

WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

ANOTHER COUNTRY



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

In this resource you will find a curated list of books set in another country as well as a variety of accompanying materials.

How to Use This Resource

1. Choose a title from the another country list.
2. Scan the QR code to play the read-aloud video.
3. Students complete the response sheet while listening.
4. Students vote: Would you keep reading?
5. Display the book cover poster to build classroom book buzz.

Classroom Use Ideas Quick List:

- First Chapter Friday
- Sub plans
- Book tasting stations
- Library preview lessons
- Early finisher reading activities



To check the reading level, video length or to find a book purchasing link, look at this [Google Doc](#) that organizes ALL of my First Chapter Friday read aloud videos alphabetically.

Table of Contents

Page 2: Instructions/Table of Contents

Page 4: What is First Chapter Friday?

Pages 5-6: Book Tracking Charts

Page 7: Book List

Page 8: Full List Book Cover Poster

Pages 10-34 Individual Book First Chapter Friday Sheets

Pages 36-60: Individual Book Posters

** More resources will be added in the future including a Reading Round Up Video to briefly explain every video on this list and possibly even some thematic coloring sheets.

As always, please email me with any title requests or questions. (wordnerd@amandazieba.com)

HAPPY READING WORLD TRAVELERS!

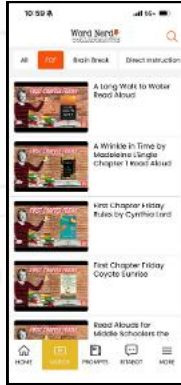


Word Nerd Daily

an app from Amanda Zieba

MUST TRY!

FREE!



First Chapter Friday Videos

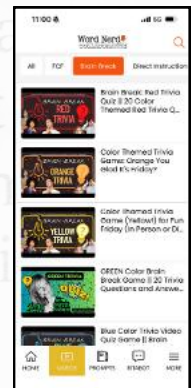


Writing Prompt Library

ChatBot for Reading Recs and Lesson Planning

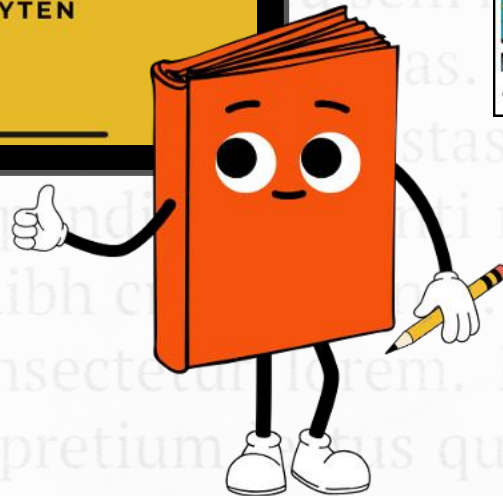


Brain Break Videos



Word Nerd COLLABORATIVE

MOBILE APP BY VYTEN



AVAILABLE FOR APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES



FIRST CHAPTER *Friday Videos*

Not sure how First Chapter Friday works?

Check out this [video](#) for a full explanation and 4 implementation ideas.



If you prefer a written description in lieu of a video, click [here](#).

[Click here](#) for a live, continually updated, Google Doc of the First Chapter Friday videos on my channel. Additionally you will find links to purchase the books and watch the read aloud videos, as well as book reading levels, genre/format, video length and more!

All my best,
Amanda Zieba

[illegible]

Name: _____

Quarter: #__



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

TRACKER

Use this worksheet to keep track of the First Chapter Friday
Videos you listen to throughout the quarter.

DATE	TITLE/AUTHOR	GENRE	REACTION

ANOTHER COUNTRY



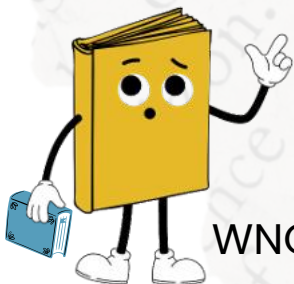
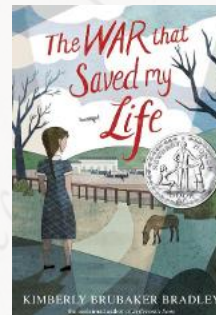
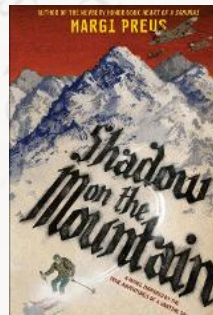
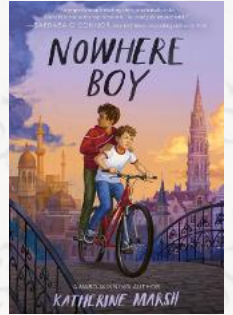
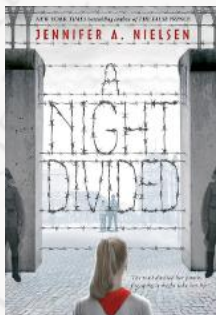
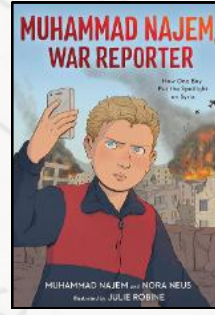
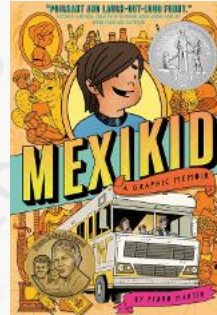
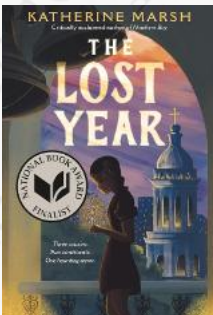
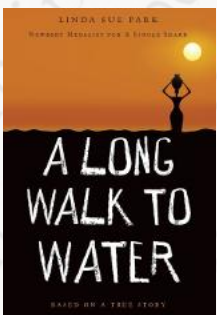
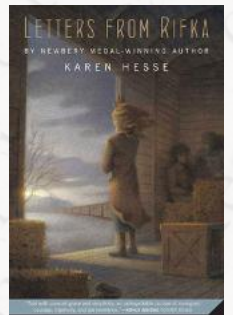
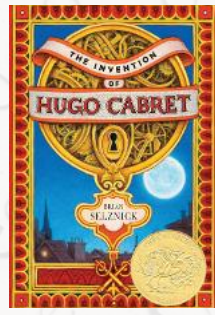
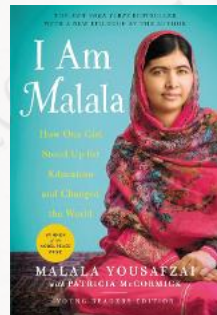
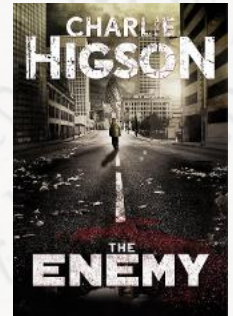
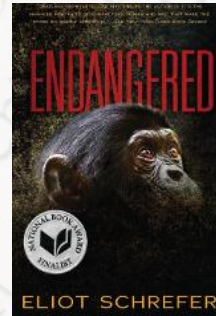
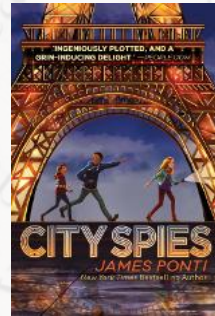
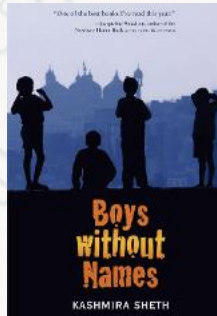
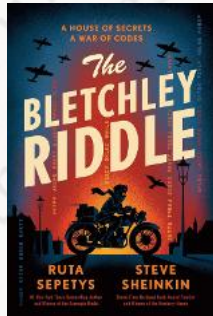
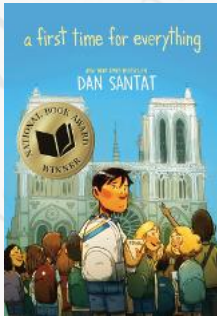
Portions of, or all off, these books take place in another country. Sail far away with these stories while staying firmly planted at home.

- A First Time for Everything by Dan Santat (Several European Countries)
- The Bletchley Riddle by Ruta Sepetys & Steve Sheinkin (Several European Countries)
- Boys Without Names by Kashmiri Sheth (India)
- City Spies by James Ponti (Scotland)
- Endangered by Eliot Schrefer (Congo)
- The Enemy by Charlie Higson (England)
- The Explorer by Katherine Rundell (Germany)
- House Swap by Yvette Clark (England)
- I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai (Afghanistan)
- The Invention of Hugo Cabret (France)
- A Lady's Guide to Fortune Hunting by Sophie Irwin (England)
- Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse (Russia)
- A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park (Sudan)
- The Lost Year by Katharine Marsh (Ukraine)
- Mexikid by Pedro Martin (Mexico)
- Muhammad Najem: War Reporter by Muhammad Najem, Nora Neus, & Julie Robine (Syria)
- The Night Diary by Veera Hirinandani (India)
- A Night Divided by Jennifer Neilsen (Germany)
- Nowhere Boy by Katharine Marsh (Belgium)
- A Place to Hang the Moon by Kate Albus (England)
- Shadow on the Mountain by Margi Preus (Norway)
- The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants by Ann Brashares (Greece)
- Thirst by Varsha Bajaj (India)
- The War That Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (England)
- War Games by Alan Gratz (Germany)



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

ANOTHER COUNTRY



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

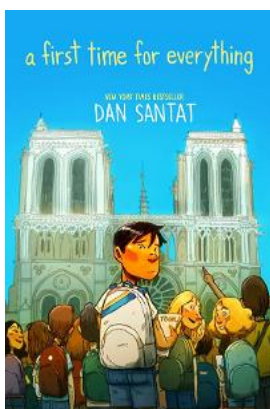
INDIVIDUAL BOOK SHEETS



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



A First Time for Everything

by Dan Santat

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Dan's always been a good kid. The kind of kid who listens to his teachers, helps his mom with grocery shopping, and stays out of trouble. But being a good kid doesn't stop him from being bullied and feeling like he's invisible, which is why Dan has low expectations when his parents send him on a class trip to Europe.

At first, he's right. He's stuck with the same girls from his middle school who love to make fun of him, and he doesn't know why his teacher insisted he come on this trip. But as he travels through France, Germany, Switzerland, and England, a series of first experiences begin to change him—first Fanta, first fondue, first time stealing a bike from German punk rockers... and first love.

Funny, heartwarming, and poignant, *A First Time for Everything* is a feel-good coming-of-age memoir based on New York Times bestselling author and Caldecott Medal winner Dan Santat's awkward middle school years. It celebrates a time that is universally challenging for many of us, but also life-changing as well.

AR Reading Level: N/A

Who Wrote It?

Birthday: October 2, 1975

Birthplace: Brooklyn, NY

Current Location: Los Angeles, CA

College: University of California San Diego

Major: Microbiology

College: Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California

Degree: Illustration

First Book Published: *The Guild of Geniuses* (2004)

Awards: Caldecott Medal for Most Distinguished Picture Book



Dan Santat is a #1 New York Times Best Selling Author author/illustrator of over one hundred titles. Dan Santat's parents moved to the United States from Thailand before he was born. Thailand is on the continent of Asia near Burma, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. He likes to incorporate his Thai heritage in the books that he illustrates. He is also the creator of the Disney animated hit, *The Replacements*. Dan lives in Southern California with his wife, two kids, and various pets.

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

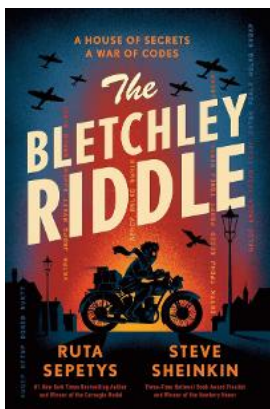
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



The Bletchley Riddle

Written by Ruta Sepetys
and Steve Sheinkin

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creators. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Remember, you are bound by the Official Secrets Act...

Summer, 1940. Nineteen-year-old Jakob Novis and his quirky younger sister Lizzie share a love of riddles and puzzles. And now they're living inside of one. The quarrelsome siblings find themselves amidst one of the greatest secrets of World War II—Britain's eccentric codebreaking factory at Bletchley Park. As Jakob joins Bletchley's top minds to crack the Nazi's Enigma cipher, fourteen-year-old Lizzie embarks on a mission to solve the mysterious disappearance of their mother. The Battle of Britain rages and Hitler's invasion creeps closer. And at the same time, baffling messages and codes arrive on their doorstep while a menacing inspector lurks outside the gates of the Bletchley mansion. Are the messages truly for them, or are they a trap? Could the riddles of Enigma and their mother's disappearance be somehow connected? Jakob and Lizzie must find a way to work together as they race to decipher clues which unravel a shocking puzzle that presents the ultimate challenge: How long must a secret be kept?

Who Wrote It?

Ruta Sepetys

Ruta Sepetys was born and raised in Michigan in a family of artists, readers, and music lovers. The daughter of a refugee, Ruta is drawn to underrepresented stories of strength through struggle and hopes to give voice to those who weren't able to tell their story. Her award-winning historical novels are published in more than sixty countries and have received over forty literary prizes.



Two Authors!

Steve Sheinkin



A former textbook writer, Steve Sheinkin is now making amends by writing history books that kids and teens actually want to read. His books have won numerous awards. Steve lives with his family in Saratoga Springs, NY.

AR Reading Level: 4.1

Lexile Level: 540L

I want to read this book: YES / NO



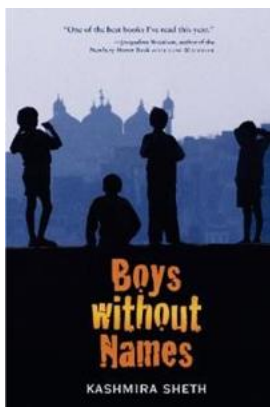
WHAT I THINK



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Boys Without Names

by Kashmira Sheth



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Trapped. For eleven-year-old Gopal and his family, life in their rural Indian village is over: We stay, we starve, his baba has warned. They flee to the big city of Mumbai in hopes of finding work and a brighter future. Gopal is eager to help support his struggling family, so when a stranger approaches him with the promise of a factory job, he jumps at the offer. But there is no factory, just a stuffy sweatshop where he and five other boys are forced to work for no money and little food. The boys are forbidden to talk or even to call one another by their real names. Locked away in a rundown building, Gopal despairs of ever seeing his family again. But late one night, when Gopal decides to share kahanis, or stories, he realizes that storytelling might be the boys' key to survival. If he can make them feel more like brothers than enemies, their lives will be more bearable in the shop—and they might even find a way to escape.

Who Wrote It?

I grew up in a tropical country and had never seen snow before moving to the United States. My mother tongue is Gujarati and I started learning English in fifth grade. In India I lived in a small city (Bhavnagar) and in a big city (Mumbai). I moved to Ames, Iowa when I was a teenager to attend college and then to Madison, Wisconsin for graduate school. In short, I stayed with the cold and the snow. When I was young, I wrote poems in Gujarati and Hindi but not in English. In college I studied Microbiology and worked for many years in that field. When my two daughters were young I started reading books with them. I started writing my 1st



book, Blue Jasmine, when my daughters completed elementary school. Since that time I have written picture books, middle grade novels, and young adult novels.

AR Reading Level: 4.2

Lexile Level: 670L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

City Spies by James Ponti



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Sara Martinez is a hacker. She recently broke into the New York City foster care system to expose her foster parents as cheats and lawbreakers. However, instead of being hailed as a hero, Sara finds herself facing years in a juvenile detention facility and banned from using computers for the same stretch of time. Enter Mother, a British spy who not only gets Sara released from jail but also offers her a chance to make a home for herself within a secret MI6 agency. Operating out of a base in Scotland, the City Spies are five kids from various parts of the world. When they're not attending the local boarding school, they're honing their unique skills, such as sleight of hand, breaking and entering, observation, and explosives. All of these allow them to go places in the world of espionage where adults can't. Before she knows what she's doing, Sara is heading to Paris for an international youth summit, hacking into a rival school's computer to prevent them from winning a million euros, dangling thirty feet off the side of a building, and trying to stop a villain...all while navigating the complex dynamics of her new team. No one said saving the world was easy...

Who Wrote It?

