

8th Grade Summer Reading 2021

Dear Eighth Grade Reader,

Next September, you will be returning to Weston Middle School as an eighth grader. Congratulations! We suggest you choose at least two titles from the list of recommendations below. You will notice a range of styles and content among the books. These choices offer a rich world of reading experiences, and we encourage you to choose books that are personally appropriate and that appeal to you. Reading a variety of authors will strengthen your reading skills and broaden your understanding of literary styles.

Happy Reading,

Mr. McHugh, Mrs. O'Connell, Mrs. Scott, 8th Grade English Teachers

Ms. Belmont, Ms. Leddy, Mrs. McNulty, 8th Grade Special Education Teachers

Mrs. Maruskin, Library Paraprofessional and Ms. Sousa, School Librarian

Summer Reading Key:

School Catalog <https://westonps.follettdestiny.com>



=eBook available in school catalog or in **Destiny Discover**, a free App



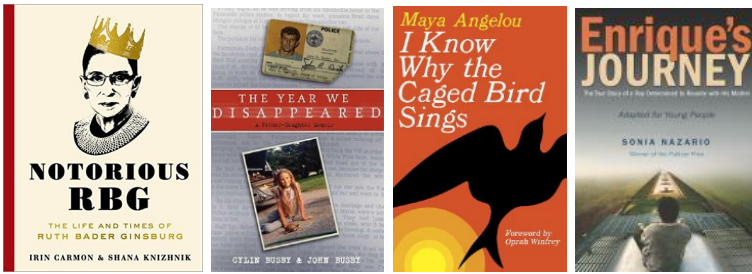
=Digital Audiobook available in school catalog or in **Destiny Discover**, a free App

F&P = [Fountas & Pinnell Reading Level](#) available in school catalog



=[Learning Ally](#)

[Weston Public Library](#) = Hoopla has audio and/or eBooks. You will need a Weston Library Card or eCard.



Non-Fiction:

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

In this autobiography, African-American poet Maya Angelou recounts a youth filled with disappointment, frustration, tragedy, and hard-won independence.



Warriors Don't Cry by Melba Pattillo Beals

Beals was one of nine Black teenagers who, in 1957, integrated into Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in the face of opposition from Gov. Orval Faubus and the state National Guard. President Dwight D. Eisenhower eventually sent troops to protect the students' right to attend school. This is the author's incredible memoir of those events, incorporating excerpts from a journal she kept as a 16-year-old.



Courage to Soar by Simone Biles, with Michelle Burford

Simone Biles's entrance into the world of gymnastics may have started on a daycare field trip in her hometown of Spring, Texas, but her talent, passion, and perseverance have made her one of the top gymnasts in the world, as well as a four-time winner of Olympic gold in Rio de Janeiro. Here, in her own words, Simone takes you through the events, challenges, and trials that carried her from an early childhood in foster care to a coveted spot on the 2016 Olympic team.

The Year We Disappeared: A Father-Daughter Memoir by Cylin Busby

This book chronicles Cape Cod officer John Busby's road to recovery after being shot on the job, and his family's turmoil in trying to find the person who ruined their lives. *Please note: this book contains mature subject matter.*



To Look a Nazi in the Eye: A Teen's Account of a War Criminal Trial by Kathy Kacer;

with Jordana Lebowitz

This is the true story of nineteen-year-old Jordana Lebowitz's experience attending the war criminal trial of Oskar Groening. In 2015 he stood trial in Germany for being complicit in the deaths of more than 300,000 Jews. A granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, Jordana was not prepared for what she would see and hear at Oscar Groening's trial. She came to understand that by bearing witness she gained the knowledge and legitimacy to stand in the footsteps of the survivors and to pass their history on to the next generation.

Notorious RBG, The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg by Irin Carmon & Shana Knizhnik;

with Kathleen Krull

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has become an icon to millions. Her tireless fight for equality and women's rights has inspired not only great strides in the workforce but has impacted the law of the land. And now, perfect for a younger generation, comes an accessible biography of this fierce woman, detailing her searing dissents and powerful jurisprudence.

Every Falling Star by Sungju Lee & Susan McClelland

The first book to portray contemporary North Korea to a young audience, this is the intense memoir of a North Korean boy named Sungju who is forced at age twelve to live on the streets and fend for himself. To survive, Sungju creates a gang and lives by thieving, fighting, begging, and stealing rides on cargo trains. This riveting memoir allows readers to learn about other cultures where freedoms they take for granted do not exist.

