

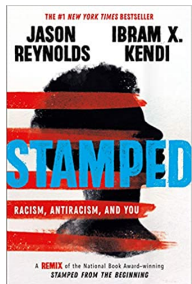


[Sigh, Gone by Phuc Tran](#)

Sigh, Gone is my favorite book of the year thus far. Each chapter follows Phuc's life in rural Pennsylvania, and is set against a famous novel (The Scarlet Letter, A Christmas Carol, The Autobiography of Malcolm X just to name a few). What follows is a punk rock literary story that will have you angry at the world one minute and smiling the next. (Some adult content)

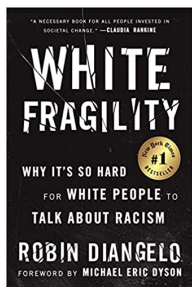
[Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo](#)

Acevedo is three for three. In this YA novel, two worlds collide together after the plane crash of Flight 587. How these two teenager's lives connect is both shocking and important. In Acevedo's trademark verse, Clap When You Land is more than worth your time.



[Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You by Jason Alexander and Ibram X. Kendi](#)

A remixed version of the book Stamped, this new version reveals the racist roots of American culture, schools and history. One of the most important reads of the year. This is the book that points to all the information we're missing.



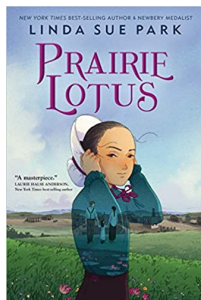
[White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo](#)

If Stamped is about what we're missing, White Fragility is about what we're doing wrong. This book asks you to look inwards. If your stance is, "I'm not racist" and "I have never participated in racist structures" - this is the book for you.

Not without its flaws (it is written from a white perspective afterall) it still remains eye opening and terrifying.

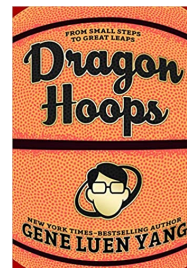
[Prairie Lotus by Linda Sue Park](#)

The only middle grade book on my list, Prairie Lotus is one of the year's best books. Following the story of Hanna, a half-Chinese, half-white girl whose father is in search of a better life. When they arrive in the Dakota territory, her life is going to change. But the dangers that lurk here feel all too real. Set against the Chinese Massacre of 1871, Prairie Lotus is one of the most important books of the year.



[Saint X by Alexis Schaitkin](#)

The Caribbean Resort of Saint X is full of laughter and fun until a dead girl's body turns up. The story that follows occurs nearly a decade later. Stalking and reclusiveness begin to permeate the deceased's sister. This is the kind of water cooler talk that will have everyone gossiping. (Some adult content)



[Dragon Hoops by Gene Luen Yang](#)

A graphic-memoir of sorts, Yang's book looks at his school's basketball team which is going for victory at the California State Championship. But to understand the present, Yang needs to explore the past, which is often filled with its own dark secrets.

[American Dirt by Jeanine Cummings](#)

Despite the controversy, I still think American Dirt is worth your time. This is by far the most action packed book on this list. What occurs on the border isn't the pearl clutching shock that Cummings is accused of; instead, it's a harrowing look at the lives of immigrants in want of something more. (Adult content)



[Such a Fun Age by Kiley Reid](#)

When Emira Tucker is in a grocery store, she's accused of kidnapping the white child she is caring for. Caught on camera, the incident involving a security guard and a near arrest changes the world of Emira and the privileged woman she works for Alix.

What Alix doesn't know is to understand Emira, she has to confront her privilege that she continues to ignore. (Adult content)



[Almost American Girl by Robin Ha](#)

Robin's world is shaken as she moves from Seoul, Korea to Alabama. What she thought would be a vacation turns into a permanent residence. With limited English and no friends, Robin needs to learn to navigate America with seemingly no support. Beautifully drawn, this is a quiet book about the lone outcast that demands our attention.