

EOPL's Recommended YA Sci-Fi & Dystopia

***Internment* – Samira Ahmed**

Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens. With the help of newly made friends also trapped within the internment camp, her boyfriend on the outside, and an unexpected alliance, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom, leading a revolution against the internment camp's Director.

***Feed* – M. T. Anderson**

For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon — a chance to party during spring break. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its ever-present ability to categorize human thoughts and desires.

***Ship Breaker* – Paolo Bacigalupi**

In America's Gulf Coast region, where grounded oil tankers are being broken down for parts, Nailer, a teenage boy, works the light crew, scavenging for copper wiring just to make quota--and hopefully live to see another day. But when, by luck or chance, he discovers an exquisite clipper ship beached during a recent hurricane, Nailer faces the most important decision of his life: Strip the ship for all it's worth or rescue its lone survivor, a beautiful and wealthy girl who could lead him to a better life.

***Contagion* – Erin Bowman**

After receiving a distress call from a drill team on a distant planet, a skeleton crew is sent into deep space to perform a standard search-and-rescue mission.

When they arrive, they find the planet littered with the remains of the project—including its members' dead bodies. As they try to piece together what could have possibly decimated an entire project, they discover that some things are best left buried—and some monsters are only too ready to awaken.

***Any Sign of Life* – Rae Carson**

Paige Miller is determined to take her basketball team to the state championship, maybe even beyond. But as March Madness heats up, Paige falls deathly ill. Days later, she wakes up attached to an IV and learns that the whole world has perished. Everyone she loves, and all of her dreams for the future—they're gone.

But Paige is a warrior. She pushes through her fear and her grief and gets through each day scrounging for food, for shelter, for safety. As she struggles with her new reality, Paige learns that the apocalypse did not happen by accident. And that there are worse things than being alone.

***The Hunger Games* – Suzanne Collins**

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen regards it as a death sentence when she steps forward to take her sister's place in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead before—and survival, for her, is second nature. Without really meaning to, she becomes a contender. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weight survival against humanity and life against love.

***The Maze Runner* – James Dashner**

When Thomas wakes up in the lift, the only thing he can remember is his name. He's surrounded by strangers—boys whose memories are also gone. Outside the stone walls that surround them is a limitless, ever-changing maze. It's the only way

out—and no one's ever made it through alive. Then a girl arrives. The first girl ever. And the message she delivers is terrifying: Remember. Survive. Run.

The Sound of Stars – Alechia Dow

Two years ago, a misunderstanding between the leaders of Earth and the invading Ilori resulted in the death of one-third of the world's population. Today, seventeen-year-old Ellie Baker survives in an Ilori-controlled center in New York City. All art, books and creative expression are illegal, but Ellie breaks the rules by keeping a secret library.

When young Ilori commander Morris finds Ellie's illegal library, he's duty-bound to deliver her for execution. But Morris isn't a typical Ilori...and Ellie and her books might be the key to a desperate rebellion of his own.

The Disasters – M. K. England

Hotshot pilot Nax Hall has a history of making poor life choices. So it's not exactly a surprise when he's kicked out of the elite Ellis Station Academy in less than twenty-four hours. But Nax's one-way trip back to Earth is cut short when a terrorist group attacks the Academy.

Nax and three other washouts escape—barely—but they're also the sole witnesses to the biggest crime in the history of space colonization. And the perfect scapegoats.

On the run, Nax and his fellow failures plan to pull off a dangerous heist to spread the truth. Because they may not be “Academy material,” and they may not even get along, but they're the only ones left to step up and fight.

The Upper World – Femi Fadugba

Today: During arguably the worst week of Esso's life, an accident knocks him into an incredible world—a place beyond space or time, where he can see glimpses of the past and future. But if what he sees there is true, he might not have much longer to live, unless he can use his new gift to change the course of history.

Tomorrow: Rhia's past is filled with questions, none of which she expects a new physics tutor to answer. But Dr. Ezzo's not here to help Rhia. He's here because he needs her help—to unravel a tragedy that happened fifteen years ago. One that holds the key not only to Rhia's past, but to a future worth fighting for.

