



## Sunshine State Young Readers Award Books 2021-2022 List for Grades 6-8



### ***Cleo Porter and the Body Electric* by Jake Burt**

A woman is dying. Cleo Porter has her medicine. And no way to deliver it. Like everyone else, twelve-year-old Cleo and her parents are sealed in an apartment without windows or doors. They never get visitors. Their food is dropped off by drones. So they're safe. Safe from the disease that nearly wiped humans from the earth. Safe from everything. The trade-off? They're alone. Thus, when they receive a package clearly meant for someone else—a package containing a substance critical for a stranger's survival—Cleo is stuck. As a surgeon-in-training, she knows the clock is ticking. But people don't leave their units. Not ever. Until now.



### ***Charlie Thorne and the Last Equation* by Stuart Gibbs**

The CIA forces twelve-year-old Charlotte "Charlie" Thorne, a rebellious genius, to use her code-breaking skills on an epic global chase to locate Einstein's last equation before dangerous agents discover it and unlock the solution to harnessing energy.



### ***When Stars Are Scattered* by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed**

Omar Mohamed was a child when soldiers attacked his village in Somalia. Separated from his parents, he and his younger brother, Hassan, eventually made their way to Dadaab. Living in this crowded refugee camp in Kenya, Omar spends his days scrambling for food and taking care of Hassan, who is nonverbal and suffers from debilitating seizures. A chance to attend school is a dream come true, but the opportunity weighs heavily on Omar; school is a selfish choice when you have no parents and a brother who needs constant care.



### ***The Unteachables* by Gordon Korman**

The Unteachables are a notorious class of misfits, delinquents, and academic train wrecks. Like Aldo, with anger management issues; Parker, who can't read; Kiana, who doesn't even belong in the class—or any class; and Elaine (rhymes with pain). The Unteachables have been removed from the student body and isolated in room 117. Their teacher is Mr. Zachary Kermit, the most burned-out teacher in all of Greenwich. He was once a rising star, but his career was shattered by a cheating scandal that still haunts him. After years of phoning it in, he is finally one year away from early retirement. But the superintendent has his own plans to torpedo that idea—and it involves assigning Mr. Kermit to the Unteachables. The Unteachables never thought they'd find a teacher who had a worse attitude than they did. And Mr. Kermit never thought he would actually care about teaching again. Over the course of a school year, though, room 117 will experience mayhem, destruction—and maybe even a shot at redemption.



### ***Me and Banksy* by Tanya Lloyd Kyi**

A Banksy-style protest against cameras in classrooms brings a group of middle-grade students together. Dominica's private school is covered in cameras, and someone is hacking into them and posting embarrassing moments for the whole school to see; Like Ana picking her nose. When Dominica quickly changes her shirt from inside out in what she thinks is the privacy of a quiet corner in the library, she's shocked – and embarrassed – to discover a video has captured this and is currently circulating amongst her school-mates. So mortifying, especially since over the past three years, they've had a half-dozen school talks about social media safety. Who has access to the school security cameras and why are they doing this? Dominica and her best friends, Holden and Saanvi, are determined to find out, and in the process start an art-based student campaign against cameras in the classroom.



### ***The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl* by Stacy McAnulty**

If you can survive a bolt of lightning, you can survive middle school...right? Lucy was struck by lightning when she was eight; turning her into a math savant with genius level math skills and some quirky OCD issues. Now that Lucy is twelve, she's technically ready for college. Except Lucy's grandma wants her to survive just one year of middle school. Lucy must: Go to middle school for 1 year. Make 1 friend. Join 1 activity. And read 1 book (that's NOT a math textbook.)



### ***Jinxed* by Amy McCulloch**

Lacey Chu is a girl who codes. She has always dreamed of working as an engineer for MONCHA, the biggest tech firm in the world and the company behind the "baku"—a customizable "pet" with all the capabilities of a smartphone. But when Lacey is rejected by the elite academy that promises that future, she's crushed.

One night, Lacey comes across the broken form of a highly advanced baku. After she repairs it, the cat-shaped baku she calls Jinx opens its eyes and somehow gets her into her dream school. But Jinx is different from any other baku she's ever seen... He seems real. As Lacey settles into life at school, competing with the best students in a battle of the bakus that tests her abilities, she learns that Jinx is part of a dangerous secret. Can Lacey hold on to Jinx and her dreams for the future?

