

Selected and annotated by Anna Lapp

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Take a look in our book stacks, and you might notice an inordinate number of books with the word “girl” in the title. From YA to middle grade and even picture books, “girl” is both an identifier and a popular title trend. Check out a few of these books—published in the last few years—and see what you make of a common word among a diverse group of stories.

Barnhill, Kelly *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*. Algonquin, 2016. 400p. Gr. 5-8.

In this bildungsroman fairy tale, the people of the Protectorate annually give a baby up to the evil witch in the forest, believing this will keep them safe. Little do they know the witch, Xan, is good: she gives the abandoned children starlight and takes them to wonderful families on the other side of the forest. One year, she accidentally feeds the child moonlight, giving her a special magic. Xan raises the child on her own, names her Luna, and is determined to keep her safe. As time passes, the townspeople decide to kill the witch, and it is up to Luna to bring forth her magic and save the only world she’s known.

Bassoff, Leah. *Lost Girl Found*; by Leah Bassoff and Laura DeLuca. Greenwood, 2014. 212p. Gr. 8-12.

Poni’s life in Southern Sudan has a repeat cycle: school, stay away from boys, watch out for the treacherous river. Until the war comes. As her home is invaded, Poni must run for her life, facing many travails along the way and using her personal strength to surpass dangers. In this dramatic and heart wrought story, Poni must make an excruciating decision for the sake of her own future.

Engle, Margarita *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl’s Courage Changed Music*; illus. by Rafael López. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. 42p. 4-8 yrs.

This charming picture book, based on the true story of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, tells the tale of a girl dreamer in Cuba who wants to play the drums. Unfortunately, only boys can play the drums. But she continues to dream and beat to her own tune, and her persistence changes the feelings of those around her so both boys and girls can play the drums and dream their dreams.

Foxlee, Karen *A Most Magical Girl*. Knopf, 2016. 224p. Gr. 5-8.

Annabel Grey has been raised for a proper life in Victorian England. But when her mother disappears and she is entrusted into the care of her two peculiar aunts, her life is—poof!—full of magic! Filled with broomsticks, wizards, and an unlikely friendship with a fellow young witch, Annabel experiences life quite unlike what she was raised for.

Girard, M-E *Girl Mans Up*. Tegen/HarperCollins, 2016. 384p. Gr. 8-10.

For Pen, it's hard to be herself in her strict Portuguese-American family. After her brother leaves, Pen seeks solace in her large group of guy friends, but starts to realize their less than respectable behavior towards girls. When Pen finally admits her own feelings to herself, she starts a relationship with her first girlfriend and begins breaking all her parent's rules. In this book about identity, Pen has to defy the norm to find her true self.

Glasgow, Kathleen *Girl in Pieces*. Delacorte, 2016. 416p. Gr. 9-12.

Girl in Pieces tells the story of Charlotte Davis. To forget her many losses, the seventeen-year-old self harms to find calm. Charlotte's story follows her from rehab to Arizona to the music industry, taking a windy, sometimes heartbreaking road to self-discovery.

Gonzales, Andrea *Girl Code: Gaming, Going Viral, and Getting It Done*; by Andrea Gonzales and Sophie Houser. Harper/HarperCollins, 2017. 272p. Gr. 6-9.

Want a girl power packed book? Then this is for you! *Girl Code* is the true story of two summer camp coding buds that bonded and created the viral video game "Tampon Run." Learn about how they met, made the game, and had one heck of a time taking the coding world by storm.

Goodman, Susan E. *The First Step: How One Girl Put Segregation on Trial*; illus. by E. B. Lewis. Bloomsbury, 2016. 40p. 6-10 yrs.

In 1847, four-year-old Sarah Roberts was suddenly kicked out of school. She was told her school was only for white children. This ground-breaking picture book centers on Sarah's story: the first court case to challenge segregation in schools and the first supreme court case argued by an African American lawyer. Check this title out to see work towards equality a century preceding the Civil Rights movement.

Grey, Melissa *The Girl at Midnight*. Delacorte, 2015. 368p. Gr. 6-9.

An ancient race of magical people—the Avicen—are hidden from humankind. All except Echo, a girl who's only ever known life as an Avicen and fiercely loves her people. When a war breaks out on her home front, she takes matters into her own hands and seeks out the power of peace in a magical entity: the firebird. But her quest for the firebird might just set the world on fire.

Hale, Shannon *The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl: Squirrel Meets World*; by Shannon Hale and Dean Hale. Marvel, 2017. 336p. Gr. 5-9.

Moving to the suburbs of New Jersey from California is a new adventure, especially when you have to hide your tail! Doreen Green, a squirrel girl, has trouble adjusting to her new town until she decides to use her powers against some troublemakers and –boom!— she is born anew as a cool squirrel superhero.

Hall, Shyima. *Hidden Girl: The True Story of a Modern-Day Child Slave*; by Shyima Hall and Lisa Wysocky. Simon, 2014. 240p. Gr. 7-10.

Shyima Hall was the seventh child in her family. Her parents were destitute, and sold her into childhood slavery where she worked 16 hours work days. When the family she was enslaved to moved from Cairo, Egypt to Orange County, California her slavery continued, hidden from plain sight. Shyima's harrowing true tale as a slave child hits hard, but her determination to speak out against human trafficking is awe-inspiring.

Jamieson, Victoria. *Roller Girl*. Dial, 2015. 240 p. Gr. 4-7.

Astrid and Nicole are best friends and always have been. But when Astrid excitedly signs up for Roller Derby camp and Nicole has other plans, this middle school friendship may be deteriorating. In this colorfully drawn graphic novel, Astrid's difficult venture into roller derby and friendships is packed with a punch of girl power!

Kanefield, Teri. *The Girl from the Tar Paper School: Barbara Rose Johns and the Advent of the Civil Rights Movement*. Abrams, 2014. 56p. Gr. 5-8.

Barbara Johns: teen activist. The year: 1951. This biography mixed with the social history of the early Civil Rights era follows one girl's movement to fight against segregation in her school; her movement preceded Rosa Parks, Little Rock Nine and Martin Luther King Jr.—making her act of civil nonviolent disobedience the first of its kind. With a woman who later became a librarian as the star of this book, what more could inspire you?

Keil, Melissa *The Incredible Adventures of Cinnamon Girl*; illus. by Mike Lawrence. Peachtree, 2016. 304p. Gr. 8-10.

Alba loves her life. She works and lives next to the bakery owned by her mom in their remote town in Australia. But when an apocalypse prediction forecasts her town to be the only place of survival, all sorts of odd people come flooding in. Alba's life takes a few funny twists with this apocalyptic prediction and her own fair share of boy troubles too. In this quirky novel, Alba learns that her own issues might outweigh the threat of doomsday.

Kelly, Jacqueline *Skunked!: Calpurnia Tate, Girl Vet*; illus. by Teagan White. Holt, 2016. 112p. Gr. 2-4.

This younger age series features the beloved characters from *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, with a focus on Calpurnia's vet skills. Calpurnia Tate has a proclivity for science, which might seem unusual for her small Texan town at the turn of the century. When Callie's younger brother Travis comes to her with an injured skunk, she is on the job. The question is: will the skunk stink up the process?

Moss, Miriam *Girl on a Plane*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016. 288p. Gr. 7-10.

It's 1970 and Anna has just spent a hot summer with her family in Jordan. She boards a plane to return to her English boarding school, but her plane never makes it to the destination. Her flight is hijacked by Palestinian guerillas that use the passengers as hostage, claiming if their demands aren't met in 3 days, they'll kill them all. Follow this nail biter to discover Anna's fate!

Rivers, Karen *The Girl in the Well Is Me*. Algonquin, 2016. 224p. Gr. 5-7.

When Kammie Summers moves to a new town with her family, she desperately wants to make friends and follows an "initiation" for a club of popular girls. When she falls down a well during the initiation, the girls tell her they'll go find help. As the hours tick by, Kammie has all the time in the world to contemplate her life, her struggles, and her ups and downs. The emotional suspense behind Kammie's journey will keep you reading to find out just what happens.

Russo, Meredith *If I Was Your Girl*. Flatiron, 2016. 272p. Gr. 9-12.

She's a new girl in a new town in a new school, and all Amanda Hardy wants is to be herself. But she harbors a secret about why she transferred and she doesn't want to let anyone too close to learn. When Amanda meets Grant, things start to change. She yearns to tell him the truth, but she's terrified of telling him about her past as Andrew.

Stoop, Naoko. *Red Knit Cap Girl to the Rescue*; written and illus. by Naoko Stoop. Tingley/Little, 2013. 36p. 4-6 yrs.

Red Knit Cap Girl has a dream larger than life: to meet the moon. She plays with her animal friends in the magical forest, but she still wants to meet the moon. With the help and ingenuity of her friends, Red Knit Cap Girl is up for a mission.

Wittlinger, Ellen *Local Girl Swept Away*. Merit, 2016. 269p. Gr. 7-10.

Lorna, Finn, Jackie and Lucas are inseparable. As the leader of the group, Lorna decides to take the group to new heights—walking on the breakwater of their Cape Cod tourist town. But when Lorna suddenly disappears in the churning waters, the group dynamic shifts. Jackie is lost without her out-of-this-world best friend, her hidden feelings for Lorna's boyfriend Finn threaten to expose themselves, and Lucas's extreme silence seems to hide a secret.