Hi! My name's James and I'm the author of four book series, including City Spies and The Sherlock Society. I like to write books that mash together twisty mysteries, globe-trotting adventures, and laugh-out-loud comedy. As a kid, my favorite fictional characters were Indiana Jones, James Bond, and Encyclopedia Brown. As an adult, I try to put a little bit of each of them into everything I write. Thanks for stopping by. Happy Reading! - James

Learn more at: <https://www.jamesponti.com/>
Or check out more of James' books!!



AR Reading Level: 5.6 Lexile Level: 750L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆

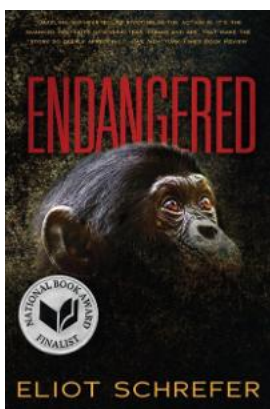
Author: James Ponti	
Due Date:	
9/2/25	Sherlock Society Hurricane Heist
2/4/25	City Spies London Calling
9/3/24	The Sherlock Society
2/6/24	City Spies Mission Manhattan
2/7/23	City Spies City of the Dead
2/1/22	City Spies Forbidden City
9/16/21	City Spies Golden Gate
8/10/20	City Spies
9/25/18	Trapped!
3/22/17	Vanished!
8/23/16	Framed!
10/8/15	Dead City Dark Days
10/1/13	Dead City Blue Moon
10/2/12	Dead City



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Endangered

by Eliot Schrefer



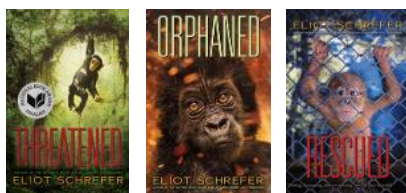
Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Congo is a dangerous place, even for people who are trying to do good. When Sophie has to visit her mother at her sanctuary for bonobos, she's not thrilled to be there. Then Otto, an infant bonobo, comes into her life, and for the first time she feels responsible for another creature. But peace does not last long for Sophie and Otto. When an armed revolution breaks out in the country, the sanctuary is attacked, and the two of them must escape unprepared into the jungle. Caught in the crosshairs of a lethal conflict, they must struggle to keep safe, to eat, and to live. In **ENDANGERED**, Eliot Schrefer plunges us into a heart-stopping exploration of the things we do to survive, the sacrifices we make to help others, and the tangled geography that ties us all, human and animal, together.

The other 3 books in the series are...



Who Wrote It?

Eliot wrote a fantasy novel when I was in eighth grade, which featured loads of glowing blue swords, archers in green leather, and monsters rearing in anguish. After a childhood spent in Illinois, Connecticut, California, Maryland, and Florida, Schrefer attended Harvard University, where he graduated with High Honors in French and American literature. After a year teaching at a boarding school in Rome, he settled down in New York City. His works have been translated into many languages including German, Russian, Polish, Taiwanese, Bulgarian, and Japanese. Most recently, Schrefer joined the faculty of Fairleigh Dickinson's low residency MFA program, as well as the MFA in writing for children at



Hamline University. You can find him on Twitter @EliotSchrefer, and online here at www.EliotSchrefer.com. (A full interview, in which Eliot asks himself questions, can also be seen on his website. :)

AR Reading Level: 6.2

Lexile Level: 900L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

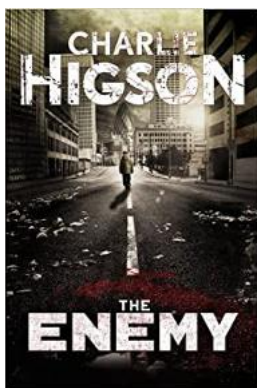
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



The Enemy

by Charlie Higson



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

In the wake of a devastating disease, everyone sixteen and older is either dead or a decomposing, brainless creature with a ravenous appetite for flesh. Teens have barricaded themselves in buildings throughout London and venture outside only when they need to scavenge for food. The group of kids living a Waitrose supermarket is beginning to run out of options. When a mysterious traveler arrives and offers them safe haven at Buckingham Palace, they begin a harrowing journey across London. But their fight is far from over—the threat from within the palace is as real as the one outside it. Full of unexpected twists and quick-thinking heroes, *The Enemy* is a fast-paced, white-knuckle tale of survival in the face of unimaginable horror.

**** Not for the faint of heart... gave me a nightmare or two! Grades 8 and up!****

Who Wrote It?

Charlie Higson is a successful author, actor, comedian and writer for television and radio. He wrote the phenomenally successful *Young Bond* series which has now sold over a million copies in the UK and has been translated into over 24 different languages. With three sons of his own, Charlie knows exactly how to terrify and captivate teenagers in equal measure. After leaving university, Charlie formed a band, *The Higsons*. He then became a decorator before



turning to the world of television. His television successes have included *Saturday Live*! You can learn more about Charlie and his books at <https://www.charliehigson.co.uk/>

AR Reading Level: 4.1

Lexile Level: 590L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



The Explorer

by Katherine Rundell



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Fred, Con, Lila, and Max are flying back to England from the Amazon jungle when their plane crashes—and the pilot dies upon landing. Stranded, scared, and totally alone, they must rely on their instincts, courage, and each other to survive. When Fred finds a mysterious map, it leads them not just to a hidden ruin... but to a secret that could change everything. This is one of my favorite middle grade books of all time—a masterfully written, high-stakes survival story with deep emotional threads and an unforgettable setting. Trust me, you'll be hooked from the first page.

Who Wrote It?

Katherine Rundell spent her childhood growing up in 3 different countries: England, Zimbabwe and Belgium! She is now an internationally bestselling writer. Her books have sold millions of copies, been translated into 40 languages and have won numerous prizes. Her stories often feature adventurous plots, elements of fantasy, and connections to the real world, with themes of survival, discovery, and the natural world. She begins each day with a cartwheel and believes that reading is almost exactly the same as cartwheeling: it turns the



world upside down and leaves you breathless. In her spare time, she enjoys walking on tightropes and trespassing on the rooftops of Oxford colleges.

AR Reading Level: 4.5

Lexile Level: 600L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



The House Swap by Yvette Clark



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Seventh grade is going to be Iveliz's year. She's going to make a new friend, help her abuela Mimi get settled after moving from Puerto Rico, and she is not going to get into any more trouble at school. . . .

Except is that what happens? Of course not. Because no matter how hard Iveliz tries, sometimes people say things that just make her so mad. And worse, Mimi keeps saying Iveliz's medicine is unnecessary—even though it helps Iveliz feel less sad. But how do you explain your feelings to others when you're not even sure what's going on yourself?

Powerful and compassionate, Andrea Beatriz Arango's debut navigates mental health, finding your voice, and discovering that those who really love you will stay by your side no matter what.

AR Reading Level: Unavailable

Who Wrote It?

A Brit by birth and a New Yorker by design, Yvette lives in Manhattan with her husband, two teenagers, and a small blue cat.

Yvette is proud to be a mentor for a fantastic organization called Girls Write Now. Find out more about them here: www.girlswritenow.org



Lexile Level: Unavailable

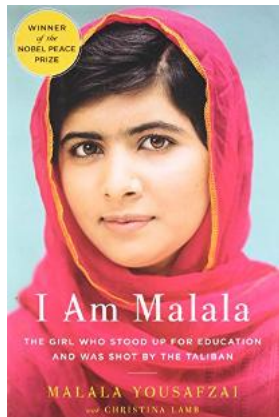
I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK







Name _____

Date _____

I Am Malala

by Malala Yousafzai



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

I Am Malala. This is my story. Malala Yousafzai was only ten years old when the Taliban took control of her region. They said music was a crime. They said women weren't allowed to go to the market. They said girls couldn't go to school. Raised in a once-peaceful area of Pakistan transformed by terrorism, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believes. So she fought for her right to be educated. And on October 9, 2012, she nearly lost her life for the cause: She was shot point-blank while riding the bus on her way home from school. No one expected her to survive.

Now Malala is an international symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize winner. In this Young Readers Edition of her bestselling memoir, which has been reimagined specifically for a younger audience and includes exclusive photos and material, we hear firsthand the remarkable story of a girl who knew from a young age that she wanted to change the world—and did. Malala's powerful story will open your eyes to another world and will make you believe in hope, truth, miracles and the possibility that one person—one young person—can inspire change in her community and beyond.

AR Reading Level: 7.1

Who Wrote It?

At a very young age, Malala developed a thirst for knowledge. For years her father, a passionate education advocate himself, ran a learning institution in the city, and school was a big part of Malala's family. She later wrote that her father told her stories about how she would toddle into classes even before she could talk and acted as if she were the teacher. In 2007, when Malala was ten years old, the situation in the Swat Valley rapidly changed for her family and community. The Taliban began to control the Swat Valley and quickly became the dominant socio-political force throughout much of northwestern Pakistan. Girls were banned from attending school, and cultural activities like dancing and watching television were prohibited. By the



the end of 2008, the Taliban had destroyed some 400 schools. Malala blogged and spoke up against the Taliban in speeches. These made her a target and this book, I am Malala is her story. You can learn more at: <https://malala.org/>

Lexile Level: 1,000L

I want to read this book: YES / NO



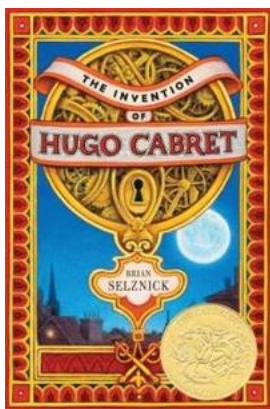
WHAT I THINK





Name _____

Date _____



The Invention of Hugo Cabret

by Brian Selznick

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Orphan, clock keeper, and thief, Hugo lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station, where his survival depends on secrets and anonymity. But when his world suddenly interlocks with an eccentric, bookish girl and a bitter old man who runs a toy booth in the station, Hugo's undercover life, and his most precious secret, are put in jeopardy. A cryptic drawing, a treasured notebook, a stolen key, a mechanical man, and a hidden message from Hugo's dead father form the backbone of this intricate, tender, and spellbinding mystery.

- This book is told half in pictures and half in words.
- This book was turned into a movie in 2011.
- This book won the Caldecott Award (best illustrations) in 2008.

Who Wrote It?

Brian was born on July 14, 1966. He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1988. He got his start in children's books as an independent bookseller at Eeyore's Books for Children on Manhattan's Upper West Side. There he learned all about books from his boss Steve Geck, who is now an editor at Source Books. Brian used to paint and design the windows at the stores for holidays and book events. Brian also worked as a puppeteer. He has



written and illustrated many other books. He currently splits his time living between California and New York.

AR Reading Level: 5.1

Lexile Level: 820L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

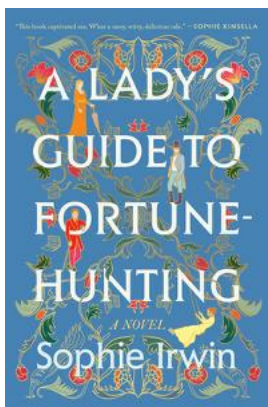
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



A Lady's Guide to Fortune Hunting by Sophie Irwin



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Kitty Talbot needs a fortune. Or rather, she needs a husband who has a fortune. Left with her father's massive debts, she has only twelve weeks to save her family from ruin. Kitty has never been one to back down from a challenge, so she leaves home and heads toward the most dangerous battleground in all of England: the London season. Kitty may be neither accomplished nor especially genteel—but she is utterly single-minded; imbued with cunning and ingenuity, she knows that risk is just part of the game.

The only thing she doesn't anticipate is Lord Radcliffe. The worldly Radcliffe sees Kitty for the mercenary fortune-hunter that she really is and is determined to scotch her plans at all costs, until their parrying takes a completely different turn....

This is a frothy pleasure, full of brilliant repartee and enticing wit—one that readers will find an irresistible delight.

AR Reading Level: N/A

Who Wrote It?

Sophie Irwin grew up in Dorset, England; after university, she moved to London to work in publishing. *A Lady's Guide to Fortune-Hunting* was her debut and it has already sold in nearly thirty countries worldwide. Sophie has spent years immersed in the study of historical fiction. Her love and passion for historical fiction bring a breath of fresh air and a contemporary energy to the genre. Sophie hopes to transport readers to Regency London, where ballrooms are more like battlegrounds. Writing Tip from Sophie: I find it very difficult to come up with good character names on the spot – so a great many of my side characters' surnames are borrowed from street names or towns



and villages I've been through. I keep a list of good ones on my phone in case I get stuck! Learn more about Sophie in this interview: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/posts/meet-the-author/meet-the-author-sophie-irwin>

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

With Nazis bombing London every night, it's time for thirteen-year-old Ken to escape. He suspects his stepmother is glad to see him go, but his dad says he's one of the lucky ones—one of ninety boys and girls to ship out aboard the SS City of Benares to safety in Canada. Life aboard the luxury ship is grand—nine-course meals, new friends, and a life far from the bombs, rations, and his stepmum's glare. And after five days at sea, the ship's officers announce that they're out of danger. They're wrong. Late that night, an explosion hurls Ken from his bunk. They've been hit. Torpedoed! The Benares is sinking fast. Terrified, Ken scrambles aboard Lifeboat 12 with five other boys. Will they get away? Will they survive?

A Junior Library Guild Selection
The 2019 Golden Kite Middle Grade Fiction Award Winner
A 2019 ALSC Notable Children's Book
The 2019–2020 Lectoria Book Award Winner
The 2020–2021 Florida Sunshine State Young Readers Award List
The 2020 Oklahoma Library Association's Children's Sequoyah Book Award Winner
The Connecticut Book Award Winner

AR Reading Level: 4.2

Who Wrote It?

I was born in 1952, in Baltimore, Maryland. I lived in a brick, row house in the city and my neighborhood brimmed with children my age. Summers were spent flying in and out of each other's homes. We were generally unsupervised, playing from early morning until late in the evening when our parents came out on their porches and called us home. We played everything from jacks to hopscotch, jump rope to 'swinging statues', 'talent show' to 'mothers and babies'. There was a park about 5 blocks from my house in one direction and a public library about the same distance in the other direction and I loved going to both. I graduated from high school when I was sixteen and attended Towson State College for one year as a theater major, then the University of Maryland for three more years where I graduated with a B.A. in English with double minors in Psychology and Anthropology. I've



lived in Vermont since 1976 where, with my husband, I've raised two amazing daughters. I love to knit dolls, go hiking, take photographs, read, write little tunes for the piano, paint, sing, and cook.

Lexile Level: 660L

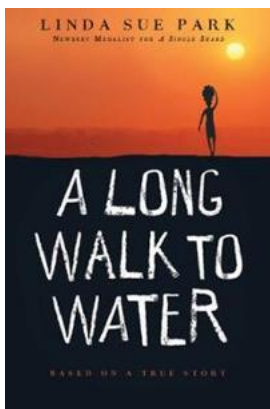
I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK







Name _____

Date _____

A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

A Long Walk to Water begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the 'lost boys' of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way. This book includes an afterword by author Linda Sue Park and the real-life Salva Dut, on whom the novel is based, and who went on to found Water for South Sudan.

Who Wrote It?

Linda Sue Park is the author of the Newbery Medal book A Single Shard, many other novels, and several picture books. She lives in Rochester, New York, with her family, and is now a devoted fan of the New York Mets. Her parents immigrated to the US from Korea and she loves cooking, snorkeling and knitting. For more information visit www.lspark.com.



AR Reading Level: 5.0

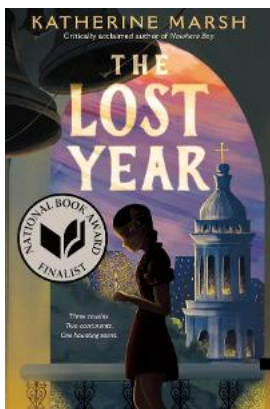
Lexile Level: 720L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

The Lost Year

by Katherine Marsh



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Thirteen-year-old Matthew is miserable. His journalist dad is stuck overseas indefinitely, and his mom has moved in his one-hundred-year-old great-grandmother to ride out the pandemic, adding to his stress and isolation. But when Matthew finds a tattered black-and-white photo in his great-grandmother's belongings, he discovers a clue to a hidden chapter of her past, one that will lead to a life-shattering family secret. Set in alternating timelines that connect the present-day to the 1930s and the US to the USSR, Katherine Marsh's latest novel sheds fresh light on the Holodomor—the horrific famine that killed millions of Ukrainians, and which the Soviet government covered up for decades.