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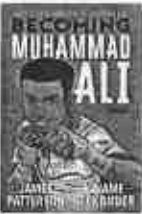
### **Bloom by Kenneth Oppel**

The invasion begins—but not as you'd expect. It begins with rain. Rain that carries seeds. Seeds that sprout—overnight, everywhere. These new plants take over crop fields, twine up houses, and burrow below streets. They bloom—and release toxic pollens. They bloom—and form Venus flytrap-like pods that swallow animals and people. They bloom—everywhere, unstoppable. Or are they? Three kids on a remote island seem immune to the toxic plants: Anaya, Petra, Seth. They each have strange allergies—and yet not to the plants. What's their secret? Can they somehow be the key to beating back this invasion? They'd better figure it out fast, because it's starting to rain, again....



### **Bouncing Back by Scott Ostler**

Thirteen-year-old Carlos Cooper used to be the star of the team. Back in his old basketball league, he took every shot he possibly could - even if he had to steal it from a teammate - and he made every single one of them. But, on his new wheelchair basketball team, he's back to being just one of the players, nothing special. When the city closes down his league's gym, Carlos soon finds himself even more adrift. Without the gym, they can't practice, and if they can't practice, they might as well kiss their dreams of a State Championship win goodbye. It's only by learning to work together that Carlos and his new teammates will be able to save their gym, and Carlos will have to learn what it takes to be a member of the team so he can fully embrace his new friends.



### **Becoming Muhammad Ali by James Patterson and Kwame Alexander**

Before he was a household name, Cassius Clay was a kid with struggles like any other. Kwame Alexander and James Patterson join forces to vividly depict his life up to age seventeen in both prose and verse, including his childhood friends, struggles in school, the racism he faced, and his discovery of boxing. Readers will learn about Cassius's family and neighbors in Louisville, Kentucky, and how, after a thief stole his bike, Cassius began training as an amateur boxer at age twelve. Before long, he won his first Golden Gloves bout and began his transformation into the unrivaled Muhammad Ali.



### **Wildfire: A Novel by Rodman Philbrick**

Thirteen-year-old Sam Castine is at summer camp while his mother is in rehab, but when the camp is evacuated ahead of a fast moving wildfire, he makes the mistake of going back for his phone. He finds himself left behind, disoriented, and running for his life. Together with a girl, Delphy, from a different camp, they work to survive. Finding an old jeep keeps them going, but in the wilds of Maine, there are only logging roads and the deadly fire is everywhere.



### **A Wish in the Dark by Christina Soontornvat**

All light in Chattana is created by one man — the Governor, who appeared after the Great Fire to bring peace and order to the city. For Pong, who was born in Namwon Prison, the magical lights represent freedom, and he dreams of the day he will be able to walk among them. But when Pong escapes from prison, he realizes that the world outside is no fairer than the one behind bars. Nok, the prison warden's perfect daughter, is bent on tracking Pong down and restoring her family's good name. But as Nok hunts Pong through the alleys and canals of Chattana, she uncovers secrets that make her question the truths she has always held dear.



### **Coop Knows the Scoop by Taryn Souders**

*The whole town is talking about what's buried beneath the playground...*

Windy Bottom, Georgia is usually a peaceful place. Coop helps his mom at her café and bookstore, hangs out with his grandpa, bikes around with his friends, Justice and Liberty, and is determined to live up to his dad's legacy. Windy Bottom is full of all kinds of interesting people, but no one has ever caused a problem. Until now. And somehow, Gramps is taking all the blame! It seems like there are a lot of secrets that were buried in their small town after all... Will Coop and his friends get to the bottom of the mystery and clear Gramps's name before it's too late?



### **Clean Getaway by Nic Stone**

**How to Go on an Unplanned Road Trip with Your Grandma:**

**Grab a Suitcase:** Prepacked from the big spring break trip that got CANCELLED. **Fasten Your Seatbelt:** G'ma's never conventional, so this trip won't be either. **Use the Green Book:** G'ma's most treasured possession. It holds history, memories, and most important, the way home.

**What Not to Bring:**

**A Cell Phone:** Avoid contact with Dad at all costs. Even when G'ma starts acting stranger than usual. Set against the backdrop of the segregation history of the American South, take a trip with this *New York Times* bestseller with an eleven-year-old boy who is about to discover that the world hasn't always been a welcoming place for kids like him, and things aren't always what they seem—his G'ma included.



### **The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA by Brenda Woods**

Gabriel, twelve, gains new perspective when he becomes friends with Meriwether, a Black World War II hero who has recently returned to the unwelcoming Jim Crow South in South Carolina. As their friendship develops, Gabriel's eyes are opened to new realizations.