



Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award
2022-2023 Booktalk Scripts
Young Adult



***Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley**

Someone is slinging a dangerous new form of meth around the reservation where Daunis' father's family lives, and the town of Sault Ste. Marie, where her mother was raised. One night, Daunis witnesses an agonizing death that throws her into the middle of a web of crimes that seems to keep spreading; the repercussions affecting both of her communities. Having put her plans for medical school aside to care for her maternal grandmother, Daunis enters the investigation and becomes determined to protect her community from more than one kind of predator. Ojibwe language and culture are interwoven into this page turner about an unforgettable heroine.

Author Website: <https://angelineboulley.com/>

Author Interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Knsndc96MRk>

Book Club Kit: <https://bookish.netgalley.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Firekeepers-Daughter-Book-Club-Kit.pdf>

Teacher's Guide: <http://www.mackidsschoolandlibrary.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Final-FKD-TeachersGuide.pdf>

*** *Black Birds in the Sky* by Brandy Colbert**

Did you know that June 1, 2021, marked the 100-year anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre? If you've never heard the story of the Greenwood District, now is the time! Greenwood, a.k.a. "America's Black Wall Street," was a thriving community until three violent days in 1921 led to its total destruction and the deaths of dozens of its residents. Author Brandy Colbert sets the stage with the ways Black Oklahomans found to "not only survive but also thrive" as Reconstruction led into the era of Jim Crow laws, the KKK, and lynchings. She interweaves these chapters with a day-by-day account of May 30 to June 1, 1921, so as you read you will understand what planted the seeds for the Greenwood massacre. The alleged assault of a white woman by a young Black man on May 30 was the tipping point but escalating racial violence and jealousy of Greenwood's economic success were all factors, too. One hundred years is long enough ... learn about Tulsa and the events of 1921 today!

Author Website: <https://www.brandycolbert.com/>

Author Speaks on the Tulsa Race Massacre: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01lxJeTNfA0>

Educator's Guide: <https://b0f646cfbd7462424f7a-f9758a43fb7c33cc8adda0fd36101899.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/teaching-guides/TG-9780063056664.pdf>

*Also recommended for grades 7 and 8

*** *Once Upon a Broken Heart* by Stephanie Garber**

How far will Evangeline Fox go to secure a happily ever after life for herself? When the love of her life decides to marry her stepsister, she makes a deal with Jacks, the Prince of Hearts, in order to stop the wedding. However, making a deal with one of the Fates is never what it seems to be. If you're interested in a magical, modern, fast-paced fairytale with curses, spell books, intrigue, and romance, you will definitely want to read this enchanting story.

Author Website: <https://stephaniegarberauthor.com/>

Author Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/stephanie_garber/

*** *This Is My Brain in Love* by I. W. Gregorio**

“No hanky-panky!” Jocelyn’s traditional father says to her when he realizes she likes the new employee they’ve hired in their family’s Chinese restaurant. Her father agreed they needed more help to grow the business so she was allowed to hire the handsome, quiet Will, who, along with Jocelyn’s best friend Priya, is working to advertise on social media and get more customers. Her father has Jocelyn and Will agree to a deal that involves improving the restaurant’s financial situation and Will’s tutoring Jocelyn’s younger brother to get his grades up before he and Jocelyn are allowed to date. Will works to keep his anxiety in check as the stress of it all leads Jocelyn to pull away from him, doubting his wealthy background, which makes him truly understand the dire situation her family is in. This is a romance with a realistic bumpy ride to true friendship and love.

Author Website: <http://www.iwgregorio.com/>

Educator’s Guide: <https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/This-Is-My-Brain-in-Love-Educator-Guide.pdf>

***White Smoke* by Tiffany D. Jackson**

Marigold’s blended family has just relocated from sunny California to the run-down midwestern town of Cedarville. Their historic house, still under renovation, is part of her mother’s Grow Where You’re Planted residency. As the artist-in-residence, the family will live in the home for free, which is important after Mari’s recent – and expensive – stay at Strawberry Pines Rehabilitation Center. It’s clear from page one that Mari is facing some pretty serious mental health challenges: setting medication reminders on her phone, repeating calming mantras, and obsessing about bedbugs. Meanwhile, Mari witnesses unexplained disturbances in the house, including strange noises, smells, and disappearing objects. Something is definitely wrong in her desolate neighborhood, but what is real and what is all in her head? *White Smoke* is a great choice for fans of haunted house stories, especially because Tiffany D. Jackson includes real reported ghostly incidents throughout the story! And look out for her signature plot twist!

