NONFICTION

TURNING 15 ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM
By Lynda Blackmon Lowery
As the youngest marcher in the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, Lynda Blackmon Lowery proved that young adults can be heroes.

Jailed nine times before her fifteenth birthday, Lowery fought alongside Martin Luther King, Jr. for the rights of African-Americans. In this memoir, she shows today’s young readers what it means to fight nonviolently (even when the police are using violence, as in the Bloody Sunday protest) and how it felt to be part of changing American history.

Straightforward and inspiring, this beautifully illustrated memoir brings readers into the middle of the Civil Rights Movement, complementing Common Core classroom learning and bringing history alive for young readers.

Tags: African-American, civil rights

BROWN GIRL DREAMING
By Jacqueline Woodson
Winner of the 2014 National Book Award for Young People’s Literature.

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child’s soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson’s eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.

Tags: African-American, civil rights

THE BOY WHO HARNESSED THE WIND
By William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer
The New York Times bestselling memoir of the heroic young inventor who brought electricity to his Malawian village is now perfect for young readers.

When a terrible drought struck William Kamkwamba’s tiny village in Malawi, his family lost all of the season’s crops, leaving them with nothing to eat and nothing to sell. William began to explore science books in his village library, looking for a solution. There, he came up with the idea that would change his family’s life forever: he could build a windmill. Made out of scrap metal and old bicycle parts, William’s windmill brought electricity to his home and helped his family pump the water they needed to farm the land.

Retold for a younger audience, this exciting memoir shows how, even in a desperate situation, one boy’s brilliant idea can light up the world. Complete with photographs, illustrations, and an epilogue that will bring readers up to date on William’s story, this is the perfect edition to read and share with the whole family.

Tags: African, Malawi, STEM

THE BLOSSOMING UNIVERSE OF VIOLET DIAMOND
By Brenda Woods
Coretta Scott King Honor winner Brenda Woods’s moving, uplifting story of a girl finally meeting the African American side of her family explores racism and how it feels to be biracial, and celebrates families of all kinds.

Violet is a smart, funny, brown-eyed, brown-haired girl in a family of blonds. Her mom is white, and her dad, who died before she was born, was black. She attends a mostly white school where she sometimes feels like a brown leaf on a pile of snow. She’s tired of people asking if she’s adopted. Now that Violet’s eleven, she decides it’s time to reach out to her estranged Grandma and learn about her African American heritage. And despite getting off to a rocky start trying to reclaim her dad’s side of the family, she can feel her confidence growing as the puzzle pieces of her life finally start coming together. Readers will cheer for Violet, sharing her joy as she discovers her roots.

Tags: African-American, mixed race

FOR MIDDLE GRADE READERS
Dear Educators and Librarians,

What young reader doesn't want to read about someone like them in their books? We know your readers come from a rich spectrum of diverse backgrounds. We know they want books that are a reflection of themselves and their lives. Finally, we know how important your role is in helping them find those books. With the call for diversity in young readers' literature gaining more and more attention, we want to help you find selections for your students and patrons.

In this brochure, you will find eight new middle grade and young adult titles, historical and contemporary, fiction and non-fiction, that readers will love and patrons.

Don't hesitate to let us know your thoughts!

Happy Reading!

Penguin School & Library Marketing

FOR YOUNG ADULT READERS

A TIME TO DANCE

By Padma Venkatraman

Padma Venkatraman's inspiring story of a young girl's struggle to regain her passion and find a new peace is told lyrically through verse that captures the beauty and mystery of India and the ancient bharatanatyam dance form.

Veda, a classical dance prodigy in India, lives and breathes dance—so when an accident leaves her a below-knee amputee, her dreams are shattered. For a girl who's grown used to receiving applause for her dance prowess and flexibility, adjusting to a prosthetic leg is painful and humbling. But Veda refuses to let her disability rob her of her dreams, and she starts all over again, taking beginner classes with the youngest dancers. Then Veda meets Govinda, a young man who approaches dance as a spiritual pursuit. As their relationship deepens, Veda reconnects with the world around her, and begins to discover who she is and what dance truly means to her:

This is a stunning novel about spiritual awakening, the power of art, and above all, the courage and resilience of the human spirit.

Tags: Indian, disability

UNDER A PAINTED SKY

By Stacey Lee

Missouri, 1849: Samantha dreams of moving back to New York to be a professional musician—not an easy thing if you're a girl, and harder still if you're Chinese.

But a tragic accident dashes any hopes of Samantha fulfilling her dream, and instead, leaves her fearing for her life. With the help of a runaway slave named Annamae, Samantha flees town for the unknown Oregon Trail, but life on the frontier is unsafe for two girls, so they disguise themselves as Sammy and Andy, two boys headed for the frontier. And the ancient bharatanatyam dance form.

But life on the Oregon Trail is unsafe for two girls, so they disguise themselves as Sammy and Andy, two boys headed for the California gold rush. Sammy and Andy forge a powerful bond as they each search for a link to their past, and struggle to avoid any unwanted attention. But when they cross paths with a band of cowboys, the light-hearted troupe turn out to be unexpected allies. With the law closing in on them and new setbacks coming each day, the girls quickly learn that there are not many places to hide on the open trail.

This beautifully written debut is an exciting adventure and heart-wrenching survival tale. But above all else, it's a story about perseverance and trust that will restore your faith in the power of friendship.

Tags: Chinese-American, African-American, slavery

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

By Aisha Saeed

This heart-wrenching novel explores what it is like to be thrust into an unwanted marriage. Has Naila's fate been written in the stars? Or can she still make her own destiny? Naila's conservative immigrant parents have always said the same thing: She may choose what to study, how to wear her hair, and whom to marry. But a tragic accident dashes any hopes of Samantha fulfilling her dream, and instead, leaves her fearing for her life. With the help of a runaway slave named Annamae, Samantha flees town for the unknown Oregon Trail, but life on the frontier is unsafe for two girls, so they disguise themselves as Sammy and Andy, two boys headed for the California gold rush. Sammy and Andy forge a powerful bond as they each search for a link to their past, and struggle to avoid any unwanted attention. But when they cross paths with a band of cowboys, the light-hearted troupe turn out to be unexpected allies. With the law closing in on them and new setbacks coming each day, the girls quickly learn that there are not many places to hide on the open trail.

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Tags: Chinese-American, African-American, slavery

THE SECRET SKY

By Aisha Abawi

Based on the people Atia Abawi met and the events she covered during her nearly five years in Afghanistan, this stunning novel is a must-read for anyone who has lived during America's War in Afghanistan.

Samiullah was not meant to fall in love. But they do. The story that follows shows both the beauty and the violence in current-day Afghanistan as Fatima and Samiullah fight their families, their cultures and the Taliban to stay together. Of Afghan descent, Atia Abawi based this story on people she met and the events she covered during her nearly five years in Afghanistan, this stunning novel is a must-read for anyone who has lived during America's War in Afghanistan.

Fatima is a Hazara girl. She was raised to be obedient, to be dutiful, and to honor the traditions of her family, her village, and her religion. Samiullah is a Pashtun boy. He was raised to be a landowner, to increase his family’s power, and to defend the traditions of his tribe, his village, and his religion. Fatima and Samiullah were not meant to fall in love. But they do. The story that follows shows both the beauty and the violence in current-day Afghanistan as Fatima and Samiullah fight their families, their cultures and the Taliban to stay together. Of Afghan descent, Atia Abawi based this story on people she met during her time covering the war. It is a tale of love, honor, betrayal and humanity that will stay with readers for a long time to come.

Tags: Afghan, Afghanistan, forbidden love