

**LRC 585: Literature for Adolescents Student Booktalks**  
14th Annual Conference on Literature and Literacy for Children and Adolescents:  
Literature as an Invitation for Creating Change

***All is Fair in Love, War, and High School*** by Janette Rallison. Walker & Company, 2003. ISBN: 0802788742.

After bombing the SAT, cheerleader Samantha Taylor decides that running for student body president will look good on her college application, but she has one problem - her mouth. When her best friend Logan makes a bet that she can't go for two weeks without insulting anyone something unexpected and wonderful happens.

***Autobiography of My Dead Brother*** by Walter Dean Myers; art by Christopher Myers. HarperTempest/Amistad, 2005. ISBN: 006058291x.

Award-winning author Walter Dean Myers and award-winning artist Christopher Myers partner brilliantly to deliver the unforgettable story of Jesse, a teenage boy growing up in a troubled, Harlem neighborhood who vividly chronicles his struggle to make sense of gangs, friendship, and loss in his sketchbook.

***Bear Dancer: The Story of a Ute Girl*** by Thelma Hatch Wyss. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2005. ISBN: 978-1-4169-0285-0.

In this historical novel set in the 1860s, Elk Girl shares her story as a Tabaguache Ute and reveals the challenges facing her traditional Ute community as their lands, resources and ways of life are threatened by the encroaching presence of their "real enemy."

***Behind You*** by Jacqueline Woodson. G.P.Putnam's Sons. New York. ISBN: 3-399-23988-X.

The sequel to *If You Come Softly*, the novel explores themes of death, grief and sexuality. This touching story about healing is written through the perspectives of those who are grieving the loss of Jeremiah.

***Chanda's Secrets*** by Allan Stratton. Anton Press, 2004. ISBN: 155037835x.

This is a 2005 Michael Printz Award honor book. It is the fictionalized story of a young South African girl living in a place where AIDS is truly an epidemic.

***Chasing Vermeer*** by Blue Balliett. Scholastic Press, 2004 .ISBN: 0439372941.

Petra and Calder are two classmates in Chicago who are not exactly friends, yet. When a famous painting by Vermeer goes missing, Petra and Calder work together to find out who stole it and why.

***The City of Ember*** by Jeanne DuPrau. Random House, 2004. ISBN: 0375822747.

In a world with no sunlight and rapidly failing power resources, two children, Lina and Doon, discover an amazing secret that will lead to an escape from the dying city of Ember.

***Flush*** by Carl Hiaasen. Knopf, 2005. ISBN: 0-375-82182-1.

Noah's dad has been put in jail for trying to stop the Coral Queen casino boat's illegal dumping...by sinking the boat. This is the story of how Noah inherits his dad's struggle.

***For Freedom: The Diary of a French Spy*** by Kimberly Bradley. 2003. ISBN: 0-4404-1831-3.

Suzanne is an ordinary girl trying to ignore World War II and concentrate on her opera singing. However, that becomes impossible when the Nazis come to her town and the Resistance asks her to carry messages for them.

***Girl, 15, Charming But Insane*** by Sue Limb. Delacorte Press, 2004. ISBN: 038573214.

In addition to being well-endowed in the bottom region but not in the top, Jess Jordan stumbles through school, the boyfriend situation, and life in general with a wry sense of humor and help from an unassuming kindred spirit. Add to all of that a feminist librarian mother, a cracked Grandma, and a friend who's "perfect" all over, and every day is another big misadventure for Jess.

***Godless*** by Pete Hautman. Simon & Schuster, 2004. ISBN: 0-689-86278-4.

This National Book Award Winner focuses on how religion affects each person in different ways. Jason Bock, after being pushed by his parents towards Christianity, decides to start his own religion that worships water towers.

***Guys Write for Guys Read*** edited by Jon Scieszka. Viking, 2005. ISBN: 0-670-06027-5

Over ninety pieces (stories, memoirs, advice, poems, comics, and drawings) by guys, for guys, about being a guy. Contributors include Neil Gaiman, James Howe, Jack Gantos, Daniel Handler, Walter Dean Meyers, Daniel Pinkwater, William Sleator, Richard Peck, Lane Smith, and many more.

***Icebergs*** by Rebecca Johns. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006. ISBN: 1-58234-498-1.

The lives of two families intertwine in this novel where the characters experience war, love, and tragedy in a story that begins with WWII, includes Vietnam, and concludes in 1999. This advance book, John's first novel, received the Michener-Copernicus Award.

***If You Come Softly*** by Jacqueline Woodson. G.P.Putnam's Sons. New York. ISBN: 0-399-23112-9.

*If You Come Softly* is the tragic love story of Ellie and Jeremiah, two high school students in Manhattan. The novel explores the topic of interracial relationships and love.

***Looking for Alaska*** by John Green. Dutton Books, 2005. ISBN: 0-525-47506-0.

This 2006 Michael Printz Award Winner chronicles a year in the life of Miles Halter as he transitions from the safe confines of life at home to a southern boarding school where he grapples with typical teenage issues (first love and personal identity), as well as complex philosophical and religious ideas.

***A Most Uncommon Degree of Popularity*** by Kathleen Gilles Seidel, St Martin's Press, 2006.

ISBN: 0-312-33326-9.

