

VA READS Middle Grade Selections 2022-2023

Barakah Beats. By Maleeha Siddiqui. Scholastic Press (9781338702064). Attending public school for the first time, Nimra joins a band despite her worry that it violates her Muslim faith.

Born Behind Bars. By Padma Venkatraman. Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin Young Readers (9780593112472). Kabir, 9, has always lived in prison with his mother in India. Suddenly released, he must learn to make his way alone in an unfamiliar world.

Chunky. By Yehudi Mercado. Katherine Tegen Books/HarperCollins (9780062972798). Hudi, Mexican American and Jewish, laughs his way through his struggles with sports and his health issues, with the help of an imaginary mascot.

Healer of the Water Monster. By Brian Young. HarperCollins/Heardrum (9780062990402). While visiting his grandmother, a Navajo boy enlists help from Holy Beings and tribal members as he tries to help heal an ailing Water Monster and his own uncle.

Isaiah Dunn is My Hero. By Kelly J. Baptist. Crown/Random House Children's Books (9780593121368) His mother is barely coping following his father's death, but Isaiah's inherited literary talent and a supportive community help the family begin to recover.

Linked. By Gordon Korman. Scholastic Press (9781338629118). When swastikas start appearing around the school, a community of middle schoolers enter a journey of self-discovery and understanding, and form stronger bonds.

Measuring Up. By Lily LaMotte. Art by Ann Xu. HarperAlley (9780062973863). Cici has recently moved to Seattle from Taiwan and desperately misses A-má, her grandmother. To pay for a plane ticket for A-má to visit her, Cici hopes to win a cash prize through a junior chef competition.

The One Thing You'd Save. By Linda Sue Park. Illus. by Robert Sae-Heng. Clarion (9781328515131). Using traditional and modified sijo poetic structure, Park explores what children would save if they were ever in a house fire.

Show Me a Sign. By Ann Clare LeZotte. Scholastic (9781338255812). Based in the actual Deaf community that existed on Martha's Vineyard during the 1800's, Mary lives a singularly typical life. Never considering the deafness she is born with to be a disability until a prejudiced scientist arrives, Mary finds herself the focus of a study against her will.

While I Was Away. By Waka T. Brown. HarperCollins/Quill Tree (9780063017115). This novel, based on the author's childhood, chronicles 12-year-old Waka's culture shock as she spends a summer in Japan with her grandmother to improve her Japanese language skills.