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Enrique's Journey :The True Story of a Boy Determined to Reunite with His Mother

by Sonia Nazario

This is the true and heartbreaking story of sixteen-year-old Enrique, who sets off on a journey alone, to find his mother. He has not seen her for eleven years, not since she left her starving family and illegally entered the United States, hoping to make enough money to send home to Honduras. His story is an inspiring and timeless tale that brings to light the daily struggles of migrants, legal and otherwise, and the complicated choices they face.



Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town

by Warren St. John

Exciting youth soccer action blends with politics in this story of refugee kids from across the world, including Kosovo, Mozambique, Liberia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Sudan, who find home in the small town of Clarkston, Georgia. There, a tough volunteer coach, Luma Mufleh from Jordan, organizes three youth soccer teams that take on other local players--- and sometimes win.



The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism, & Treachery

by Steve Sheinkin

An introduction to the life of Benedict Arnold that highlights not only the traitorous actions that made him legendary, but also his heroic involvement in the American Revolution. Most people know very little about Benedict Arnold--- only that he was a traitor during the American War of Independence. Sheinkin recounts the tale of a larger-than-life persona, from his uncertain boyhood to his immense popularity as an unpredictable, yet brilliant, commander in the American army, and finally, to his end days, living in London, despised and disgraced.



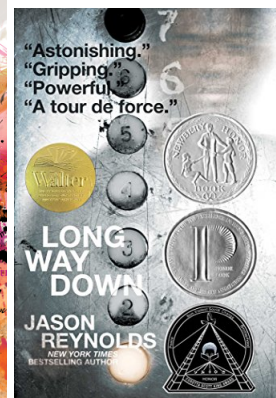
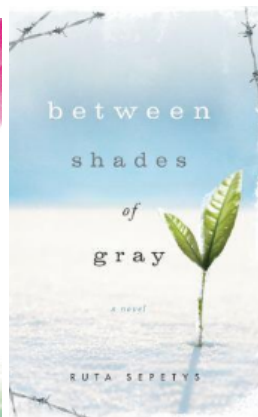
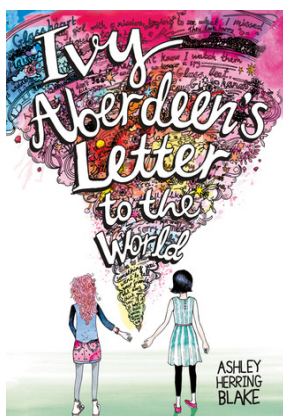
I Am Scout : The Biography of Harper Lee by Charles J. Shields

Author Harper Lee is a mysterious figure who leads a very private life in her hometown of Monroeville, Alabama, refusing to give interviews or talk about the novel that made her a household name. Lee's life is as rich as her fiction, from her girlhood as a rebellious tomboy, to her days at the University of Alabama, and her early years as a struggling writer in New York City. What emerges in this riveting portrait is the story of an unconventional, high-spirited woman who drew on her love of writing and her Southern home to create a book that continues to speak to new generations of readers.

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***The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor* by Sonia Sotomayor**

Judiciously pared down from Sotomayor's *My Beloved World* (2013), this autobiography for young people records her memories of growing up with her father (who died when she was nine), her mother, her brother, and her extended Puerto Rican American family in the Bronx. She also discusses her education in Catholic schools, at Princeton, and at Yale, her pro bono advocacy work, and her career as an assistant district attorney and a partner in a private law firm. This is a lively autobiography of the third woman and the first Latina on the U.S. Supreme Court.



Fiction:

The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo

A young girl in Harlem discovers slam poetry as a way to understand her mother's religion and her own relationship to the world. This is the debut novel of renowned slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo.

Please note: questions organized religion; contains references to sex, drugs, and violence.

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

Melinda is a friendless outcast at Merryweather High. She breaks up an end-of-summer party by calling the police, and now no one will talk to her, let alone listen to her. It is through her work on an art project that she is finally able to face the terrible event that happened at the party. Once again, she refuses to be silent. *Please note: this book contains mature language and subject matter.*

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Forgotten Fire by Adam Bagdasarian

This novel is based on the experiences of the author's great uncle during the Armenian Holocaust. It is the story of one boy's search for strength and courage, recounting a tragic and often overlooked human catastrophe as seen through the eyes of a young person. *Please note: this book contains mature subject matter.*

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Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World by Ashley Herring Black