From the author of *Nowhere Boy*—called 'a resistance novel for our times' by *The New York Times*—comes a brilliant middle-grade survival story that traces a harrowing family secret back to the Holodomor, a terrible famine that devastated Soviet Ukraine in the 1930s.

Who Wrote It?

Katherine grew up in Yonkers, New York in the home of her Ukrainian grandma who taught her to love stories and borscht, er parents, an artist/videographer and a stay-at-home mom, didn't have much money but we always had books: Mother Goose and the Little Bear stories with Maurice Sendak's wonderful etchings were some of my favorites. A former journalist and managing editor of *The New Republic*, Besides writing, I like to read, cook for friends and family, travel, correspond with friends, family and readers around the world, study languages (in addition to speaking some French and Russian, I'm learning Ukrainian), do puzzles, and visit off-beat museums. Most of all, I like to



spend time with my family. My husband, two children and I live in Washington, DC with two cats, a rabbit, a bunch of fish, a frog and an axolotl. Learn more about Katharine and her books at www.katherinemarsh.com

AR Reading Level: N/A

Lexile Level: 710L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

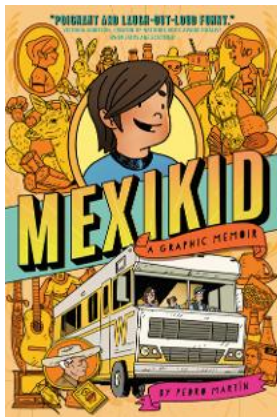
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Mexikid by Pedro Martin



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

An unforgettable graphic memoir about a Mexican American boy's family and their adventure-filled road trip to bring their abuelito back from Mexico to live with them that National Book Award Finalist Victoria Jamieson calls 'one of those books that kids will pass to their friends as soon as they have finished it.'

Pedro Martín has grown up hearing stories about his abuelito—his legendary crime-fighting, grandfather who was once a part of the Mexican Revolution! But that doesn't mean Pedro is excited at the news that Abuelito is coming to live with their family. After all, Pedro has 8 brothers and sisters and the house is crowded enough! Still, Pedro piles into the Winnebago with his family for a road trip to Mexico to bring Abuelito home, and what follows is the trip of a lifetime, one filled with laughs and heartache. Along the way, Pedro finally connects with his abuelito and learns what it means to grow up and find his grito.

** Also available in SPANISH! :)

Who Wrote It?

Pedro grew up in California with his very larger family (9 kids!). He went to San Jose and earned a degree in Editorial Illustration and Design. Pedro created greeting card art for Hallmark for almost 30 years! He is also the creator of the cartoon Asteroid Andy and also illustrated Don't Know Much About® The Solar System and Don't Know Much About® The Presidents. He loves to eat Dot's Homestyle Pretzels while he is writing. His favorite holiday tradition is making tamales with the whole family. He lives in Kansas City, Missouri. Mexikid is the first book he has written, but hopefully it will not be his last!



AR Reading Level: N/A

Lexile Level: N/A

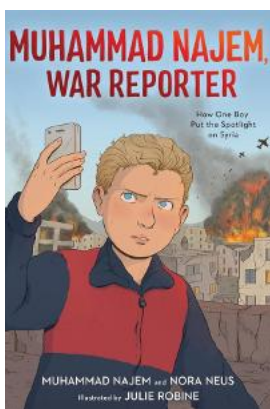
I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Name _____

Date _____



Muhammad Najem: War Reporter

by Muhammad Najem & Nora Neus



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Muhammad Najem was only eight years old when the war in Syria began. He was thirteen when his beloved Baba, his father, was killed in a bombing while praying. By fifteen, Muhammad didn't want to hide anymore—he wanted to act. He was determined to reveal what families like his were enduring in Syria: bombings by their own government and days hiding in dark underground shelters. Armed with the camera on his phone and the support of his family, he started reporting on the war using social media. He interviewed other kids like him to show what they hope for and dream about. More than anything, he did it to show that Syrian kids like his toddler brother and infant sister, are just like kids in any other country. Despite unimaginable loss, Muhammad was always determined to document the humanity of the Syrian people. Eventually, the world took notice. This tenderly illustrated graphic memoir is told by Muhammad himself along with CNN producer Nora Neus, who helped break Muhammad's story and bring his family's plight to an international audience.

Who Wrote It?

Muhammad Najem is from the eastern city of Ghouta in Syria. He began filming and reporting on the war in Syria at the age of 15 to share with the world the horrors of bombings, death, and destruction occurring daily in his homeland. He lived through eight years of war—documenting and sharing the stories and realities of the Syrian people online. In 2019, Muhammad moved to Turkey with his family, where they are now safe. However, the war in Syria continues more than 11 years later, and people still lose their lives every day. He remains committed to reporting on Syria to keep the world informed of the truth. In addition to this book, Muhammad was featured in Angelina Jolie's book Know Your Rights and Claim Them, a guide



empowering young people worldwide to advocate for themselves and others. Currently, Muhammad is focused on improving his English and continuing his education.

AR Reading Level: 3.1

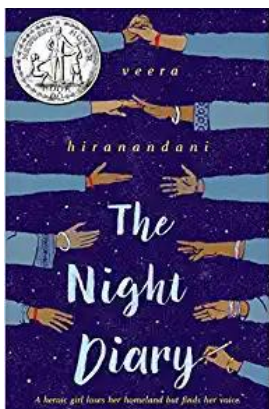
Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

The Night Diary

By Veera Hiranandani



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

It's 1947, and India, newly independent of British rule, has been separated into two countries: Pakistan and India. The divide has created much tension between Hindus and Muslims, and hundreds of thousands are killed crossing borders. Half-Muslim, half-Hindu twelve-year-old Nisha doesn't know where she belongs, or what her country is anymore.

When Papa decides it's too dangerous to stay in what is now Pakistan, Nisha and her family become refugees and embark first by train but later on foot to reach her new home. The journey is long, difficult, and dangerous, and after losing her mother as a baby, Nisha can't imagine losing her homeland, too. But even if her country has been ripped apart, Nisha still believes in the possibility of putting herself back together. Told through Nisha's letters to her mother, *The Night Diary* is a story of one girl's search for home, for her own identity...and for a hopeful future.

This book won a Newbery Honor Award in 2019.

Who Wrote It?

When I was a kid, I liked video games a lot and since I grew up in the '80s before the internet, xbox, and wii, going to the arcade and playing Pacman was just about the most exciting thing in the world. When I wasn't begging my parents to take me to an arcade, I was reading, making up stories, doing gymnastics, baking cookies, drawing, and making my little sister play the games I wanted to play. I was raised in a small town in Connecticut. Growing up wasn't always easy. My mother is Jewish-American, my father is from a Hindu family in India, and I didn't know any kids like me where I lived. But coming from two cultures



and not always fitting in has probably made me a stronger person. Now I live in a little town on the Hudson River with my husband, daughter, son, and a very moody cat who we love anyway.

AR Reading Level: 4.5

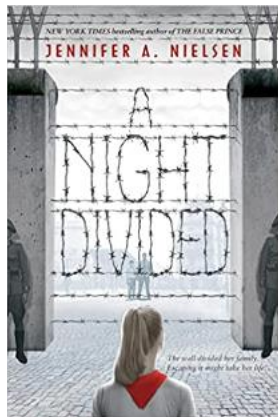
Lexile Level: 700L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

A Night Divided

by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

A With the rise of the Berlin Wall, Gerta finds her family suddenly divided. She, her mother, and her brother Fritz live on the eastern side, controlled by the Soviets. Her father and middle brother, who had gone west in search of work, cannot return home. Gerta knows it is dangerous to watch the wall, yet she can't help herself. She sees the East German soldiers with their guns trained on their own citizens; she, her family, her neighbors and friends are prisoners in their own city. But one day on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Gerta concludes that her father wants her and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. However, if they are caught, the consequences will be deadly. No one can be trusted. Will Gerta and her family find their way to freedom?

Who Wrote It?

For as far back as Jennifer can remember, she has shared her brain with imaginary characters. She figures it's okay if she talks to them as she's working on her stories, as long as they don't start talking back. Jennifer began writing in elementary school, writing in spiral notebooks or plucking out keys on an electric typewriter (yep, she's that old). Jennifer has won multiple awards including the Sydney Taylor Notable Book Award (RESISTANCE, 2019), multiple Whitney Awards, and several state book awards. Jennifer's favorite food is Pho and she loves watching movies. Her favorite is The



Lord of the Rings. You can learn more about Jennifer by visiting her website: <https://jennielsen.com/> or watching the interview at the end of this video.

AR Reading Level: 5.4

Lexile Level: 810L

I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK





Name _____

Date _____



Nowhere Boy

by Katherine Marsh



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

A devastating tornado tears apart more than just houses in this striking novel in verse about a girl rebuilding herself. Before the storm, thirteen-year-old Quinn was happy flying under the radar. She was average. Unremarkable. Always looking for an escape from her house, where her bickering parents fawned over her genius big brother. But after the storm, Quinn can't seem to go back to average. Her friends weren't affected by the tornado in the same way. To them, the storm left behind a playground of abandoned houses and distracted adults. As Quinn struggles to find stability in the tornado's aftermath, she must choose: between homes, friendships, and versions of herself. Told in rich, spectacular verse, Caroline Brooks DuBois crafts a powerful story of redemption as Quinn makes her way from Before to After. There's nothing average about the world Quinn wakes up to after the storm; maybe there's nothing average about her, either. This emotional coming-of-age journey for middle grade readers proves that it's never too late to be the person you want to be.

AR Reading Level: 5.4

Who Wrote It?

Katherine grew up in Yonkers, New York in the home of her Ukrainian grandma who taught her to love stories and borscht, er parents, an artist/videographer and a stay-at-home mom, didn't have much money but we always had books: Mother Goose and the Little Bear stories with Maurice Sendak's wonderful etchings were some of my favorites. A former journalist and managing editor of The New Republic, Besides writing, I like to read, cook for friends and family, travel, correspond with friends, family and readers around the world, study languages (in addition to speaking some French and Russian, I'm learning Ukrainian), do puzzles, and visit off-beat museums. Most of all, I like to



spend time with my family. My husband, two children and I live in Washington, DC with two cats, a rabbit, a bunch of fish, a frog and an axolotl. Learn more about Katharine and her books at www.katherinemarsh.com

Lexile Level: 810L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



A Place to Hang the Moon by Kate Albus



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

It is 1940 and William, 12, Edmund, 11, and Anna, 9, aren't terribly upset by the death of the not-so-grandmotherly grandmother who has taken care of them since their parents died. But the children do need a guardian, and in the dark days of World War II London, those are in short supply, especially if they hope to stay together. Could the mass wartime evacuation of children from London to the countryside be the answer? It's a preposterous plan, but off they go-- keeping their predicament a secret, and hoping to be placed in a temporary home that ends up lasting forever. Moving from one billet to another, the children suffer the cruel trickery of foster brothers, the cold realities of outdoor toilets and the hollowness of empty stomachs. But at least they find comfort in the village lending library-- a cozy shelter from the harshness of everyday life, filled with favorite stories and the quiet company of Nora Müller, the kind librarian. The children wonder if Nora could be the family they've been searching for. . . . But the shadow of the war, and the unknown whereabouts of Nora's German husband complicate matters.

AR Reading Level: 5.0

Who Wrote It?

I started writing after stepping away from my career as a research psychologist to be with my kids. I had written plenty of scientific stuff, and always assumed I had to be either scientific or creative – but not both. Silly. Then I attended a dear friend's creative writing group and fell in love with it. I had a story in my head – about the World War II evacuation of London – and squirreled myself away in my studio while my kids were in school. For at least a hundred pages, I didn't even tell my family I was doing it, but when we'd had pizza for a suspicious number of dinners, I finally fessed up.

I love writing for the pure, simple, solitary pleasure of it. I love spending a year or more with characters who come to feel like family.



Lexile Level: N/A

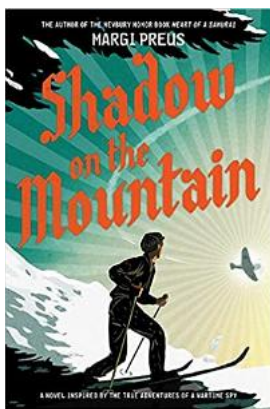
I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

Shadow on the Mountain by Margi Preus



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Shadow on the Mountain recounts the adventures of a 14-year-old Norwegian boy named Espen during World War II. After Nazi Germany invades and occupies Norway, Espen and his friends are swept up in the Norwegian resistance movement. Espen gets his start by delivering illegal newspapers, then graduates to the role of courier and finally becomes a spy, dodging the Gestapo along the way. During five years under the Nazi regime, he gains—and loses—friends, falls in love, and makes one small mistake that threatens to catch up with him as he sets out to escape on skis over the mountains to Sweden.

Preus incorporates archival photographs, maps, and other images to tell this story based on the real-life adventures of Norwegian Erling Storrusten, whom Preus interviewed in Norway.

Who Wrote It?

I grew up in a pretty town in Minnesota, in a beautiful area of rolling hills, farms, and hardwood forests. My mother was a pianist, organist, and piano teacher. My father was a Lutheran pastor. He liked to hunt and fish and walk in the woods, and I liked to walk in the woods with him. Before I started writing books, I had a lot of oddball jobs: I taught swimming lessons in remote Alaskan villages, was a groom at a horse race track, have been an adventure travel guide, a professional note-taker, a dance instructor, a teacher of fiction writing—also children's literature and the director of a theater company in Duluth.



Minnesota, where I still live. Learn more about Margi, by visiting her website: <https://www.margipreus.com/> or by listening to the interview at the end of this video!

AR Reading Level: 5.0

Lexile Level: 730L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

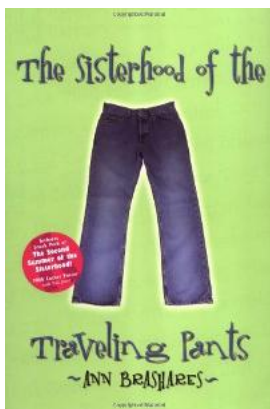


WHAT I THINK





Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants by Ann Brashares



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

The first novel in the wildly popular #1 New York Times bestselling Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants series.

Some friends just fit together. Once there was a pair of pants. Just an ordinary pair of jeans. But these pants, the Traveling Pants, went on to do great things. This is the story of the four friends—Lena, Tibby, Bridget, and Carmen—who made it possible.

Pants = love. Love your pals. Love yourself.

** The first in a series of 4 books.
** Also a movie!

Who Wrote It?

I am a writer living in New York City and a mother of four. I am married to artist Jacob Collins. I grew up in and around Washington, DC. Before becoming a writer, I was a student of philosophy, a receptionist, an editor, a ghostwriter, and briefly, the co-president of a small media company. I love babies and children (many of whom are no longer children), teaching, gardening, and the effort, more generally, of growing and taking care of living things, in some cases fictional. I love walking, running, and biking around my own city and others, especially old cities. I love reading



fiction, poetry, and history; I love talking about ideas and also arguing about them in a civilized way. I prize curiosity above intellect. I cherish my friendships.

AR Reading Level: 4.5

Lexile Level: 600L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Thirst

by Varsha Bajaj



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Minni lives in the poorest part of Mumbai, where access to water is limited to a few hours a day and the communal taps have long lines. Lately, though, even that access is threatened by severe water shortages and thieves who are stealing this precious commodity—an act that Minni accidentally witnesses one night. Meanwhile, in the high-rise building where she just started to work, she discovers that water streams out of every faucet and there's even a rooftop swimming pool. What Minni also discovers there is one of the water mafia bosses. Now she must decide whether to expose him and risk her job and maybe her life. How did something as simple as access to water get so complicated?

- 2022 Global Read Aloud MG Pick!
- A New York Times Bestseller

AR Reading Level: 4.4

Who Wrote It?

My story begins in Mumbai, India, in the early 1960s in a rambling house built in 1929 surrounded by coconut, guava, and betel nut trees. I grew up in a large joint family. My father and grandfather were perfumers, always sniffing and perfecting blotter strips of sandalwood and jasmine. I devoured Amar Chitra Katha comic books with stories from Indian mythology and was introduced to Marathi children's theater by my parents. On September 13th, 1986, I came to America as a graduate student. After a dozen intermediate years in which I got a Master's degree, almost completed a doctorate, worked as a Counselor, got married, had children and became a citizen,



I started writing. It was 1999, and I'd fallen in love with the picture book while reading aloud to my kids. Varsha writes picture books and middle grade novels and now lives in Texas.

