zarela, a talented flamenco dancer, must step into her father's role as Dragonador. In desperate need of help, she turns to a handsome and infuriating dragon hunter. (YA)

Khorram, Adib—***Kiss & Tell***

Hunter is the gay one in a wildly successful Canadian boy band. As they launch their big tour, Hunter is getting extra attention after a painful public breakup and leaked sexts. While The Label lays on the pressure to live up to their reductive idea of the perfect gay boy image, Hunter begins to crack under the pressure as he leans more and more into a new connection with Kaivan, the drummer for their opening band. (YA)

Jackson, Tiffany D.

The Weight of Blood

Biracial high school student Maddy Washington passes as white until she can't and is then the subject of a viral bullying video that shines an appalling light on her small town. As the town tries to fix its image with its first integrated prom, pranks played on Maddy lead to a horrific incident with deadly consequences. (YA)

LaSala, Ryan—***The Honeys***

A terrible moment leaves genderfluid Mars twinless, injured, and traumatized. Sure that Caroline's tragic fate is linked to the swanky summer camp she attended, Mars moves in and seeks out a group of beekeeping girls known as The Honeys who toy with Mars' emotions, memories, and sense of self, opening up deeper mysteries than anyone suspected. (YA)



Lin, Judy I.

A Magic Steeped in Poison

After accidentally brewing a tea that poisoned her mother and now threatens the life of her sister, Ning seeks a place in a tea-making competition in imperial city. If she can win a favor from the princess, Ning may be able to save her sister. But bloody court politics may put Ning into the worst danger of all. (YA)

McLemore, Anna-Marie—***Lakelore***

Rumors abound about a mythical, magical world under the lake, but Bastián Silvano and Lore Garcia know the truth—it is there and it is drifting to the surface. Desperate to protect the secrets that would come with it, Bastián and Lore have to learn to work together and trust each other to stop it. (YA)

McQuiston, Casey

I Kissed Shara Wheeler

After years of a fierce rivalry with Chloe Green, prom queen and perfect popular girl Shara Wheeler corners Chloe, kisses her, and vanishes. Chloe should be glad because now she has a straight shot at being valedictorian. Still, presented with a trail of annoying clues and two unlikely allies, she develops an overwhelming compulsion to solve the mystery. (YA)

Reynolds, Jason and Jason Griffin

Ain't Burned All the Bright

Spare and powerful text mix with 300 pages of art to capture an urgent snapshot of being Black in a pandemic-ridden America that is seeking justice through protest. Packed with powerful truth and stunning imagery and a yearning to breathe, this unique book connects at a visceral and enduring level. (MG/YA)