Author Website: <https://www.writeinbk.com/>

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TzFkxITckU>

Author Q & A: <https://diversebooks.org/qa-with-tiffany-d-jackson-white-smoke/>

Author Inspiration: <https://ew.com/books/tiffany-d-jackson-shares-inspirations-behind-white-smoke-horror-novel/>

*Also recommended for grades 7 and 8

*** *Six Crimson Cranes* by Elizabeth Lim**

Princess Shiori, the emperor's only daughter, would rather jump in a lake than meet her betrothed from a snowy, distant realm. Literally. When Shiori discovers that her mysterious stepmother is hiding forbidden magical powers, as Shiori is herself, she sets in motion a series of events taking her and her six brothers through curses, quests, mistaken identities, outrageous escapes, and heartache. Along the way, Shiori – in disguise – must rely on her wits, a paper bird, a dragon, and the last young man she thought she'd ever start to fall for.

Author website: <https://www.elizabethlim.com/>

Author Q & A: <https://diversebooks.org/qa-with-elizabeth-lim-six-crimson-cranes/>

Excerpt and Audiobook Sample: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/646094/six-crimson-cranes-by-elizabeth-lim/>

***Last Night at the Telegraph Club* by Malinda Lo**

It's 1954. Lily Hu is a high school student who follows the rules, has a passion for rocket science, and lives in San Francisco's Chinatown. When she becomes friends with her classmate Kath Miller, Lily finally begins to feel like herself. The two girls sneak out to see a male impersonator at The Telegraph Club and begin to explore their feelings for each other despite the dangers of their love. This queer romance transports you to a time and place full of fear, questions, possibility, and hope.

Author Website: <https://www.malindalo.com/>

Author Introduces Book:

https://vimeo.com/465023293?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=112410106

Discussion Guide: https://storage.googleapis.com/classroom-portal-production/uploads/2021/04/14c031fb-lastnightatthetelegraphclub_discussionguide.pdf

Educator Resources and Prompts: <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/read-across-america/find-your-book/last-night-telegraph>

***Furia* by Yamile Saied Méndez**

On the soccer field, Camila is La Furia, an unstoppable force with a bright future sure to take her away from her small Argentinian city to college in the United States and, maybe one day, a career with the pros. Away from the field, she hides her skill and activity to maintain the precarious harmony of family life with her overbearing father and overly accommodating mother. Meanwhile, her brother is a rising star who seems to encounter no obstacles. When Diego, her childhood sweetheart turned world-famous footballer, comes home, Camila must decide where her priorities lie. Will she choose her love and passion for her home, for Diego, or for her own dreams?

Author Website: <https://yamilesmendez.com/>

Author Introduces Book: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bV15Pz7dzjY>

Author Insights: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4SwUlyO3BY>

Book Club Kit: https://d1bh17hrbsh0lf.cloudfront.net/product/9781643751894/downloadables/Mendez_Furia_BookClubKit_PBK_Final.pdf

*Also recommended for grades 7 and 8

*** *The Magic Fish* by Trung Le Nguyen**

Since Tien was a little boy, he has helped his Vietnamese parents, and especially his mom Hien/Helen, learn English by reading aloud from fairy tales and other library books. They share different versions of traditional stories like Cinderella and the Little Mermaid, which Trung Le Nguyen illustrates with beautiful drawings and colors. (In fact, each storyline is color-coded so you'll know exactly which section is part of a fairy tale and which is Tien's own story.) But real life isn't a fairy tale. Hien desperately misses her family in Vietnam, and Tien has a secret crush on a boy in his grade. He wants to come out to his parents, but he can't find the words in Vietnamese. Stories are meant to change with the times, the storyteller, and the listener. Can Tien and his family create their very own happily ever after?

Author Website: <http://www.trungles.com/main>

Podcast Episode: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekMKT3bDp6Q>

Author Interview: <https://ew.com/books/the-magic-fish-trung-le-nguyen-interview/>

***Donuts and Other Proclamations of Love* by Jared Reck**

Oscar can't wait for his senior year to be over so he can start working full-time with his grandfather on their food truck. With the exception of public speaking and Foods classes, he hates school. When super student Mary Louise, aka Lou, wants him to help her make baked goods out of thousands of student-rejected apples from the cafeteria, he's not happy. He likes his simple life playing Mario Kart with his Swedish grandfather, Farfar, and helping him run their food truck on the weekends. When Farfar asks Lou to help them out one Saturday, Oscar's irritation with her ratchets up. When their project to reduce food waste ends up getting the attention of the school board and the community, Oscar learns he has more in common with Lou than he thought. This romantic comedy is funny and heartwarming as Oscar and Lou deal with difficult life-changing events together.