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

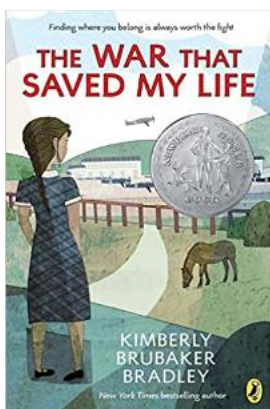
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



The War That Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him.

So begins a new adventure for Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan—and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother?

*Newbery Honor book
*Winner of the Schneider Family Book Award

Who Wrote It?

In 1967, Kimberly was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She always loved to read, often skipping recess to go talk with her school librarian. Being a writer floated in her daydreams, but she didn't know any writers, and it didn't feel like a real job. In school she loved chemistry in addition to writing. When she went to college, she majored in chemistry. She was lucky, though, a liberal arts school (Smith) where she was encouraged to study all sorts of different subjects, and she took lots of writing classes. She married my high-school sweetheart, and for awhile I worked as a research chemist and wrote stories late at night and on weekends. But eventually, she realized she really wanted



to be a writer and began pursuing that path. Kimberly and her husband and live in Bristol, TN where we live on a 52-acre farm. We love to travel and learn about history from all over the world.

AR Reading Level: 4.1

Lexile Level: 580L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

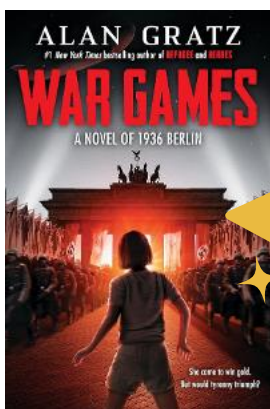
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



War Games

by Alan Gratz



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

In 1936 Berlin, nothing is what it seems... Evie Harris can't believe her luck: She's competing in the Olympics, along with fellow American athletes like Jesse Owens. True, there's something creepy about Germany's leader, Adolf Hitler, who watches over the games with his Nazi henchmen. But Evie's just here to win a gold medal in gymnastics. Until she discovers a horrible secret. Behind all the Olympic fanfare, the Nazis have Berlin in an iron grip of terror and violence--and war is brewing. When Evie becomes embroiled in a mysterious plot to help steal Nazi gold, she must navigate the city's darkest corners and hidden passageways, never knowing who she can trust. With lives on the line and her family's future at stake, Evie has to choose between following her Olympic dreams and standing up to evil... before it's too late. #1 New York Times bestselling author Alan Gratz is back and better than ever with this heart-racing, plot-twisting story about the roots of World War II and the sacrifices we make for what matters most.

Who Wrote It?

Alan was born and raised in Knoxville, Tennessee, home of the 1982 World's Fair. After a carefree but humid childhood, Alan attended the University of Tennessee, where he earned a College Scholars degree with a specialization in creative writing, and, later, a Master's degree in English education. A member of the East Tennessee Writers Hall of Fame, Alan now lives with his family in Portland, Oregon, where he enjoys playing games, eating pizza, and, perhaps not too surprisingly,



reading books. You can learn more about Alan and his work (20 and counting!) at www.alangratz.com

