

Grade 12

Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley

Lexile: HL720L



As a biracial, unenrolled tribal member and the product of a scandal, Daunis Fontaine has never quite fit in—both in her hometown and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation. When her family is struck by tragedy, Daunis puts her dreams on hold to care for her fragile mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother's hockey team.

After Daunis witnesses a shocking murder that thrusts her into a criminal investigation, she agrees to go undercover. But the deceptions—and deaths—keep piling up and soon the threat strikes too close to home. How far will she go to protect her community if it means tearing apart the only world she's ever known?

From Here: A Memoir by Luma Mufleh

Lexile: 870L



In her coming-of-age memoir, refugee advocate Luma Mufleh writes of her tumultuous journey to reconcile her identity as a gay Muslim woman and a proud Arab-turned-American refugee.

With no word for “gay” in Arabic, Luma may not have known what to call the feelings she had growing up in Jordan during the 1980s, but she knew well enough to keep them secret. It was clear that not only would her family have trouble accepting her, but trapped in a conservative religious society, she could've also been killed if anyone discovered her sexuality. Luma spent her teenage years increasingly desperate to find a way out, and finally found one when she was accepted into college in the United States. Once there, Luma begins the agonizing process of applying for political asylum, which ensures her safety—but causes her family to break ties with her.

Becoming a refugee in America is a rude awakening, and Luma must rely on the grace of friends and strangers alike as she builds a new life and finally embraces her full self. Slowly, she's able to forge a new path forward with both her biological and chosen families, eventually founding Fugees Family, a nonprofit dedicated to the education and support of refugee children in the United States.

As hopeful as it is heartrending, *From Here* is a coming-of-age memoir about one young woman's search for belonging and the many meanings of home for those who must leave theirs.

Impossible Escape: A True Story of Survival in Nazi Europe

Lexile: 850L



A true story of two Jewish teenagers racing against time during the Holocaust—one in hiding in Hungary, and the other in Auschwitz, plotting escape.

It is 1944. A teenager named Rudolph (Rudi) Vrba has made up his mind. After barely surviving nearly two years in the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland, he knows he *must* escape. Even if death is more likely.

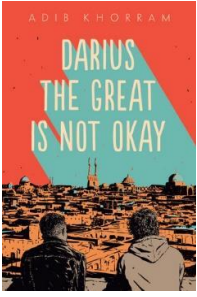
Rudi has learned the terrible secret hidden behind the heavily guarded fences of concentration camps across Nazi-occupied Europe: the methodical mass killing of Jewish prisoners. As trains full of people arrive daily, Rudi knows that the murders won't stop until he reveals the truth to the world—and that each day that passes means more lives are lost.

Lives like Rudi's schoolmate Gerta Sidonová. Gerta's family fled from Slovakia to Hungary, where they live under assumed names to hide their Jewish identity. But Hungary is beginning to cave under pressure from German Nazis. Her chances of survival become slimmer by the day.

The clock is ticking. As Gerta inches closer to capture, Rudi and his friend Alfred Wetzler begin their crucial steps towards an impossible escape. This is the true story of one of the most famous whistleblowers in the world, and how his death-defying escape helped save over 100,000 lives.

Darius the Great is Not Okay by Adib Khorram

Lexile: HL710

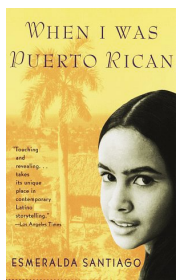


Darius Kellner speaks better Klingon than Farsi, and he knows more about Hobbit social cues than Persian ones. He's about to take his first-ever trip to Iran, and it's pretty overwhelming--especially when he's also dealing with clinical depression, a disapproving dad, and a chronically anemic social life. In Iran, he gets to know his ailing but still formidable grandfather, his loving grandmother, and the rest of his mom's family for the first time. And he meets Sohrab, the boy next door who changes everything. Sohrab makes sure people speak English so Darius can understand what's going on. He gets Darius an Iranian National Football Team jersey that makes him feel like a True Persian for the first time. And he understands that sometimes, best friends don't have to talk. Sohrab calls him Darioush--the original Persian version of his name--and Darius has never felt more like himself than he does now that he's Darioush to Sohrab. When it's time to go home to America, he'll have to find a way to be Darioush on his own.

When I Was Puerto Rican by Esmeralda Santiago

Lexile: 1020L

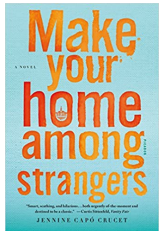
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Esmeralda Santiago's story begins in rural Puerto Rico, where her childhood was full of both tenderness and domestic strife, tropical sounds and sights as well as poverty. Growing up, she learned the proper way to eat a guava, the sound of tree frogs in the mango groves at night, the taste of the delectable sausage called morcilla, and the formula for ushering a dead baby's soul to heaven. As she enters school we see the clash, both hilarious and fierce, of Puerto Rican and Yankee culture. When her mother, Mami, a force of nature, takes off to New York with her seven, soon to be eleven children, Esmeralda, the oldest, must learn new rules, a new language, and eventually take on a new identity. In this first volume of her much-praised, bestselling trilogy, Santiago brilliantly recreates the idyllic landscape and tumultuous family life of her earliest years and her tremendous journey from the barrio to Brooklyn, from translating for her mother at the welfare office to high honors at Harvard.

Make Your Home Among Strangers by Jennine Capo Crucet

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When Lizet—the daughter of Cuban immigrants and the first in her family to graduate from high school—secretly applies and is accepted to an ultra-elite college, her parents are furious at her decision to leave Miami. Just weeks before she's set to start school, her parents divorce and her father sells her childhood home, leaving Lizet, her mother, and Leidy—Lizet's older sister, a brand-new single mom—without a steady income and scrambling for a place to live.

Amidst this turmoil, Lizet begins her first semester at Rawlings College, distracted by both the exciting and difficult moments of freshman year. But the privileged world of the campus feels utterly foreign, as does her new awareness of herself as a minority. Struggling both socially and academically, she returns to Miami for a surprise Thanksgiving visit, only to be overshadowed by the arrival of Ariel Hernandez, a young boy whose mother died fleeing with him from Cuba on a raft. The ensuing immigration battle puts Miami in a glaring spotlight, captivating the nation and entangling Lizet's entire family, especially her mother.

Pulled between life at college and the needs of those she loves, Lizet is faced with difficult decisions that will change her life forever. Urgent and mordantly funny, *Make Your Home Among Strangers* tells the moving story of a young woman torn between generational, cultural, and political forces; it's the new story of what it means to be American today.