***The House of the Scorpion* – Nancy Farmer**

To most people around him, Matt is not a boy, but a beast. A room full of chicken litter with roaches for friends and old chicken bones for toys is considered good enough for him. But for El Patrón, lord of a country called Opium—a strip of poppy fields lying between the U.S. and what was once called Mexico—Matt is a guarantee of eternal life. El Patrón loves Matt as he loves himself for Matt is himself. They share identical DNA.

***Goddess in the Machine* – Lora Beth Johnson**

When Andra wakes up, she's in a hot, dirty cave, it's the year 3102, and everyone keeps calling her Goddess. When Andra went into a cryonic sleep for a trip across the galaxy, she expected to wake up in a hundred years, not a thousand. Worst of all, the rest of the colonists—including her family and friends—are dead. They died centuries ago, and for some reason, their descendants think Andra's a deity. She knows she's nothing special, but she'll play along if it means she can figure out why she was left in stasis and how to get back to Earth.

Zhade, the exiled prince of Eerensed, has other plans. Four years ago, the sleeping Goddess's glass coffin disappeared from the palace, and Zhade devoted himself to finding it. Now he's hoping the Goddess will be the key to taking his rightful place on the throne—if he can get her to play her part. Because if his people realize she doesn't actually have the power to save their dying planet, they'll kill her.

With a vicious monarch on the throne and a city tearing apart at the seams, Zhade and Andra might never be able to unlock the mystery of her fate, let alone find a way to unseat the king, especially since Zhade hasn't exactly been forthcoming with Andra. And a thousand years from home, is there any way of knowing that Earth is better than the planet she's woken to?

***Legend* – Marie Lu**

Born into an elite family in one of the Republic's wealthiest districts, June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic's highest military circles. Born into the slums, Day is the country's most wanted criminal. From very different worlds, June and Day have no reason to cross paths—until the day June's brother is murdered and Day becomes the prime suspect. But in a shocking turn of events, the two uncover the truth of what has really brought them together, and the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets.

***Skyhunter* – Marie Lu**

Strikers are loyal. With unparalleled, deadly fighting skills. With a willingness to do anything—including sacrifice their own lives—to defend Mara, the world's last free nation. But to the very people she protects, Talin is seen as an outcast first and a Striker second. No matter what others think, Talin lets nothing distract her from keeping the evil Federation and its army of haunting, mutant beasts at bay. Until a mysterious prisoner shows up and disrupts Talin's entire world. Is he a spy? A product of the Federation's sinister experiments? The clock is ticking for Talin to unravel the prisoner's secrets and discover whether he's the weapon that will save—or destroy—they all.

***#MurderTrending* – Gretchen McNeil**

Welcome to the near future, where good and honest citizens can enjoy watching the executions of society's most infamous convicted felons, streaming live on The Postman app from the suburbanized prison island of Alcatraz 2.0.

When seventeen-year-old Dee Guerrero wakes up in a haze, lying on the ground of a dimly lit warehouse, she realizes she's about to be the next victim of the app. Watching hardened criminals get a taste of their own medicine in this place is one thing, but Dee refuses to roll over and die for a heinous crime she didn't commit. Can Dee and her newly formed posse, the Death Row Breakfast Club, prove she's innocent before she ends up wrongfully murdered for the world to see? Or will The Postman's cast of executioners kill them off one by one?

***Gearbreakers* – Zoe Hana Mikuta**

The shadow of Godolia's tyrannical rule is spreading, aided by their giant mechanized weapons known as Windups. War and oppression are everyday constants for the people of the Badlands, who live under the thumb of their cruel Godolia overlords.

Eris Shindanai is a Gearbreaker, a rebel who specializes in taking down Windups from the inside. When one of her missions goes awry and she finds herself in a Godolia prison, Eris meets Sona Steelcrest, a cybernetically enhanced Windup pilot. At first Eris sees Sona as her mortal enemy, but Sona has a secret: She has intentionally infiltrated the Windup program to destroy Godolia from within.

As the clock ticks down to their deadliest mission yet, a direct attack to end Godolia's reign once and for all, Eris and Sona grow closer—as comrades, friends, and perhaps something more...