A tornado destroys Ivy Aberdeen's house and her family of five is displaced. Ivy then feels invisible and ignored in the aftermath of the storm. What's worse, her notebook filled with secret drawings of girls holding hands has gone missing. Mysteriously, Ivy's drawings begin to reappear in her locker with notes from someone telling her to open up about her identity. Ivy hopes that this someone might be her classmate, another girl for whom Ivy has begun to develop a crush. Ivy looks to find the strength to reveal her true self. *Please note: contains homosexual relationships.*

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If A Tree Falls at Lunch Period by Gennifer Choldenko

This story has alternating narrators, Kirsten McKenna and Walker Jones, seventh-graders at an elite private school. The two tell how race, wealth, weight, and other issues shape their relationships. As they and other misfits stand up to a mean but influential classmate, they end up uncovering a long-kept secret about themselves. *Please note: this story deals with body image, race, and divorce.*

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House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

This is the remarkable story of Esperanza Cordero, a young Latina girl growing up in Chicago, inventing who and what she will become. Capturing her thoughts and emotions in poems and stories, she is able to rise above hopelessness and create a quiet space for herself, in the midst of her oppressive surroundings. This sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous, masterpiece is a classic story of childhood and self-discovery.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

This novel depicts a group of young boys stranded on a desert island without adult supervision. As they are forced to fend for themselves, they vie for power in an attempt to structure their society, which causes terrible tragedies to ensue. *Note: scenes in this book include graphic violence.*

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Five Feet Apart by Rachael Lippincott; with Mikki Daughtry and Tobias Iaconis

Seventeen-year-olds Stella and Will, both suffering from cystic fibrosis, realize the only way to stay alive is to stay apart, but their love for each other is slowly pushing the boundaries of physical and emotional safety. The characters' backstories are complex and moving, and the unpredictability of the disease will break readers' hearts.

Team Players by Mike Lupica

Cassie Bennett is great at being in charge. She always knows what to do to lead her teams to victory, keep her many groups of friends together, or fix any problem that comes her way. So when Sarah Milligan, an autistic girl with unreal softball skills, joins Cassie's team, Cassie's sure she can help her fit in with the team. Through an eventful summer both on and off the field, Cassie and the others learn much about themselves and what kind of commitment it takes to maintain both a friendship and a team, while Cassie gets an insightful lesson from Sarah's mom about the difference between sympathy and empathy.

When Dimple Met Rishi by Sandhya Menon

It's not always as easy as boy meets girl. In the case of Rishi Patel and Dimple Shah, it's more like boy is arranged to marry girl, and girl attacks boy with iced coffee. In this bright and funny novel, two intellectually gifted teens from traditional Indian families meet at a summer tech conference in San Francisco. The twist: Dimple and Rishi's parents have arranged their marriage. This is a glimpse into the lives of two first-generation American teens.

Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds

This is *New York Times* bestseller Jason Reynolds's stunning novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes a kid to decide whether or not he's going to murder the guy who killed his brother. Told in short, fierce, staccato narrative verse, ***Long Way Down*** is a look at teenage gun violence. *Please note: contains violence, mature language.*

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Saenz

When Aristotle and Dante meet, in the summer of 1987, Dante is sure of his place in the world, while Ari feels he may never know who he is or what he wants. This award-winning title is primarily focused on the back-and-forth in the boys' relationship over the course of a year. Family issues take center stage, as well as issues of Mexican identity, but the heart of the novel is Dante's openness about his homosexuality and Ari's suppression of his.



Between Shades of Gray by Ruta Sepetys

In 1941, fifteen-year-old Lina, her mother, and her brother are pulled from their Lithuanian home by Soviet guards and sent to Siberia. While she fights for her life, she vows to honor her family and the thousands like hers by burying her story in a jar on Lithuanian soil. This book is based on the author's family history.

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Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys

As World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia, thousands of refugees embark on a ship, the *Wilhelm Gustoff*, en route to freedom. The paths of three passengers, Joana, Emilia, and Florian converge and their secrets revealed. Forced by circumstance to unite, their strength, courage, and trust in each other are tested with each step closer to safety.

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Counting by 7s by Holly Sloan

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions. She finds comfort counting by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that has not kept her from leading a quiet, happy life -- until something happens to change that.