AR Reading Level: 4.9

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

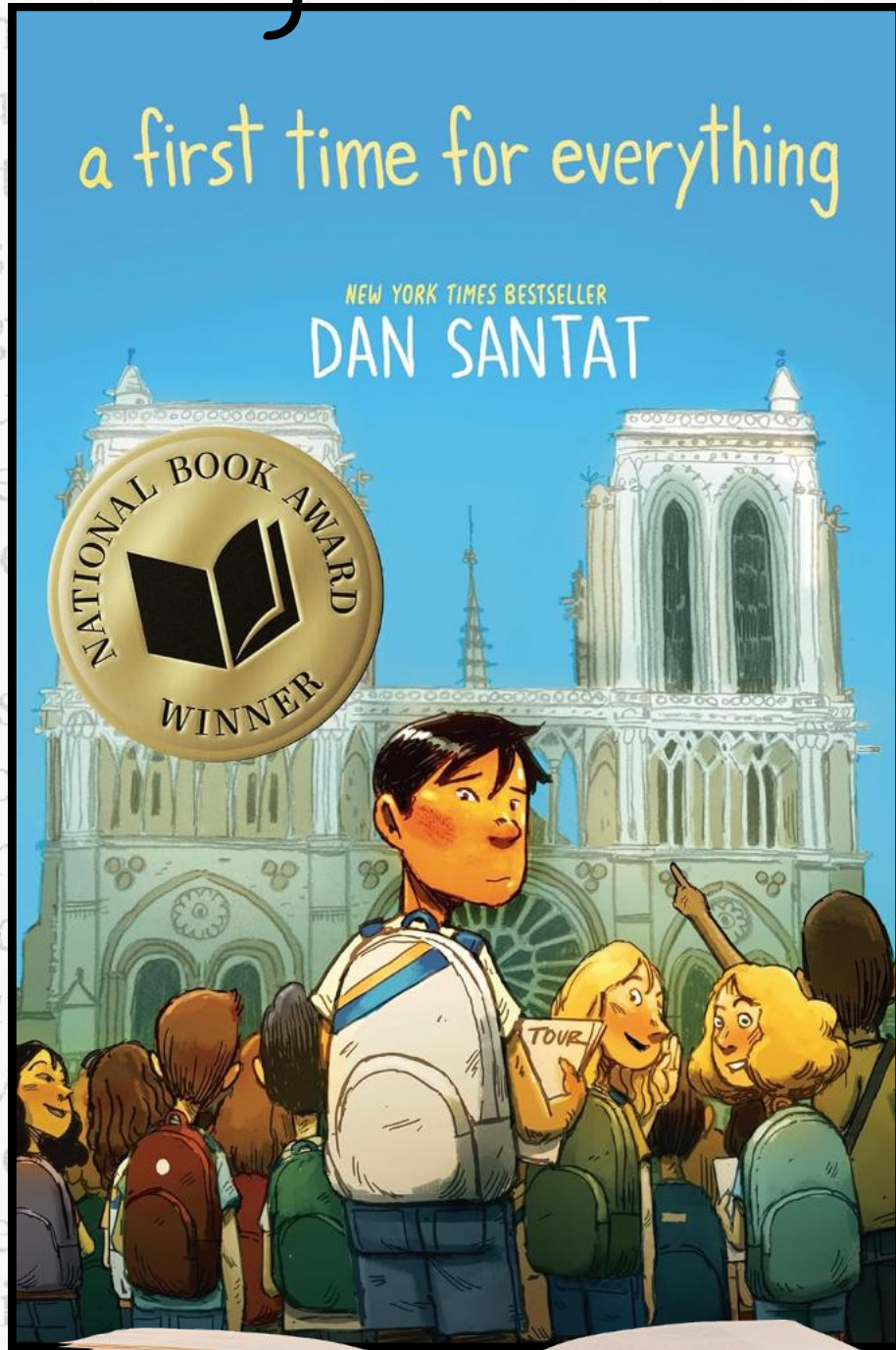
INDIVIDUAL BOOK POSTERS



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

A FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING

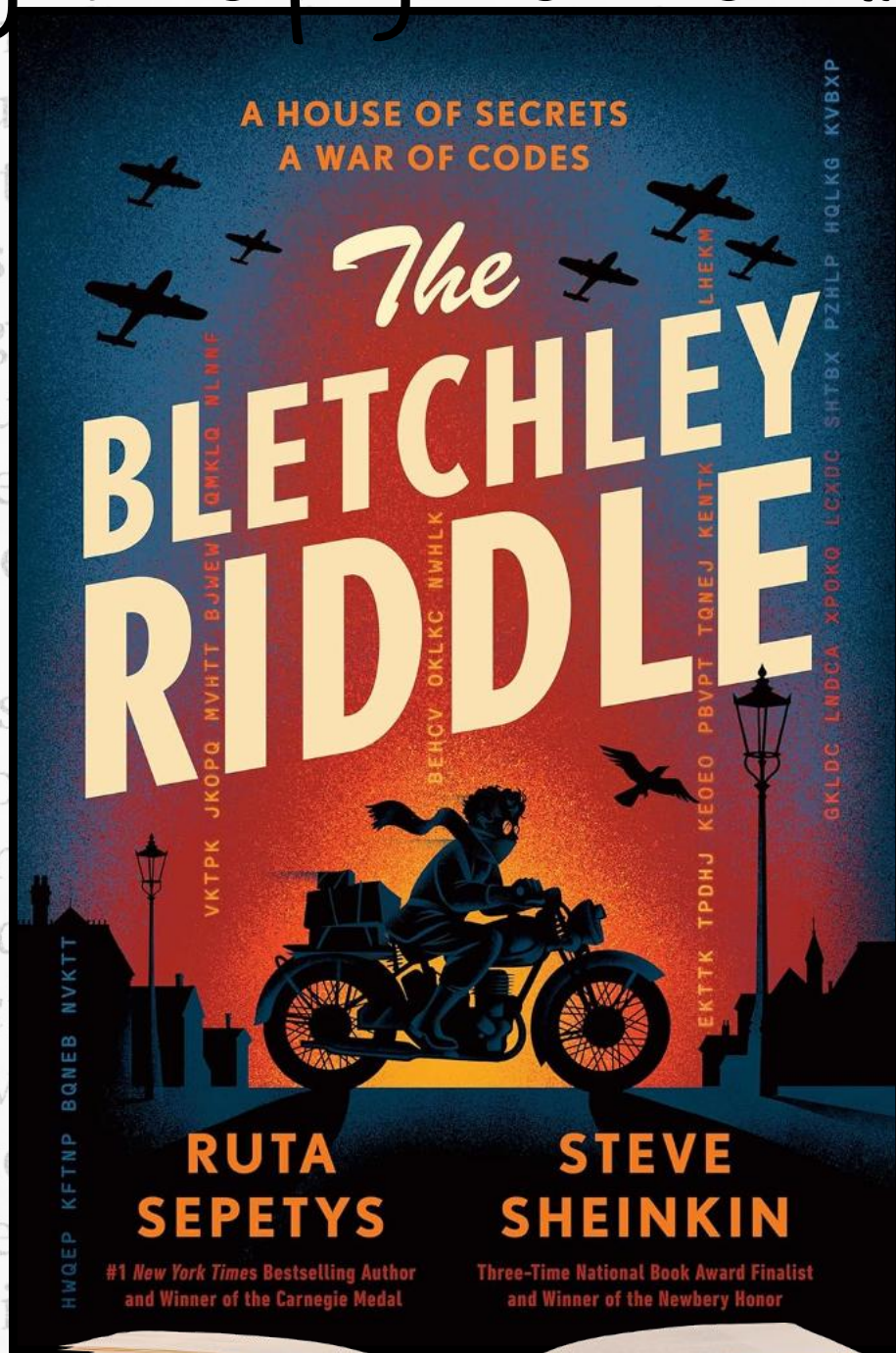
By Dan Santat



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE BLETCHLEY RIDDLE

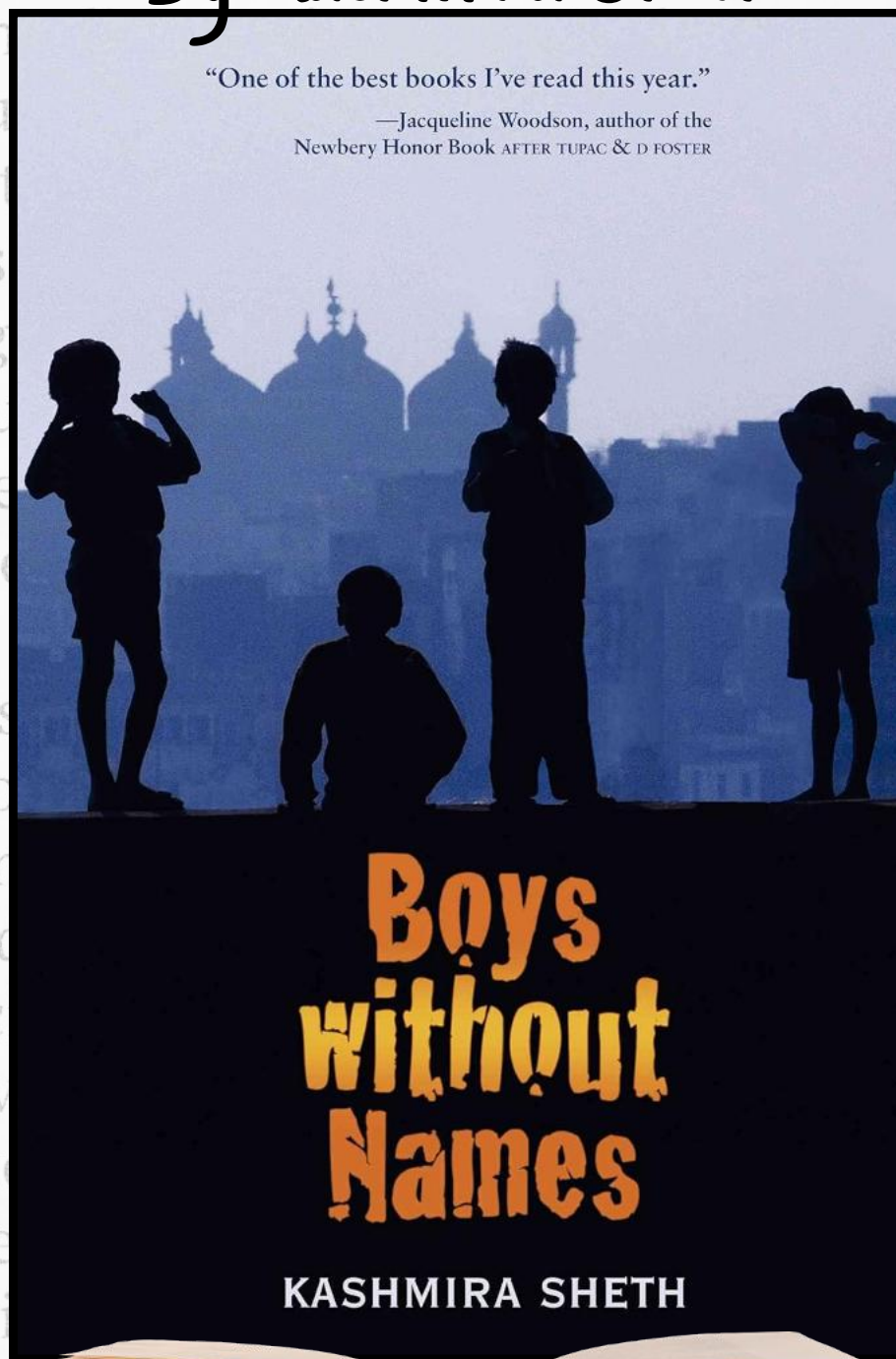
by Ruta Sepetys & Steve Sheinkin



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

BOYS WITHOUT NAMES

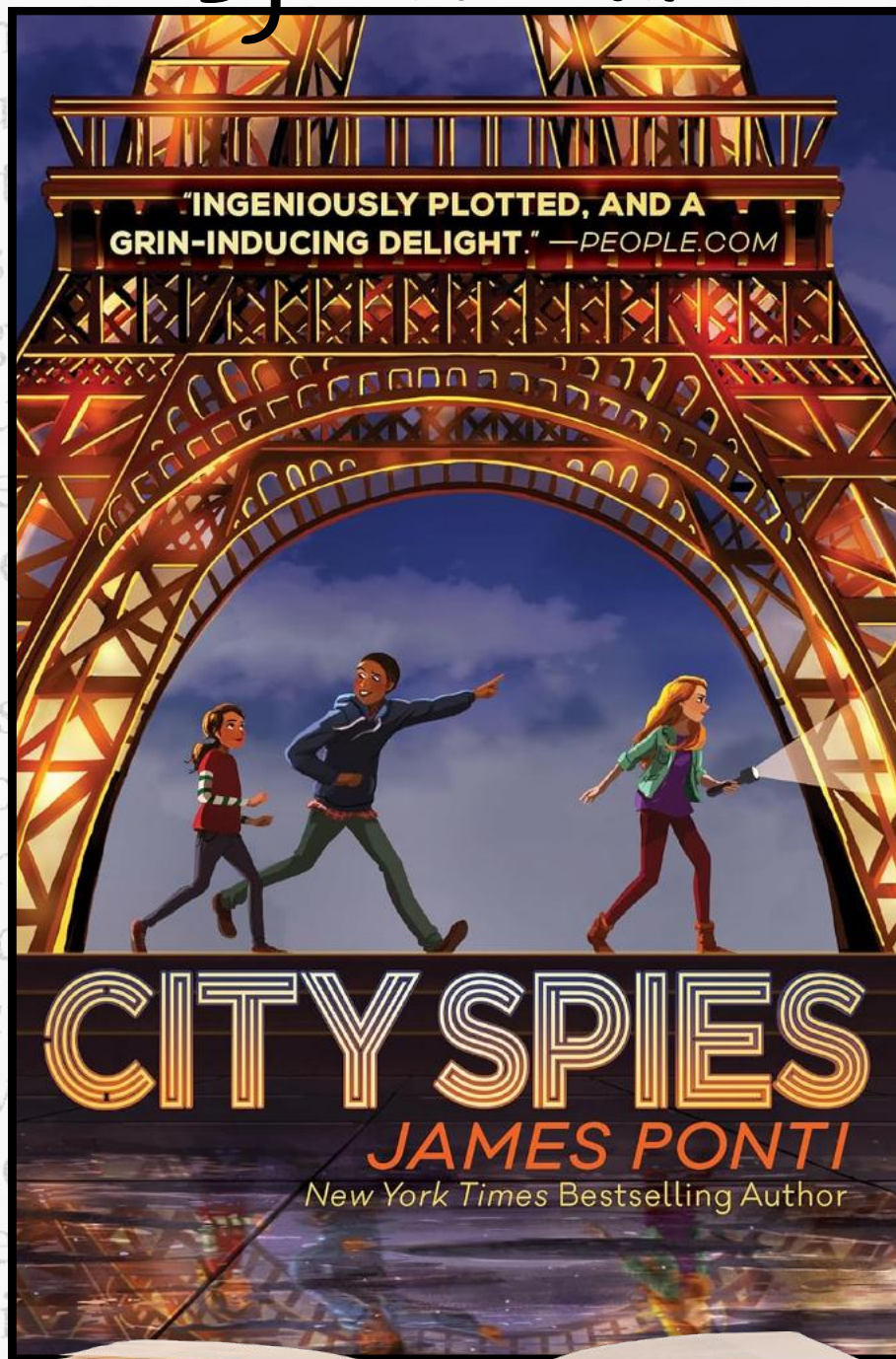
By Kashmiri Sheth



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

CITY SPIES

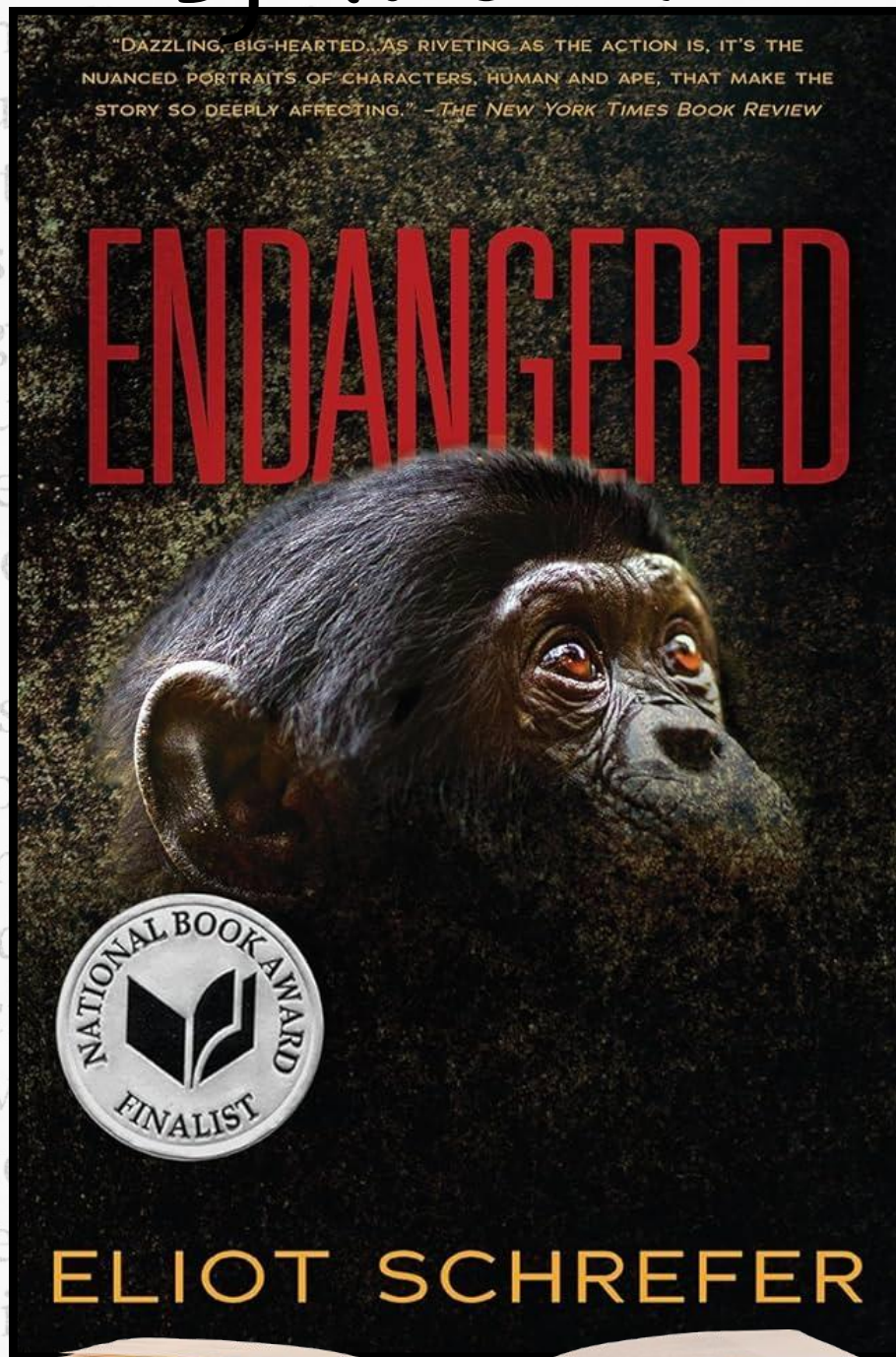
By James Ponti