Author Website: <https://www.jaredreckbooks.com/>

Excerpt and Audiobook Sample: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/549850/donuts-and-other-proclamations-of-love-by-jared-reck/>

***Concrete Rose* by Angie Thomas**

Garden Heights isn't the easiest neighborhood to grow up in. A young Maverick Carter is navigating his way through his place in the King Lords, where he is labeled a "lil homie." He has some big decisions to make after a tragic death and he realizes he has more responsibilities than he realized. Follow Maverick on his new journey through the city he loves and watch as he attempts to evolve into someone he can respect. Will he stay out of trouble with the King Lords, or will he step up to take care of his new responsibilities?

Author Website: <https://angiethomas.com/>

Book Trailer: <https://youtu.be/XwdyA8Q6Jx4>

Discussion Guide: <https://b0f646cfbd7462424f7a-f9758a43fb7c33cc8adda0fd36101899.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/teaching-guides/TG-9780062846716.pdf>

*Also recommended for grades 7 and 8

*** *Fadeaway* by E. B. Vickers**

Everyone has secrets ... What were Jake's? That's the question at the heart of this addictive puzzle of a story! At the state championship basketball game, all eyes were on Jake, the star player who scored the winning points with his signature fadeaway. But the next morning, no one knows where he is. It's as if he's vanished into thin air. Author E.B. Vickers tells this story from the perspectives of Jake's best friend Kolt, his ex-girlfriend Daphne, and his younger brother Luke, who all have questions about where Jake could be. Was he abducted, is he off somewhere taking a breather from the pressures of his life, or is it something much more complicated? Luke writes poems to try and understand his brother's disappearance, while Daphne takes the investigation into her own hands. Transcripts of the characters' statements to the police also deepen the mystery. Rumors, secrets, and little white lies are revealed in the build-up to finding out what really happened to Jake.

Author's Website: <https://www.elainevickers.com/>

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aw675slRVE8>

Reading Guide: <https://www.elainevickers.com/beyond-the-book-guides/>

***From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry* by Paula Yoo**

If a person beats someone to death with a baseball bat, should they go to prison? In Detroit, in 1982, just a week before he was to be married, Vincent Chin was beaten to death by a man he had argued with in a bar. The man and his stepson were each given a \$3,000 fine and probation. Why? Was it a hate crime? It's a complicated story, one that will keep you turning pages as you learn the details of the time period and the area in which the murder took place. Vincent Chin's death rallied the Asian American community like never before. Forty years later, it is eye-opening to read about the details of Vincent's case and to compare them to violence against Asian Americans today. Anyone who is fascinated by criminal justice and true crime TV will devour this all-too-true crime story.

Author Website: <https://paulayoo.com/>

Discussion Questions: <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/read-across-america/find-your-book/whisper-rallying-cry>

Discussion Questions: <https://edicottonquilt.com/2021/05/03/discussion-questions/>

***Super Fake Love Song* by David Yoon**

What would you do to impress someone you like who seems way cooler than you? Sunny Dae lets super-cool Cirrus believe he is the leader of a rock band and his lie spins out of control. Sunny starts dressing like a rock star and talks his two best friends into being part of the fake band that actually begins to practice. Suddenly, Sunny starts to feel "cool." Can he keep the lie going without Cirrus finding out the truth and without hurting his friends? Who does Sunny really want to be? This funny, witty story explores what it takes to be true to yourself.

Author Website: <https://www.davidyoon.com/>

Book Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ph5Hnt_-xfg

Excerpt and Audiobook Sample: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/598580/super-fake-love-song-by-david-yoon/>

*Also recommended for grades 7 and 8

***In the Wild Light* by Jeff Zentner**

Cash and Delaney have always been best friends. He is looking forward to spending the summer mowing lawns while she works at the local Dairy Queen. Things are usually quiet around their small Appalachian town, but they certainly aren't easy. Cash lost his mother to her addiction and he currently lives with his Papaw, who has emphysema. When Delaney gets a scholarship to an elite prep school in another state, she somehow secures a full ride for Cash, as well. He now has to make a choice: stick by his best friend, leave his sick Papaw and go to a new school where he will always be out of place, or give up this opportunity and stay where he's most comfortable.

Author Website: <https://www.jeffzentnerbooks.com/>

Author Interview: <https://thenerdaily.com/jeff-zentner-author-interview/>

Audiobook Excerpt: https://www.teachingbooks.net/book_reading.cgi?a=1&id=24842