



Soaring Eagle Award Book Talks 2020-2021



Truly Devious by Maureen Johnson

Genre: Mystery

This is the first book in a series of three. Absolutely a great fast read. From first page to the last this is difficult to put down. What's not to love about a mystery? It jumps back and forth between current and past time, while a young coming of age detective finds herself in a current murder mystery. The story takes place at an exclusive boarding school for unique learning talents in junior or senior year. This academy is by invite and costs the family nothing. With the chance to better themselves, some come from wealthy families and others not so much. The main character is incredible and keeps you wanting more. While the past unfolds in a mysterious kidnapping and missing persons, the current time allows the main character to attempt to solve the mystery while finding herself in the middle of a murder case. There are numerous clues and hints of what happened as the story unfolds and opens the past into the present. A highly recommended read for any young person to adult.

Library of Lost Things by Laura Taylor Namey

Genre: Romance

Darcy Wells is a literary genius who can name title and author for any quote she is given and lives her life with “advice” from novels. She lives with her mother, a compulsive shopper, and shoulders the majority of responsibilities, decisions and finances of their lives. Just as her life grows more difficult with housing issues, Asher Fleet, a former teen pilot, walks into the bookstore where Darcy works both complicating and enriching her life. Suddenly, words and books fail Darcy as she wonders if letting Asher in is a possibility and/or a good idea.

Verify by Joelle Charbonneau

Genre: Science Fiction/Dystopian

Meri Beckley lives in a calm, peaceful world without lies or conflict. She is content with her peaceful Chicago life until her mother dies and questions arise that no one is able or willing to answer for her. As she explores the last days of her mother’s life, she discovers a secret world of facts and a history that she was never taught in school. Does she embrace and try to verify this world of “truth” or stay with the life and world that she has always known? The choice could quite possibly get her killed.

Grenade by Alan Gratz

Genre: Historical Fiction

In 1945, during WWII, the island of Okinawa was occupied by the Japanese. When they learned an American invasion force was coming, they gave all the school boys two homemade grenades each and told them to go blow up the Marines when they landed. Hideki has been taught by the Japanese that the Americans are monsters, but when he sees them he isn't sure who are the real monsters. What will Hideki do with his grenades in this retelling of the Battle of Okinawa?

Shout by Laurie Halse Anderson

Genre: Nonfiction; Memoir

Written in verse, Laurie Halse Anderson shares her own personal stories from her life that she has never written about before. She writes of events that will resonate with many and gives others encouragement and a voice to share their difficulties. Written 20 years after *Speak*, Anderson talks of society's failures but also the courage of many that have and will say #metoo and #timesup. Her voice is a clear shout for everyone to hear and act.

They Both Die at the End by Adam Silvera

Genre: Social Issues

What would you do if you knew you had less than 24 hours to live? Hide in your room? Visit all your friends and family? Choose the way you die? A company called Death-Cast calls with the knowledge that you will die sometime within the next day. You may have minutes or hours. No one knows how Death-Cast knows but they are never wrong. Mateo receives his call and uses the Last Friend app to find someone in the same situation because he doesn't want to spend his last day alone in his room. Rufus is beating up his ex-girlfriend's new boyfriend for talking bad about him when he gets the call from Death-Cast. His foster brothers and family are devastated and mourning together when the cops burst in to arrest Rufus. He runs away and reaches out on the Last Friends app, finding Mateo. Rufus and Mateo form a true connection in the last hours of their lives. This is a great book about death and the things that make life worth living, but don't expect a happy ending.

Solo by Kwame Alexander

Genre: Social Issues

It isn't easy being the son of a famous drug addicted musician. All Blaze wants to do is live his life without his dad messing it up, but his dad can't seem to help it. After a cringe-worthy graduation event and getting banned from his girlfriend's house (again), Blaze is ready to be done with his father completely. What he doesn't expect is to discover his dad isn't even his real dad. With his entire world turned upside down and crashing around him, Blaze decides he will leave everything he knows to find his birth mother... in Africa. This story in prose interspersed with song titles and references is a musical journey about finding love and family.

Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald

Genre: Social issues

The main character of this book does not speak, until the end; that is because Teddy has suffered a head injury that landed him in a coma after football training camp. We all know that these types of injuries are not common in football, so what happened to Teddy? The story unfolds as the reader "hears" what Teddy did in his hospital room and through social media posts and newspaper articles. Join in to find what actually happened that fateful day of camp!

Ash Princess by Laura Sebastian

Genre: Fantasy

For 10 years Thora has been held captive by the people that murdered her mother; for 10 years Thora has had to watch her lands be decimated; for 10 years Thora has been known as the "Ash Princess" a title to keep her in line; and for 10 years she has not heard *her* name, Princess Theodosia...that all ends NOW! Join Theo and a small band of rebels as they fight to reclaim what was taken from them all those years ago! First of a trilogy (all of which have been released, you will want to read them all!)

Wizard for Hire by Obert Skye

Genre: Fantasy

"The worst thing a person can do is to give space to regret. Why should the past have such crippling power?" *Wizard for Hire* is a spell-binding tale. Ozzy's parents were kidnapped when he was 7. Since their disappearance, he's lived alone in the Oregon woods; now 14, Ozzy is ready to find answers. Armed with a talking mechanical bird and possible wizard named Ren, the trio sets off on an unforgettable journey!