***The Final Six* – Alexandra Monir**

When Leo and Naomi are drafted, along with twenty-two of the world's brightest teenagers, into the International Space Training Camp, their lives are forever changed. Overnight, they become global celebrities in contention for one of the six slots to travel to Europa—Jupiter's moon—and establish a new colony, leaving their planet forever. With Earth irreparably damaged, the future of the human race rests on their shoulders.

For Leo, an Italian championship swimmer, this kind of purpose is a reason to go on after losing his family. But Naomi, an Iranian-American science genius, is suspicious of the ISTC and the fact that a similar mission failed under mysterious circumstances, killing the astronauts onboard. She fears something equally sinister awaiting the Final Six beneath Europa's surface.

In this cutthroat atmosphere, surrounded by strangers from around the world, Naomi finds an unexpected friend in Leo. As the training tests their limits, Naomi and Leo's relationship deepens with each life-altering experience they encounter. But it's only when the finalists become fewer and their destinies grow nearer that the two can fathom the full weight of everything at stake: the world, the stars, and their lives.

***Early Departures* – Justin A. Reynolds**

What if you could bring your best friend back to life—but only for a short time?

Jamal's best friend, Q, doesn't know that he died, and that he's about to die . . . again. He doesn't know that Jamal tried to save him. And that the reason they haven't been friends for two years is because Jamal blames Q for the accident that killed his parents.

But what if Jamal could have a second chance? A new technology allows Q to be reanimated for a few weeks before he dies . . . permanently. And Q's mom is not about to let anyone ruin this miracle by telling Q about his impending death. So how can Jamal fix everything if he can't tell Q the truth?

***Divergent* – Veronica Roth**

Beatrice Prior's society is divided into five factions—Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent). Beatrice must choose between staying with her Abnegation family and transferring factions. Her choice will shock her community and herself. But the newly christened Tris also has a secret, one she's determined to keep hidden, because in this world, what makes you different makes you dangerous.

***The Pioneer* – Bridget Tyler**

When Jo steps onto planet Tau Ceti for the first time, she's ready to put the past behind her and begin again. After all, as a pioneer, she has the job of helping build a new home away from Earth. But underneath the idyllic surface of their new home, there's something very wrong. And when Jo accidentally uncovers a devastating secret that could destroy everything they've worked for, suddenly the future doesn't seem so bright. With the fate of the pioneers in her hands, Jo must decide how far she's willing to go to expose the truth.

Sia Martinez and the Moonlit Beginning of Everything – Raquel Vasquez
Gilliland

It's been three years since ICE raids and phone calls from Mexico and an ill-fated walk across the Sonoran. Three years since Sia Martinez's mom disappeared. Sia wants to move on, but it's hard in her tiny Arizona town where people refer to her mom's deportation as "an unfortunate incident."

Sia knows that her mom must be dead, but every new moon Sia drives into the desert and lights San Anthony and la Guadalupe candles to guide her mom home. Then one night, under a million stars, Sia's life and the world as we know it cracks wide open. Because a blue-lit spacecraft crashes in front of Sia's car...and it's carrying her mom, who's very much alive.

As Sia races to save her mom from armed-quite-possibly-alien soldiers, she uncovers secrets as profound as they are dangerous in this stunning and inventive exploration of first love, family, immigration, and our vast, limitless universe.

Iron Widow – Xiran Jay Zhao

The boys of Huaxia dream of pairing up with girls to pilot Chrysalises, giant transforming robots that can battle the aliens that lurk beyond the Great Wall of China. It doesn't matter that the girls die from the mental strain. When 18-year-old Zetian offers herself up as a concubine-pilot, it's to assassinate the ace male pilot responsible for her sister's death. But when she gets her vengeance, it becomes clear that she is an Iron Widow, a rare kind of female pilot who can sacrifice males to power up Chrysalises instead.

To tame her frightening yet valuable mental strength, she is paired up with Li Shimin, the strongest male pilot in Huaxia, yet feared and ostracized for killing his father and brothers. But now that Zetian has had a taste of power, she will not cower so easily. She will take over instead, then leverage their combined strength to force her society to stop failing its women and girls. Or die trying.

Updated 1/30/25 - RM