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The Help by Kathryn Stockett

Aibileen is a black maid in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, and she has always taken orders quietly -- until she is unable to contain her bitterness. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue, but is faced with keeping secrets about her employer that leave her speechless. White socialite Skeeter graduates from college full of ambition, but without a husband, she is considered a failure. Together, these

seemingly different women join together to write a tell-all book, knowing that their lives in a small southern town will forever be altered. *This book includes some mature language.*

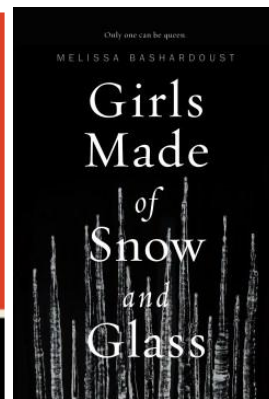
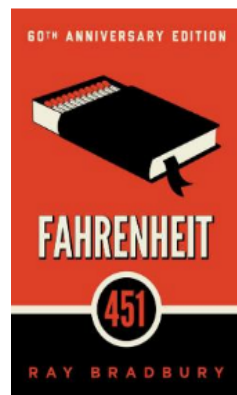
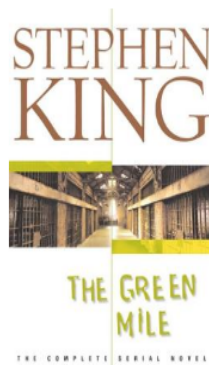
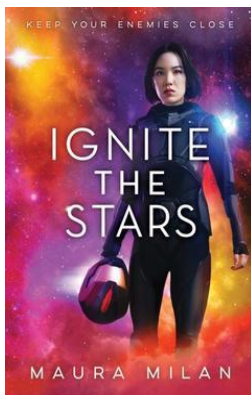
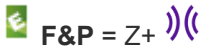


Watch Us Rise by Renée Watson and Ellen Hagan

Jasmine and Chelsea are best friends on a mission--they're sick of the way women are treated, so they decide to start a Women's Rights Club. Told from the viewpoints of Chelsea and Jasmine, this thought-provoking novel explores ideas of *body-shaming, racial stereotypes, and gender inequality*. These two dynamic, creative young women stand up and speak out in a novel that features their compelling art and poetry along with powerful personal journeys that will inspire readers and budding poets, feminists, and activists.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's novel tells the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. After she realizes that her parents are dead, Liesel finds comfort with her foster father, who teaches her how to read. When he agrees to hide a Jewish man in his basement, Liesel befriends him and her life is forever changed.



Science Fiction/Fantasy:

A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy series by Douglas Adams

Arthur Dent, a mild-mannered, bizarre earthling, is taken from his planet by his friend Ford Prefect just seconds before it is demolished to make way for a "hyperspace bypass." Ford, posing as an

out-of-work actor, is a researcher for the revised edition of "*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*."

Together, the two begin their humorous, intergalactic journey through time and space.

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Girls Made of Snow and Glass by Melissa Bashardoust

At sixteen, Mina's mother is dead, her magician father is vicious, and her silent heart has never beat with love for anyone---has never beat at all, in fact, but she'd always thought that was normal. She never guessed that her father cut out her heart and replaced it with one of glass. Told in alternating viewpoints, this retelling of *Snow White* uses elements from recognizable fairy tales to create an empowering novel with strong, three-dimensional female protagonists who refuse to let jealousy and power break their bond.

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

In a future totalitarian state where books are banned and destroyed by the government, Guy Montag is a fireman in charge of burning books. He meets a revolutionary schoolteacher who dares to read and a girl who tells him of a past when people did not live in fear.

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The Reluctant Assassin (W.A.R.P series)

In Victorian London, Albert Garrick, an assassin-for-hire, and his reluctant young apprentice, Riley, are transported via wormhole to modern London, where Riley teams up with a young FBI agent to stop Garrick from returning to his own time and using his newly acquired scientific knowledge and power to change the world forever.

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The Green Mile by Stephen King

Set in the 1930's at the Cold Mountain Penitentiary death-row facility, **The Green Mile** is the tragic story of John Coffey, a giant, gentle inmate wrongly condemned to death for the murder of twin nine-year-old girls. It is a story narrated years later by Paul Edgecomb, the ward superintendent, who discovers Coffey's secret: his supernatural ability. *Note: contains mature content.*

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Ignite the Stars by Maura Milan

In the year 8921, Ia Cocha is truly the scourge of her universe: pirate, killer, and as ruthless as they come. When she is caught by the Olympus Commonwealth, she avoids immediate execution by agreeing to join their military academy. The Olympus Commonwealth boasts the most powerful military in the galaxy and intends to explore and conquer as many star systems as possible. This is a novel of space pirates, governmental empires, simmering teen rebellion, and questions about whether a person is truly all good or bad.