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

ENDANGERED

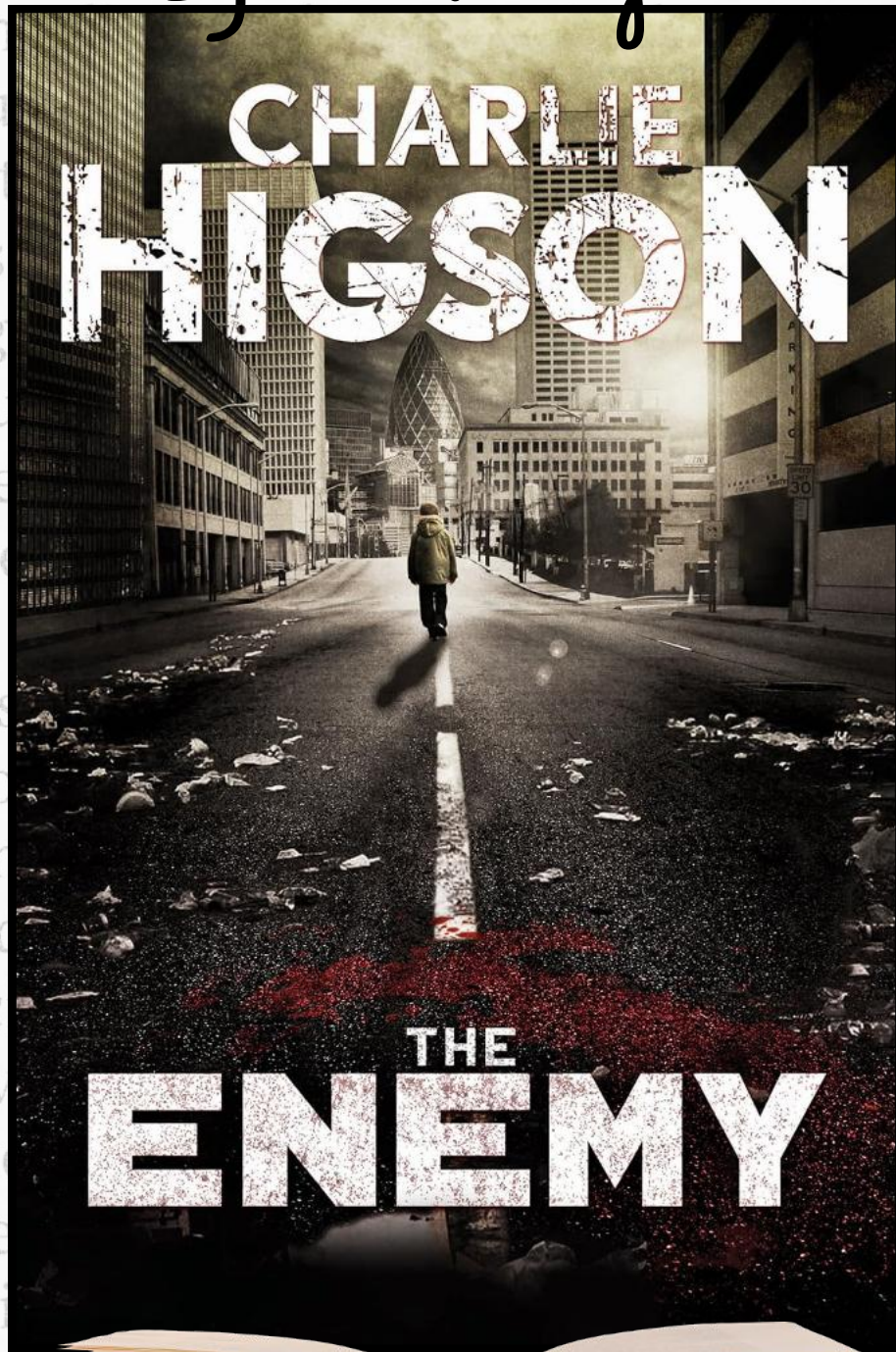
By Eliot Schrefer



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE ENEMY

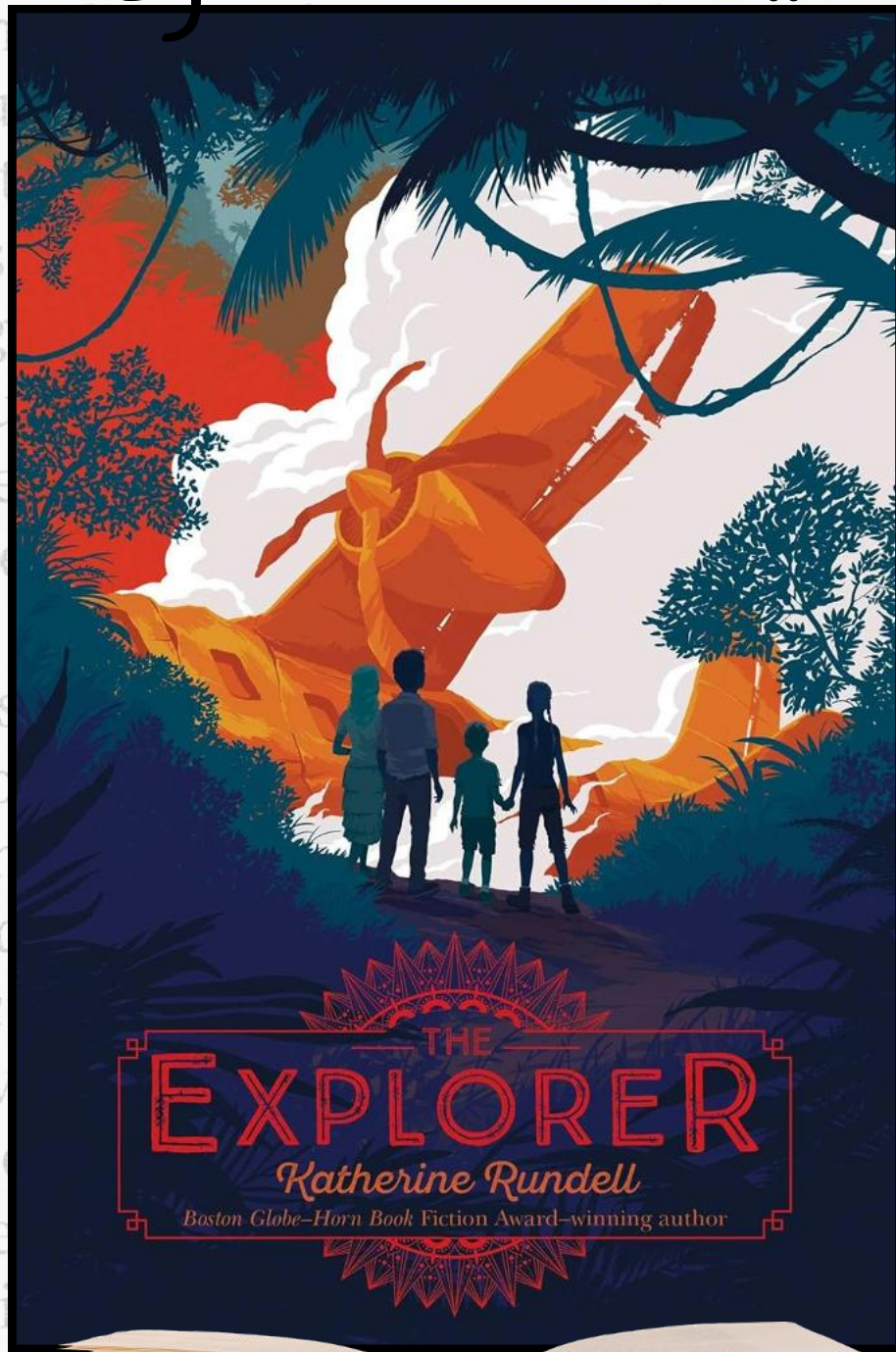
By Charlie Higson



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE EXPLORER

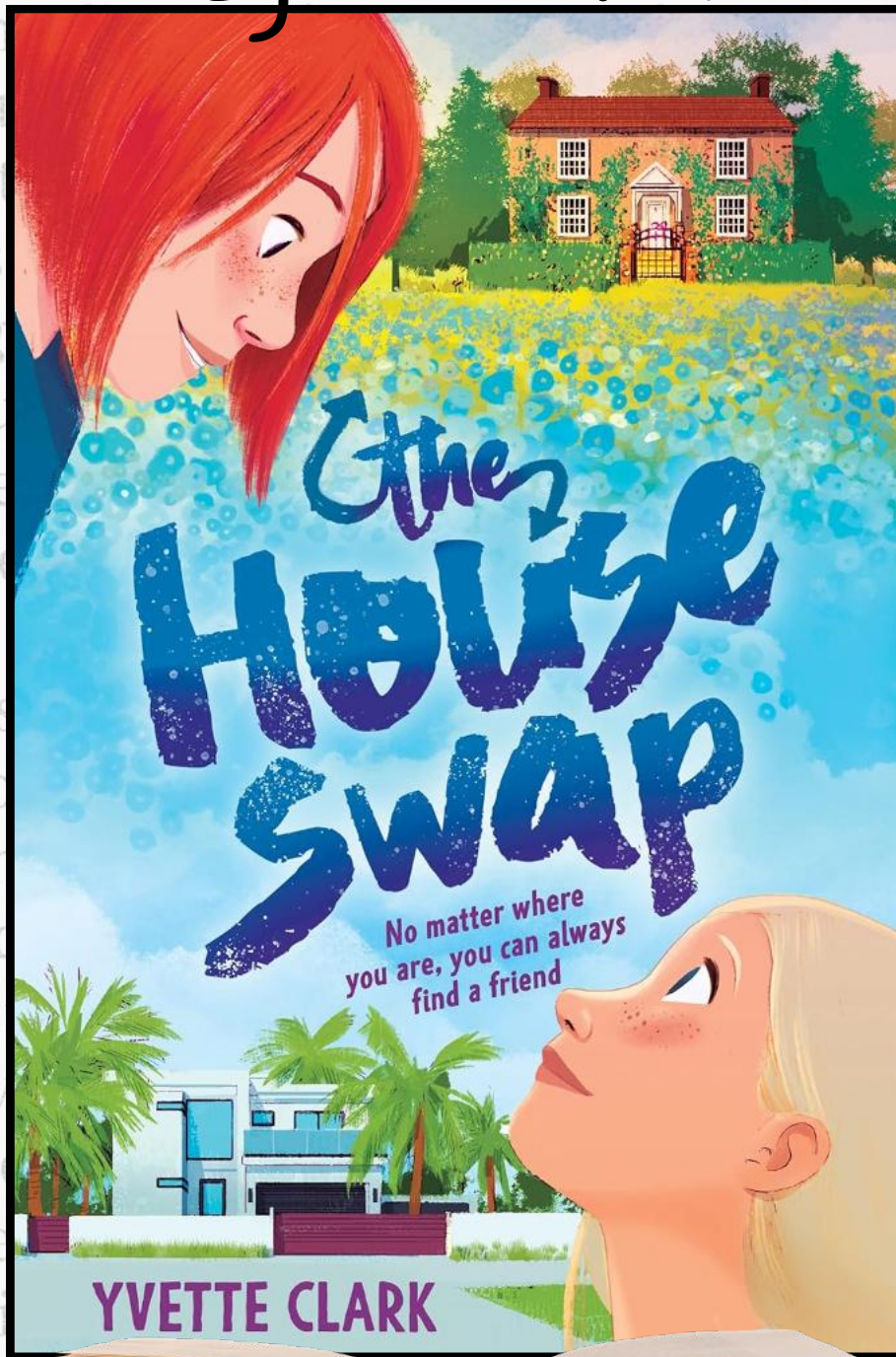
By Katherine Rundell



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE HOUSE SWAP

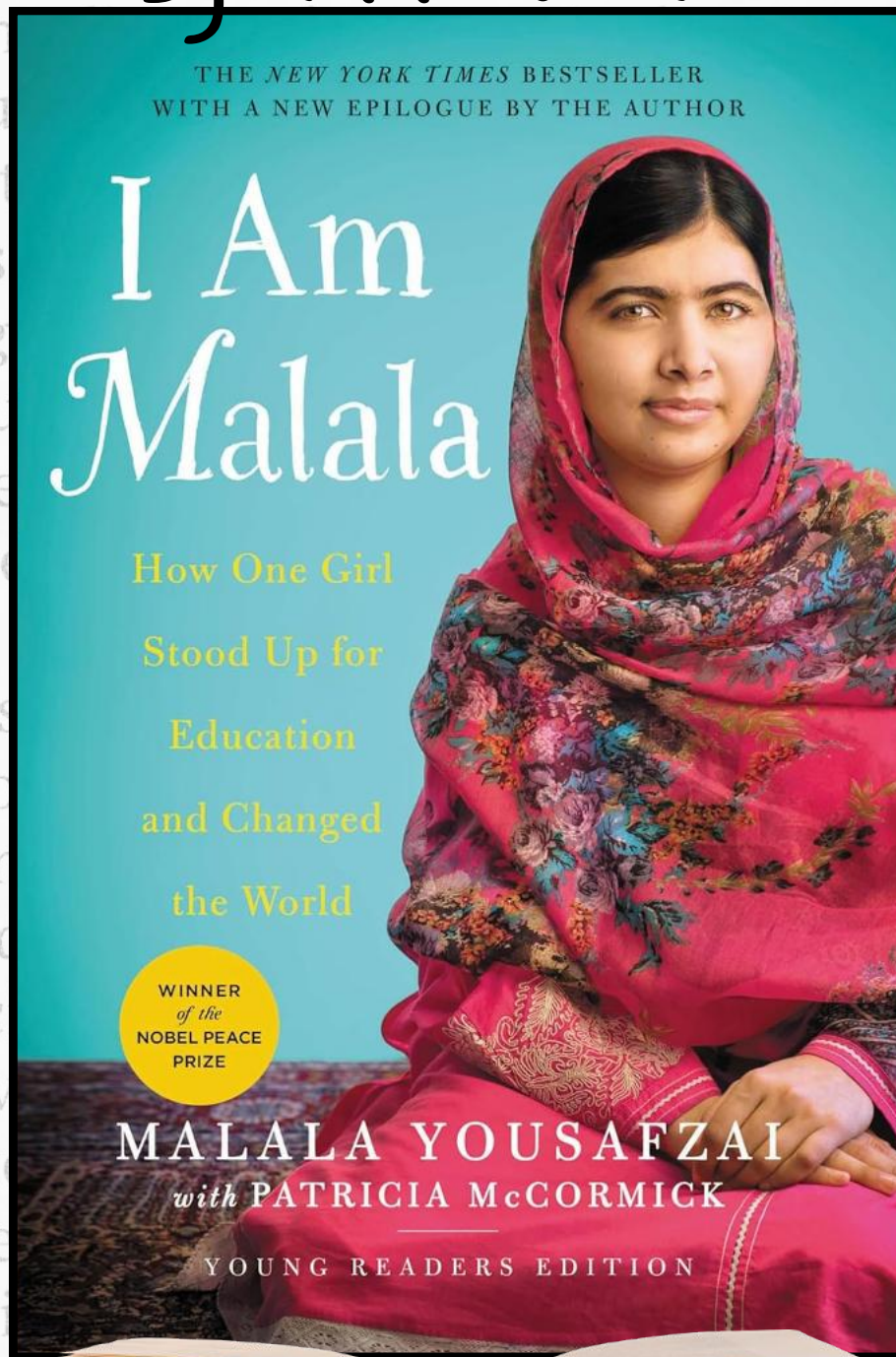
By Yvette Clark



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

I AM MALALA

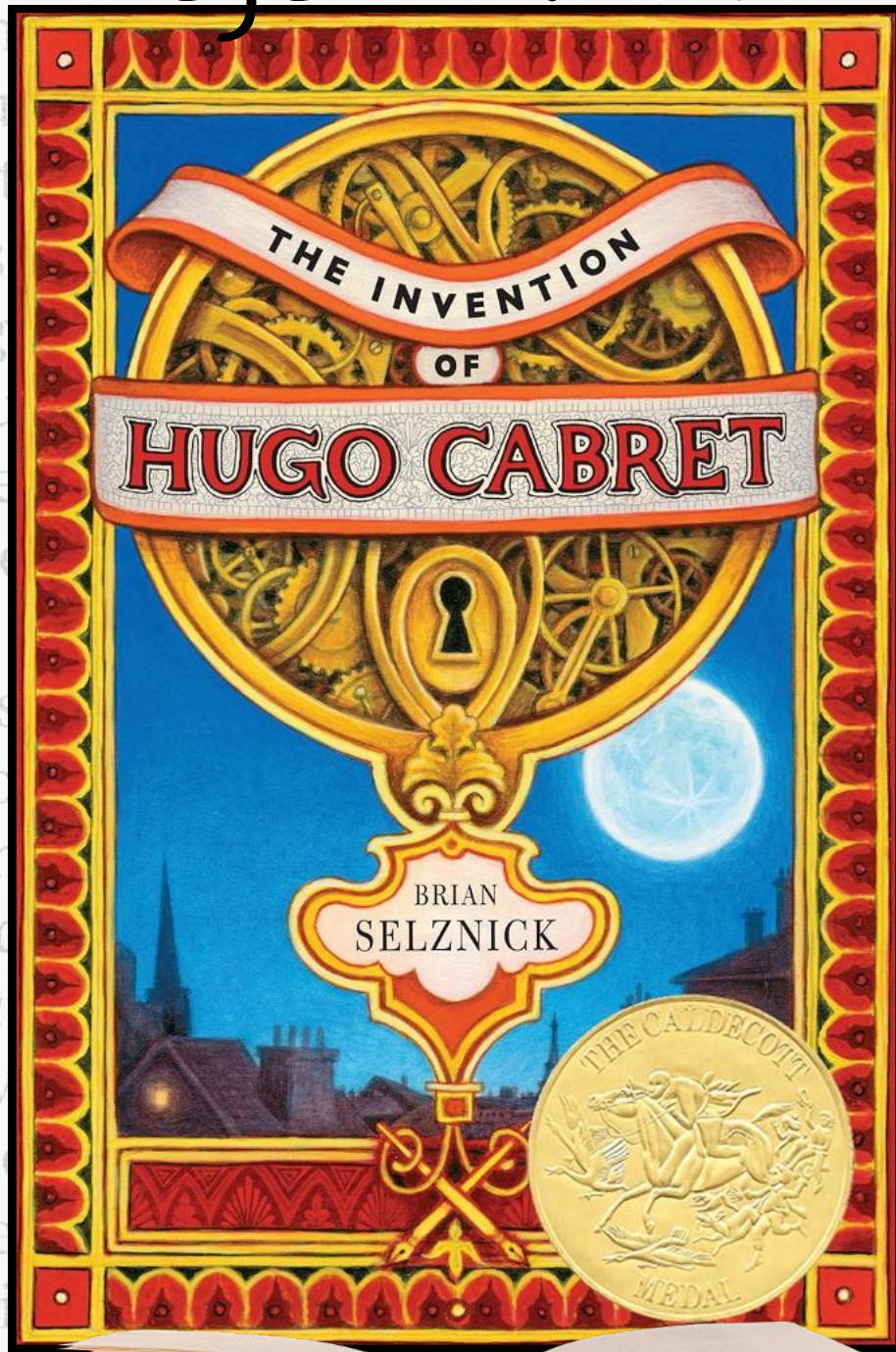
By Malala Yousafzai



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE INVENTION OF HUGO CABRET

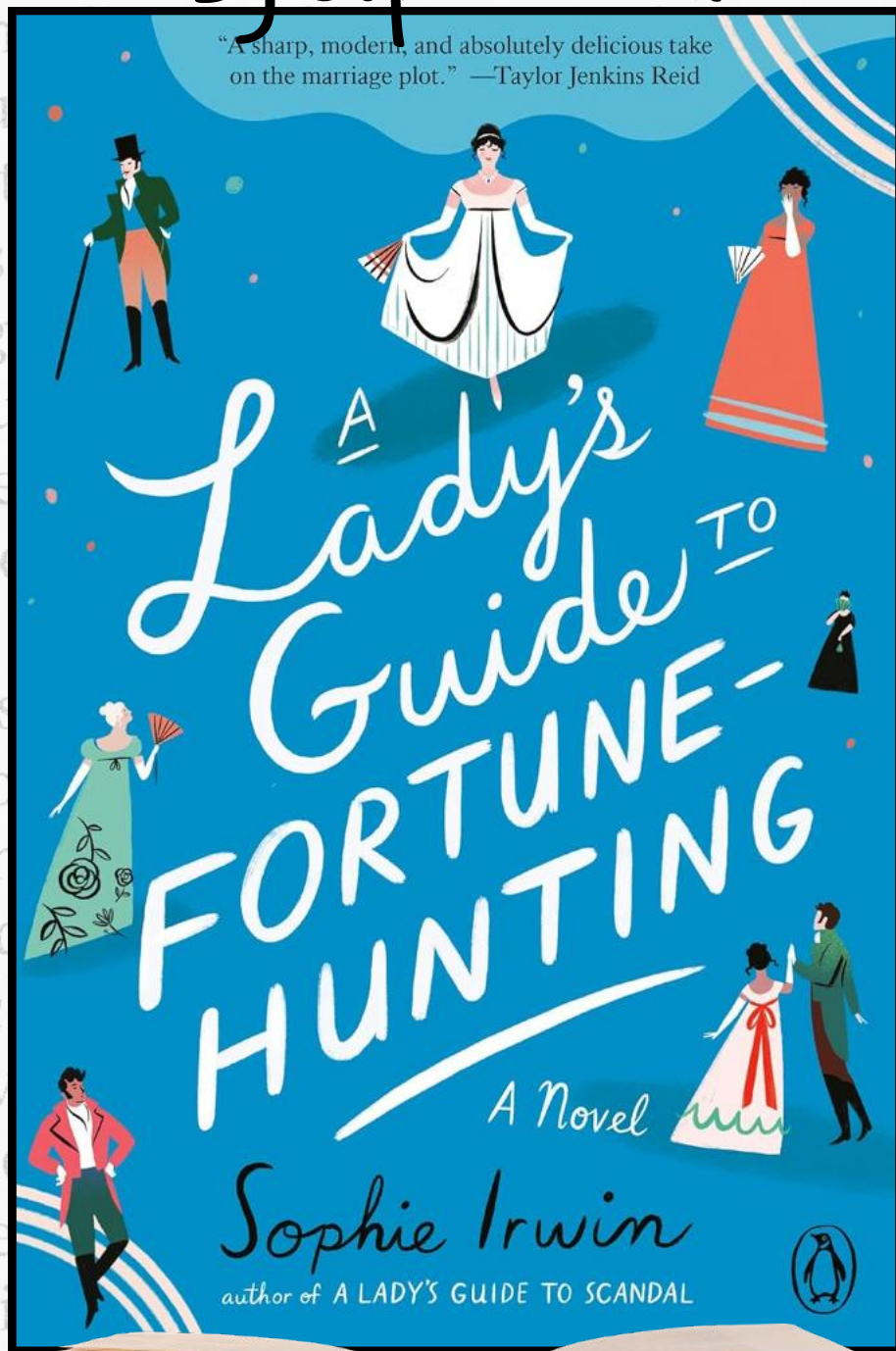