This book tells about a child becoming an teen in the mother eyes, and all the issues relating to being popular and growing up.

***No End in Sight*** by Rachael Scdoris and Rick Steber, St. Martin's Press, 2005, 2006.

ISBN: 0312352735.

This book tells Rachael Scdoris's inspirational first-person account of her passion for sled-dog racing and her desire to compete in the ultimate event in her sport: The 1,150 mile Iditarod from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska. Rachael's story is compelling for many reasons, including the fact that she is legally blind.

***Pendragon: Book Five - Black Water*** by D. J. MacHale. Aladdin Paperbacks, 2004.

ISBN: 0-689-86911-8.

The fifth book in a ten book series continues Bobby's quest to protect worlds from evil. Fifteen year old Bobby is faced with a moral dilemma: to save one world he must be the cause of the ruin of another.

***Persepolis*** by Marjane Satrapi. Pantheon, translation 2003. ISBN: 037571457X.

This memoir in graphic novel format tells the story of Ms. Satrapi's childhood growing up in a radical household in revolutionary Iran.

***Skybreaker*** by Kenneth Oppel. HarperCollins, 2006. ISBN: 0060532270.

Airship Academy student, Matt Cruse, and errant heiress, Kate de Vries, team up with a gypsy and a wayward entrepreneur in this excellent sequel to *Airborn*. On a lead to find the treasures of an ancient lost airship, they end up finding friendship, love, and almost more adventure than they can handle.

***The Summer King*** by O.R. Melling. 2006. ISBN: 0-8109-5969-0.

As Laurel investigates the mysterious death of her twin, she discovers an adventure beyond anything she could have imagined. This combination of modern and mythical Ireland has beautiful descriptions and keeps suspenseful throughout its 350 pages.

***teach me*** by R. A. Nelson. Razor Bill/Penguin Publishing, 2005. ISBN: 1-59514-084-0.

This stream of consciousness novel is told from the perspective of a high school senior who pursues with her English teacher. R. A. Nelson conveys a universal truth about love and loss.

***True Confessions of a Hollywood Starlet*** by Lola Douglas. Razorbill, 2005. ISBN: 1-59514-035-2.

Morgan is a teenage movie star of the Drew Barrymore set. After she nearly kills herself at a wild party, her mom sends her to a detox center and on to a normal life in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Under a new name she goes to a regular high school and plans a big Hollywood comeback after a year. What happens until that comeback is hilarious and surprisingly, very touching.

***tfn*** by Lauren Myracle, Amulet Books, 2006. ISBN: 0-8109-5971-2.

This book is written in IM form, and the three girl characters tell their lives and personal issues to each other.

***Uglies*** by Scott Westerfeld, Simon Pulse, 2005. ISBN: 0-689-86538-4.

This science fiction novel takes place in a futuristic city where every teenager gets to have surgery at age 16 to turn into a "Pretty." Unfortunately, this situation is not as ideal as it seems since the surgery alters not only body, but mind as well.

***Under the Persimmon Tree*** by Suzanne Fisher Staples. Frances Foster Books, 2005.

ISBN: 0-374-38025-2.

The book explores the lives of two women during the 2001 Afghan War. Najmah, a young teenager becomes a refugee when her father and brother are conscripted by the Taliban. Elaine, an American woman, waits out the war in Pakistan. Her school for refugee children brings the two together in their search for home.

***Under the Same Sky*** by Cynthia DeFelice. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. ISBN: 0374380656.

Joe Pedersen wants a motorbike for his 14th birthday, and his father decides Joe can earn the money over the summer by working with the migrant workers on the family farm. The experience changes Joe's self-centered perspective to one of respect and sensitivity to the role of migrant workers in the United States.

***Wait for Me*** by An Na. Putnam, 2006. ISBN: 0-399-24275-9.

An Na, author of the Printz award winner *A Step From Heaven* lyrically presents a teenage girl's struggle to find life and love while living with a controlling mother and dependent younger sibling.

***Weird Stuff*** by Richard Tulloch. Illustrated by Shane Nagle. Walker & Company, 2006.

ISBN: 13-978-0-8027-8058-4.

Originally published in Australia in 2004, this title is set for a United States publication date of May 2006. This fun book for young readers follows the everyday extraordinary adventures of young Brian Hobble. Interspersed throughout the book are the drawings and musings of Brian.

***Wild Roses*** by Deb Caletti. Simon & Schuster, 2005. ISBN: 0-689-86766.

Seventeen-year-old Cassie copes with the mental illness of her stepfather, a world-renowned violinist and composer and falls in love with Ian, a talented young violinist, a love that is both beautiful and painful. A National Book Award Finalist book by the author of *The Queen of Everything*, the IRA's YA Choice for 2004.

***A Wreath for Emmett Till*** by Marilyn Nelson, illustrated by Philippe Lardy. Houghton Mifflin. 2005. ISBN: 0618397523.

This book of interconnected poems celebrates the life and mourns the death of Emmett Till, an African American boy lynched in 1955.

***The Wright 3*** by Blue Balliett. Scholastic Press, 2006. ISBN: 0439693675.

Petra and Calder are drawn into another mystery, this time it involves decoding a message left behind by Frank Lloyd Wright. Calder's friend Tommy is introduced as a new character and the mayhem continues in FLW's Robie House.