The Alchemyst (The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel series) by Michael Scott

When 15-year-old twins Josh and Sophie inadvertently become involved in a plot to steal the Codex from their friend Nick Fleming (aka Nicholas Flamel), they are propelled into a fantasy world of golems, wereboars, and many other creatures that inhabit the netherworld between good and evil.

Scythe (Arc of a Scythe series) by Neal Shusterman

In a world where disease has been eliminated, the only way to die is to be random killed (gleaned) by professional reapers (scythes). Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the "art" of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own. This is a brilliant and gripping sci-fi thriller that acutely explores the consequences of worldwide immortality and asks readers to think critically about the nature of morality.

Uglies series by Scott Westerfeld

In this futuristic society, nobody has to worry about their looks because at sixteen every child is given mandatory plastic surgery to conform to a certain standard of beauty. At fifteen, Tally is excited for the upcoming change in her life. That all changes, however, when she meets Shay and hears about her plans to escape to live with the "Rusties." Tally then must struggle with what she values most: friendship or beauty.(Uglies, Pretties, Specials, Extras)



On the Lighter Side:

A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson

A funny and true account of the trek on the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail, from Maine to Georgia, by the author and his friend, and the colorful characters they meet along the way. This often hilarious account of the foibles of two inept adventurers is sprinkled with fascinating details of the history of the Trail, its wildlife, and tales of famous and not-so-famous hikers.




The Princess Bride by William Goldman

William Goldman's modern fantasy classic is an exceptional story about quests -- for riches, revenge, power, and of course, true love. Rich in character and satire, the novel is set in 1941 and framed cleverly as an "abridged" retelling of a centuries-old tale set in the fabled country of Florin that is home to "beasts of all natures and descriptions." With over one million copies in print, this classic fantasy is a readers' favorite.



Son of the Mob by Gordon Korman

Vince Luca, 17, has always been concerned, embarrassed, and fearful about his crime-family background; he has sworn never to become involved or let it keep him from upstanding behavior. During his senior year, all he wants is romance, friendship, and to get through school just like any normal guy, but things don't go as planned. His new girlfriend turns out to be the daughter of the FBI agent who is trying to put Vince's father in prison.

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The Unteachables by Gordon Korman

The Unteachables are a notorious class of misfits, delinquents, and academic train wrecks. They 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.

My Most Excellent Year: A Novel of Love, Mary Poppins, and Fenway Park by Steve Kluger

Three 11th-grade friends from Brookline, MA recall their freshman year in emails, instant messages, and texts. Revealed are the changes and events that made their “most excellent year” complicated, funny, and romantic. *Note: some content regarding sexuality.*

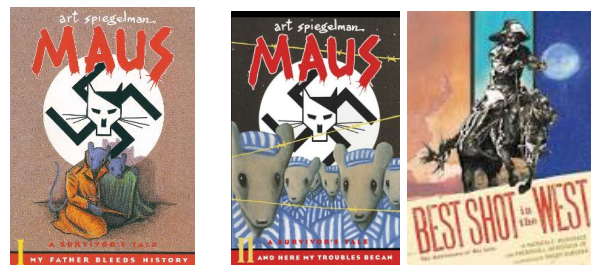
Dairy Queen a novel by Catherine Gilbert Murdock

After spending her summer running the family farm and training the quarterback for her school's rival football team, sixteen-year-old D.J. decides to go out for the sport herself, not anticipating the reactions of those around her.

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So Yesterday by Scott Westerfeld

Seventeen-year-old Hunter Braque's job is finding trend-setters for the retail market. But when a big-money client disappears, Hunter must use his cool-hunting talents to find him. Along the way, he's drawn into a web of brand-name-intrigue: a missing cargo of shoes, ads for products that don't exist, and a shadowy group dedicated to the downfall of consumerism as we know it.))((



Graphic Novels:

Best Shot in the West: The Adventures of Nat Love by Patricia C. McKissack and Fredrick L McKissack Jr.

Born into slavery in Tennessee, Love left home to seek work and eventually became an expert roper and marksman in the Old West, an acquaintance of legends such as Bat Masterson and Billy the Kid.

Maus I: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History by Art Spiegelman

A memoir about Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and his son, a cartoonist who tries to come to terms with his father, his story, and with history itself.



Maus II: A Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began by Art Spiegelman - A continuation of the story begun in the Pulitzer Prize winning "Maus," in which the author relates, in cartoon form, his father's experiences as an inmate at Auschwitz during World War.



Award Winners:

For more great award-winning books, visit: <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia>