

2026 Nominees

For more information about the award, please visit www.riteenbookaward.org



***Becoming a Queen* by Dan Clay**

Gay teen Mark Davis turns toward love, self-expression, and the power of drag to overcome grief when the unthinkable happens.



***Bright Red Fruit* by Safia Elhillo**

A novel in verse about Samira's journey into the slam poetry scene and the dangerous new relationship that could threaten all her dreams.



***Call Me Iggy* by Jorge Aguirre & Rafael Rosado**

Colombian American teen Iggy searches for his place in his family, his school, his community, and ultimately, his country - with a little help from the ghost of his abuelito.



***The Color of a Lie* by Kim Johnson**

In 1955, a Black family passes for white and moves to a "Whites Only" town in the suburbs, but Calvin puts his family at risk as he uncovers the town's racist secrets.



***A Deathly Compendium of Poisonous Plants* by Rebecca Hirsch**

This entertaining compendium delves into nature's deadliest plants and their fascinating histories as implements of medicine, warfare, and foul play.



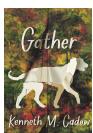
***Everything We Never Had* by Randy Ribay**

In this emotionally charged, moving novel, four generations of Filipino American boys grapple with identity, masculinity, and their fraught father-son relationships.



***Full Shift* by Jennifer Dugan**

Equal parts action-packed and full of laughs, this graphic novel explores found family, the charm and intensity of first crushes, and what it means to truly embrace who you are.



***Gather* by Kenneth M Cadow**

A resourceful teenager in rural Vermont struggles to hold on to the family home while his mom recovers from addiction in this striking debut novel.



***The Great Cool Ranch Dorito in the Sky* by Josh Glarza**

Ever since cancer invaded his adoptive mother's life, Brett feels like he's losing everything, most of all control.



***Greymist Fair* by Francesca Zappia**

This suspenseful and inventive murder mystery is infused with magic and inspired by the lesser-known fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm.



***Homebody* by Theo Parish**

Theo tells the heartwarming story of discovering how to live life on their own terms through beautiful illustrations and lyrical text.



***I Shall Never Fall in Love* by Hari Conner**

A romantic graphic novel mash-up of Jane Austen novels—where two friends discover their feelings for each other and find a space in their world for their love and identity.



***Icarus* by K Ancrum**

Seventeen year old Icarus breaks into an art collector's home to steal valuable artworks and replace them with forgeries created by his father in this reimagined myth.



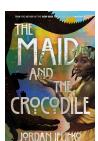
***The Invocations* by Krystal Sutherland**

A darkly seductive witchy thriller where, though both men and demons lurk in shadows, girls refuse to go quietly into the night.



***Looking for Smoke* by K A Cobell**

Four teens are suspects in their friend's murder on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana in this thriller told through all four points of view.



***The Maid and the Crocodile* by Jordan Ifueko**

Orphaned Small Sade, a curse-eater, fights to make a home for herself while contending with a cursed god in this novel set in the same world as the Raybearer series.



***Shadowed* by Carl Deuker**

Nate forges a tentative relationship with outcast neighbor, Lucas, through one on one basketball games before they join a team and Nate learns that life is about more than just getting ready for the next game.



***Six Truths and a Lie* by Ream Shukairy**

Six Muslim teens are falsely accused of a deadly attack in this timely and harrowing examination of America's justice system.



***Twenty-four Seconds from Now* by Jason Reynolds**

Neon and Aria are ready to take their relationship to the next level, if Neon can just get out of his own head (and the bathroom he has locked himself in).



***The Wilderness of Girls* by Madeline Claire Franklin**

Rhi discovers a pack of feral girls in the woods and is swept up in the ensuing mystery in this exploration of trauma, found family and the possibility of magic.