By Brian Sleznick



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

A LADY'S GUIDE TO FORTUNE HUNTING

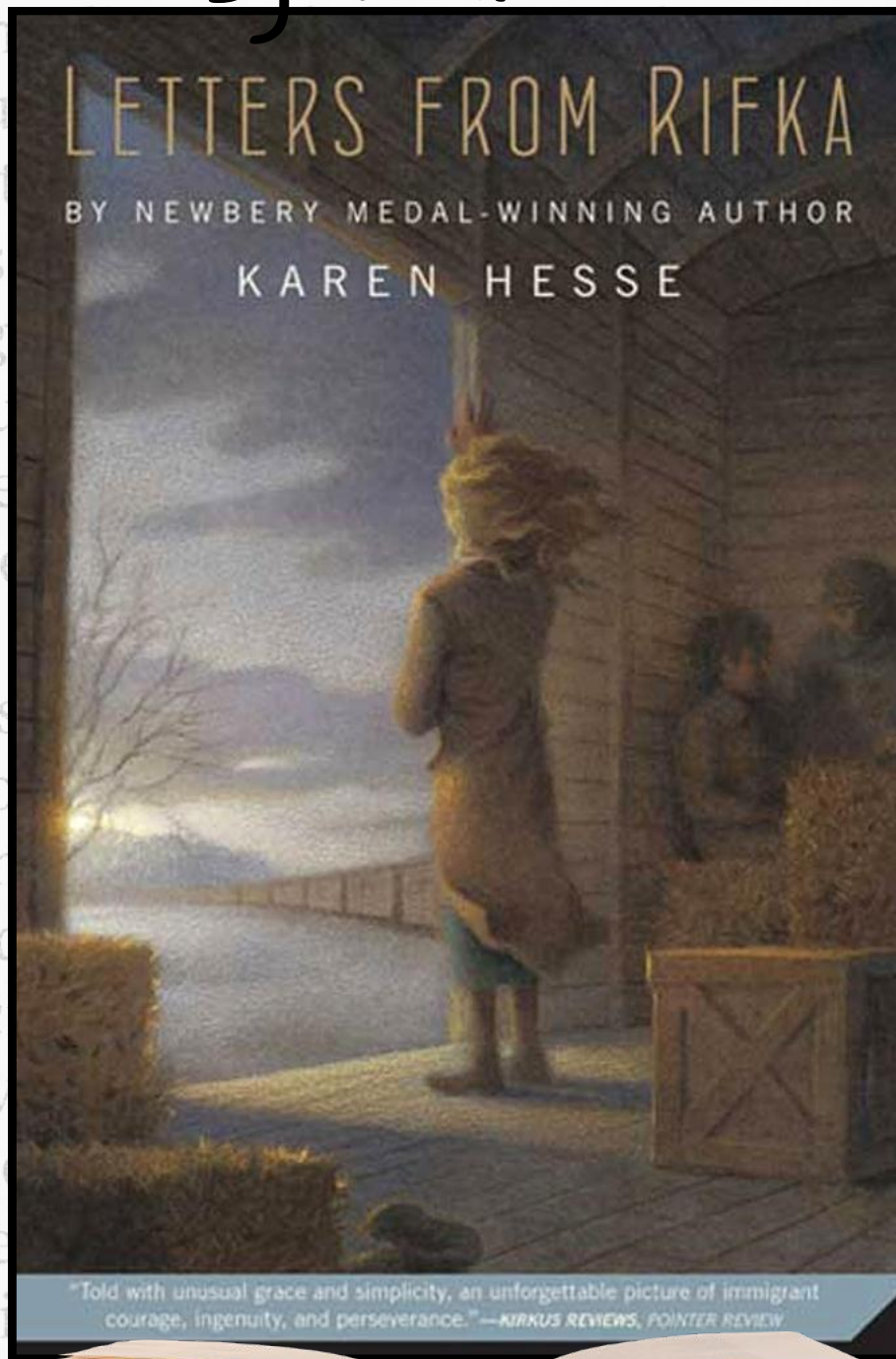
By Sophie Irwin



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

LETTERS FROM RIFKA

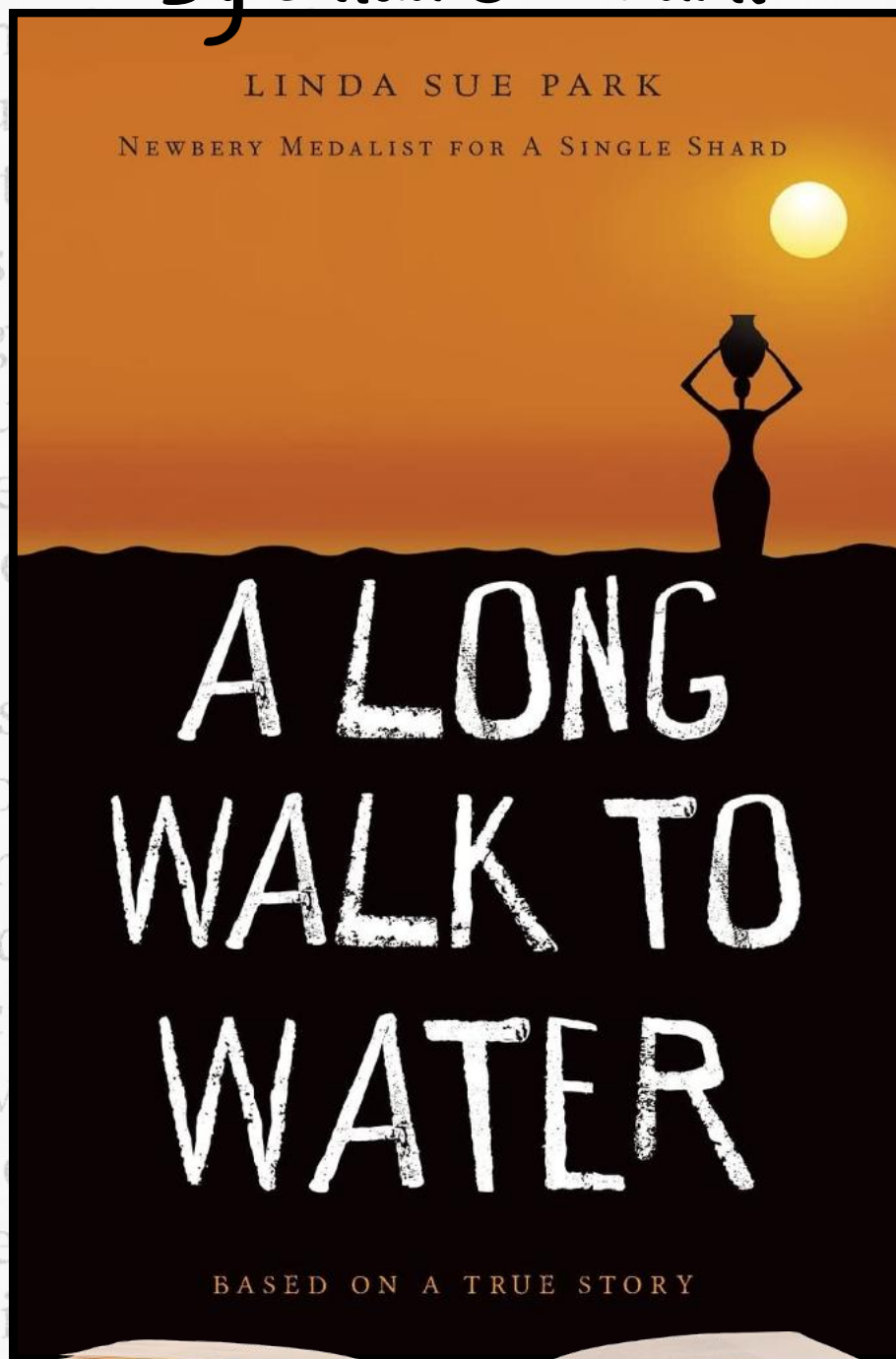
By Karen Hesse



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

A LONG WALK TO WATER

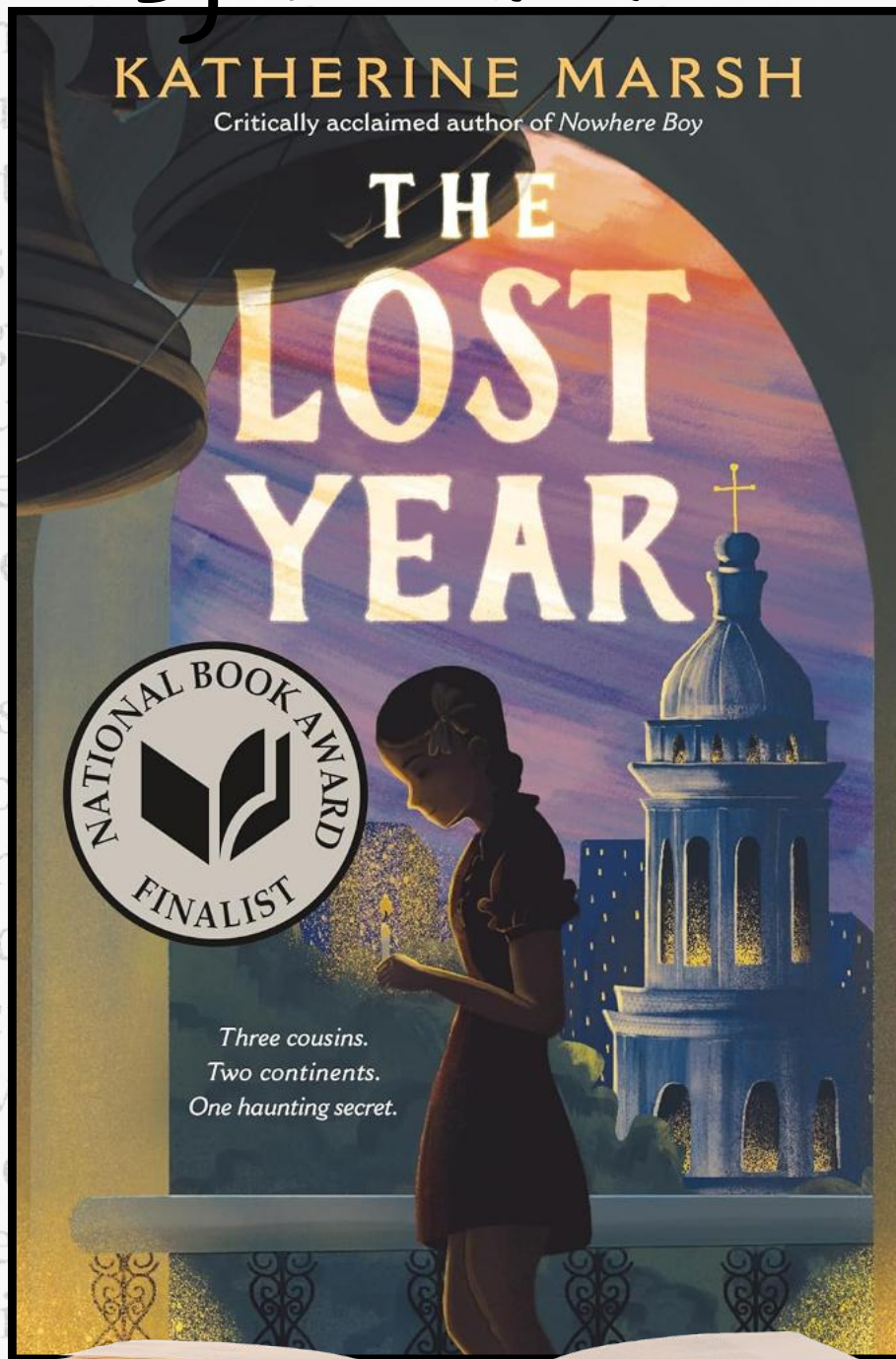
By Linda Sue Park



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE LOST YEAR

By Katherine Marsh



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

By Pedro Martin

"POIGNANT AND LAUGH-OUT-LOUD FUNNY."
VICTORIA JAMIESON, CREATOR OF NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST
WHEN STARS ARE SCATTERED

MEXIKID

A GRAPHIC MEMOIR

Pura Belpré Award

NEWBERY HONOR BOOK

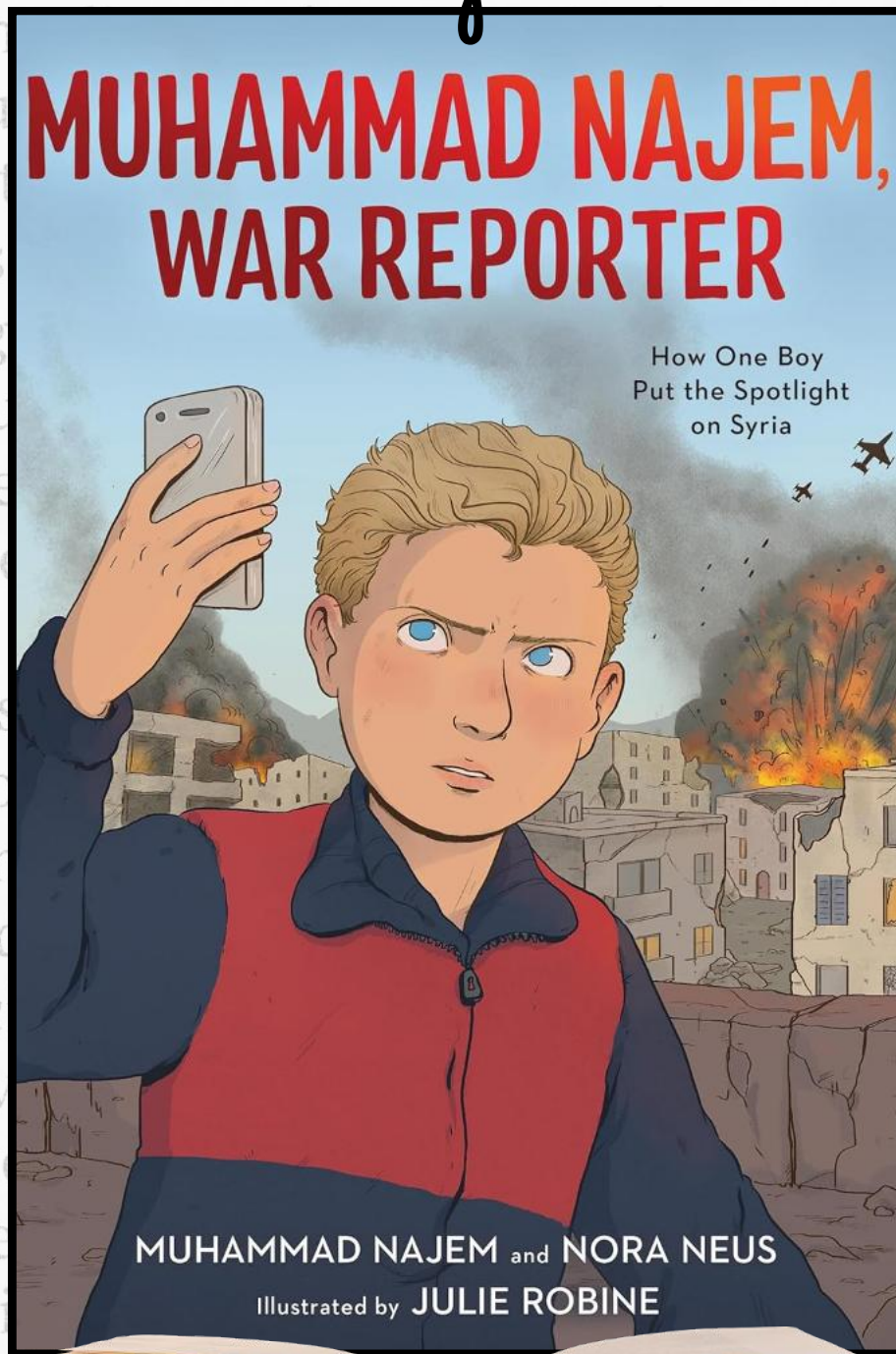
BY PEDRO MARTÍN



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

MUHAMMAD NAJEM, WAR REPORTER

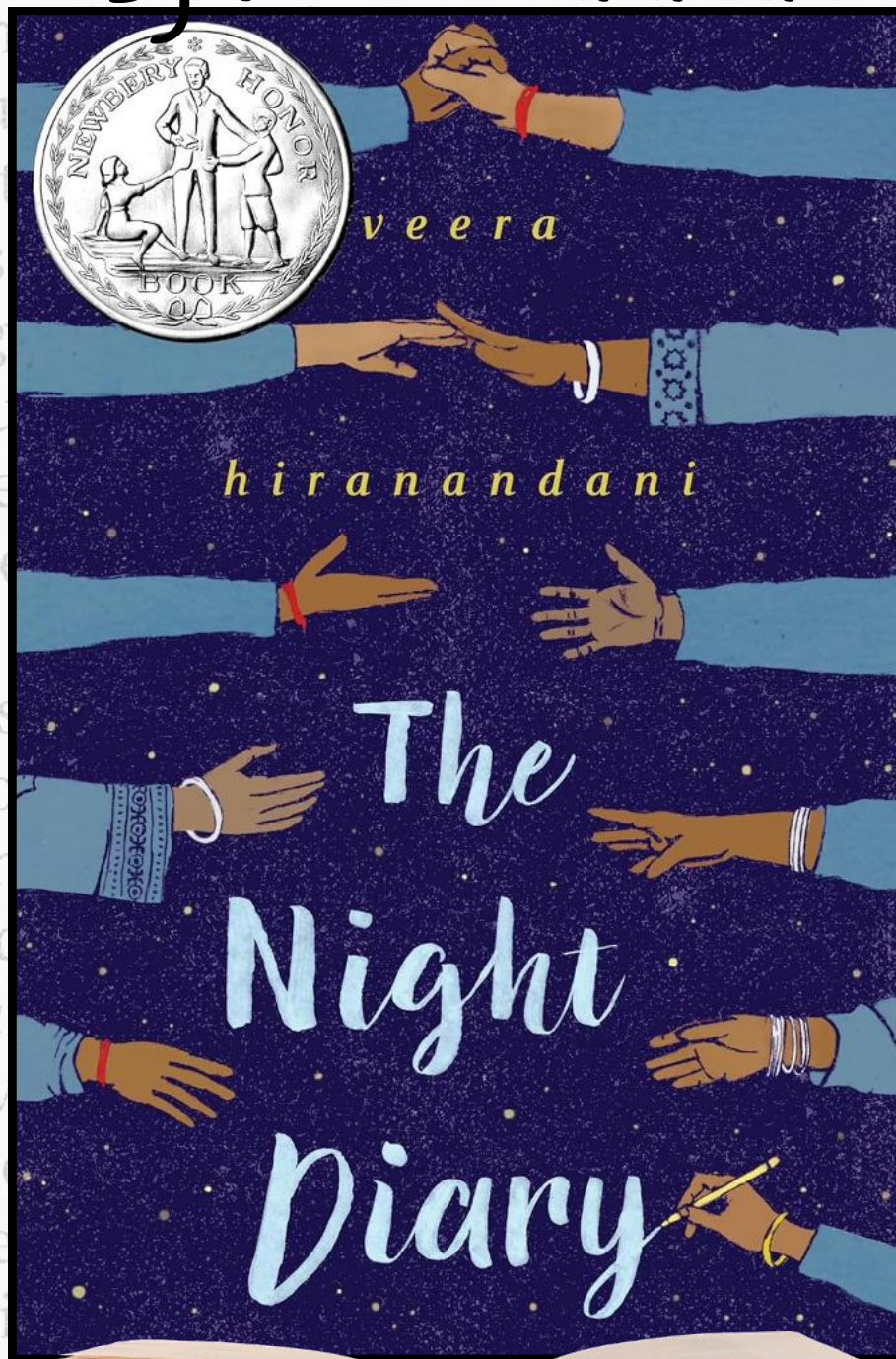
by Muhammad Najem & Nora Neus



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE NIGHT DIARY

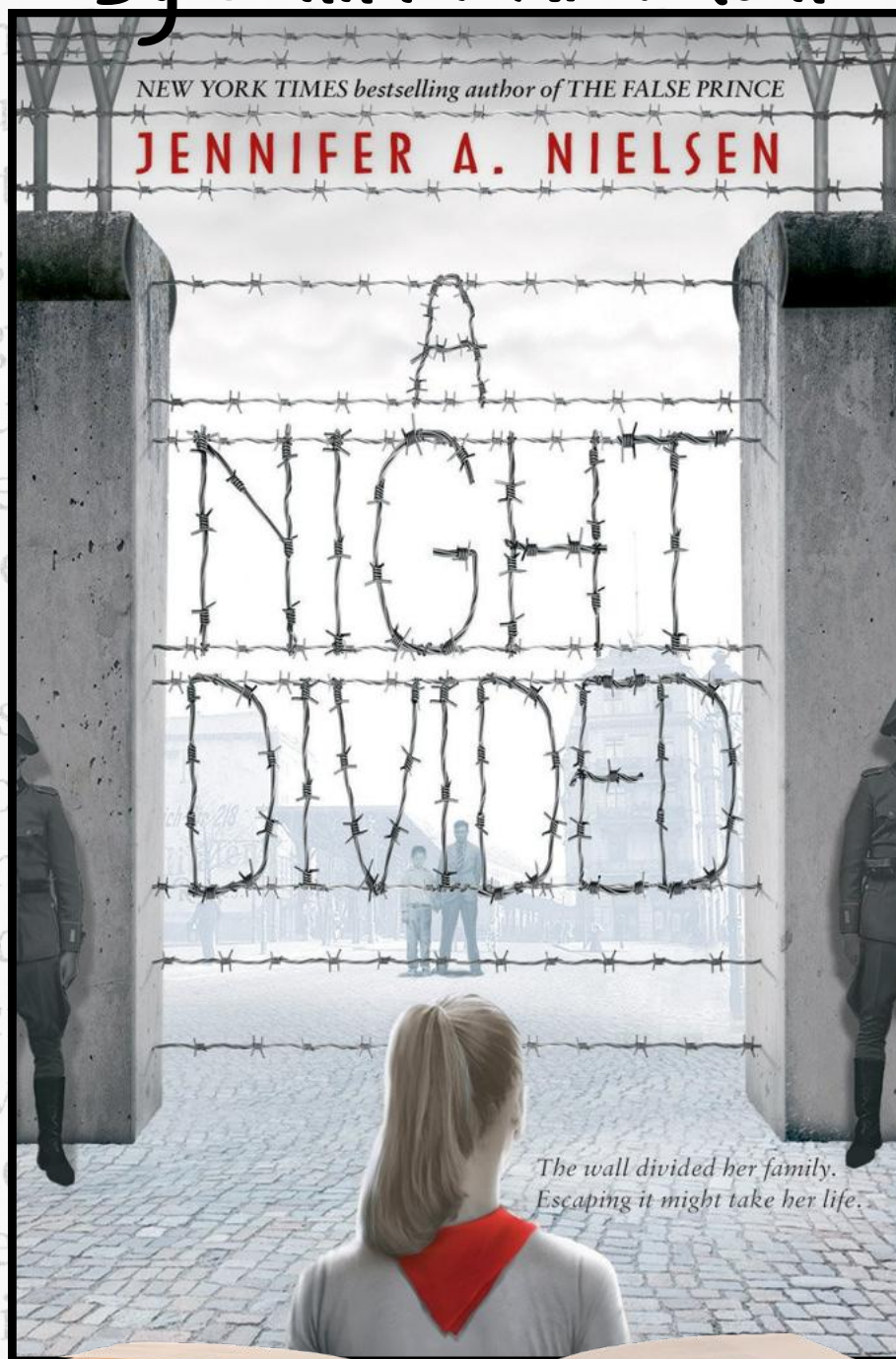
By Veera Hiranandani



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

A NIGHT DIVIDED

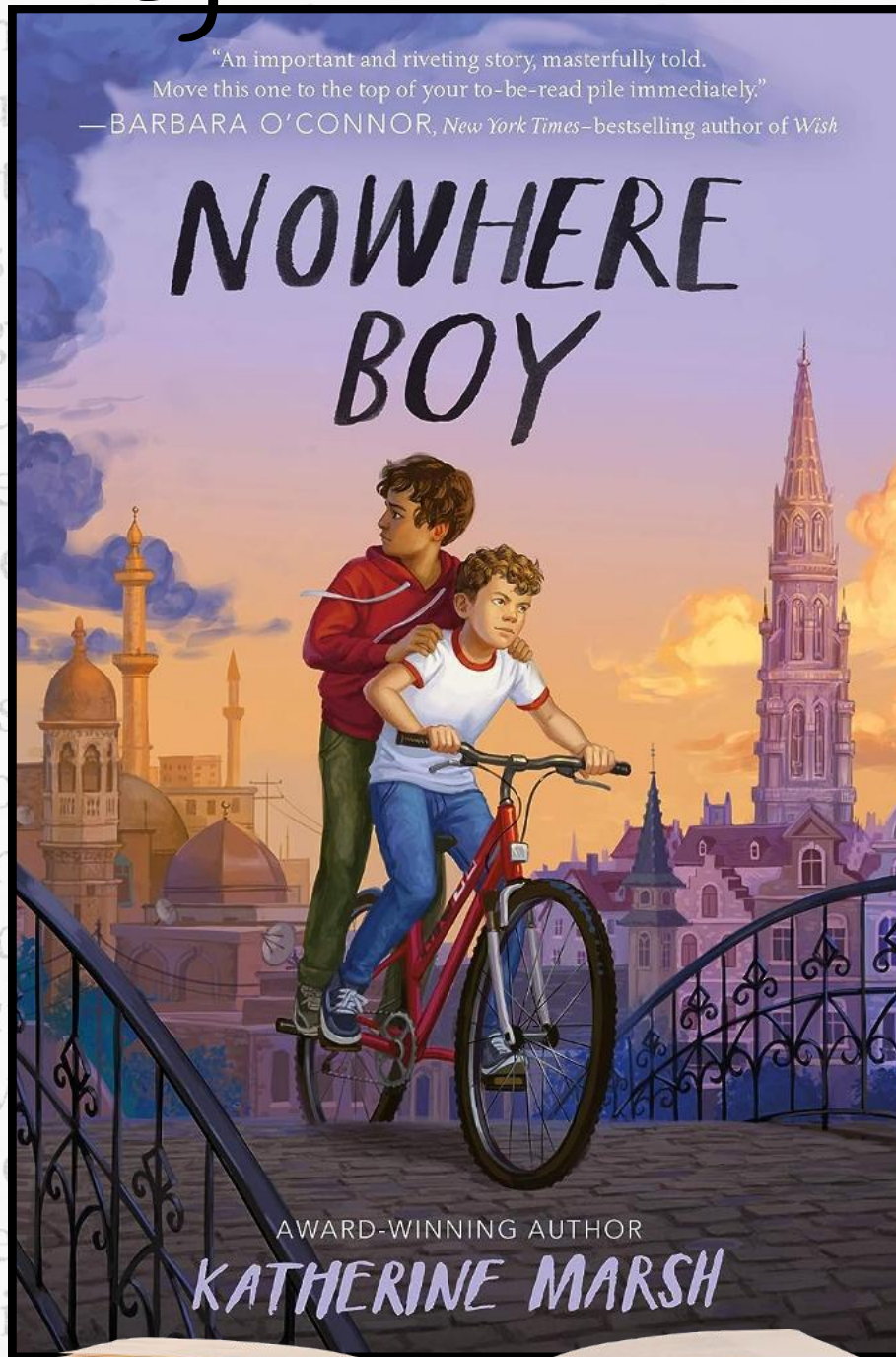
By Jennifer A. Nielsen



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

NOWHERE BOY

By Katherine Marsh



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

A PLACE TO HANG THE MOON

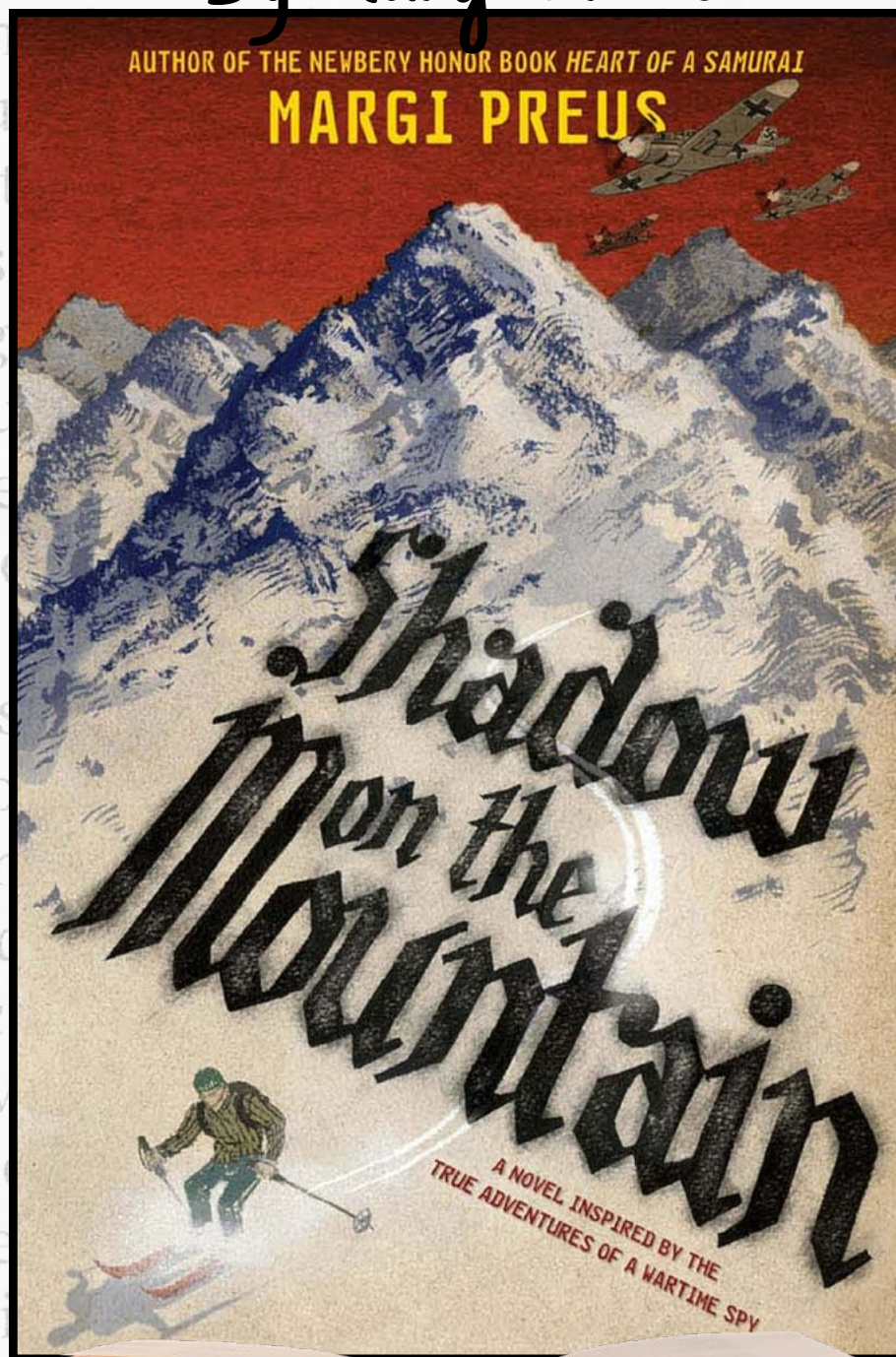
By Kate Albus



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

SHADOW ON THE MOUNTAIN

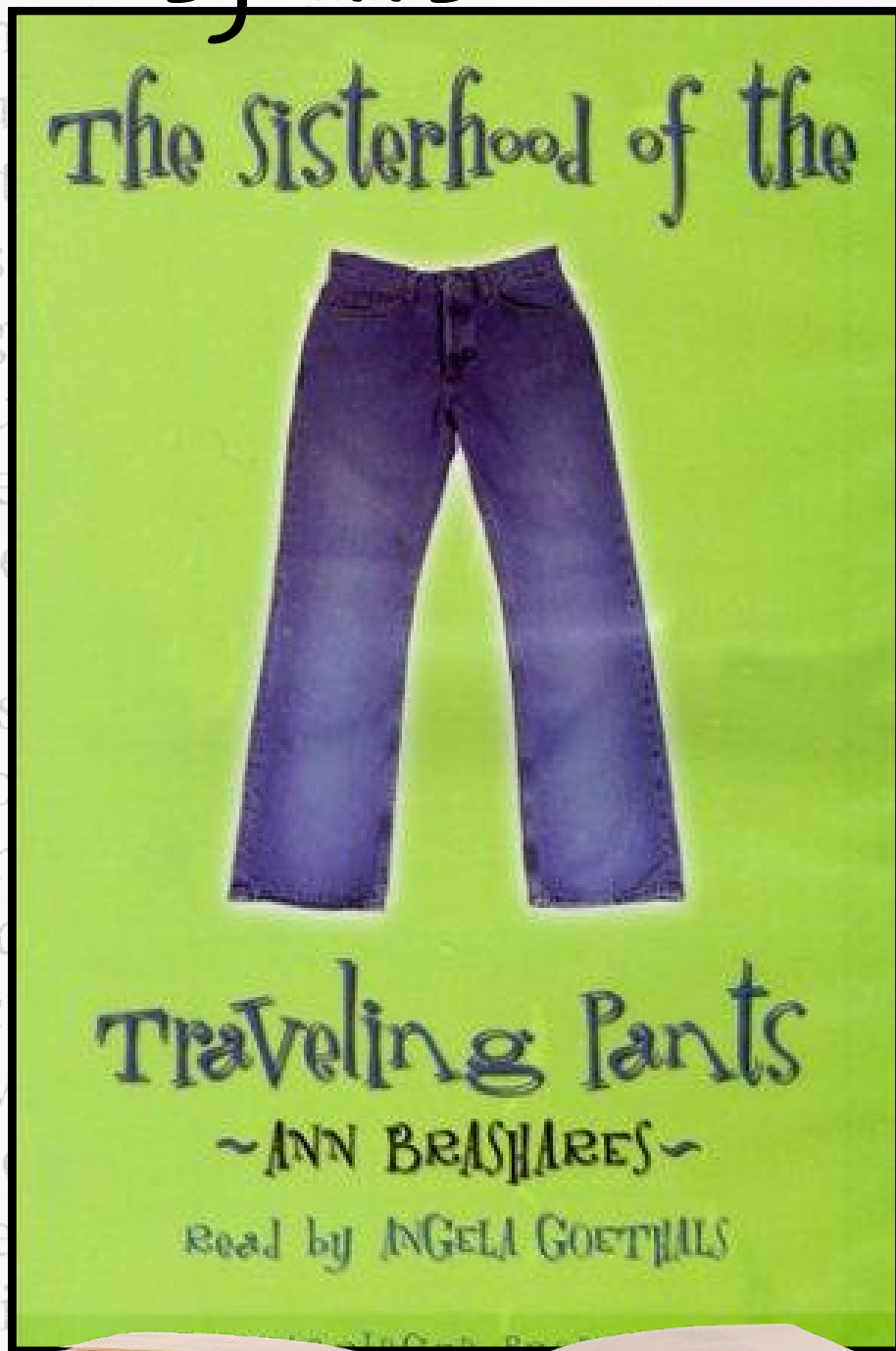
By Margi Preus



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS

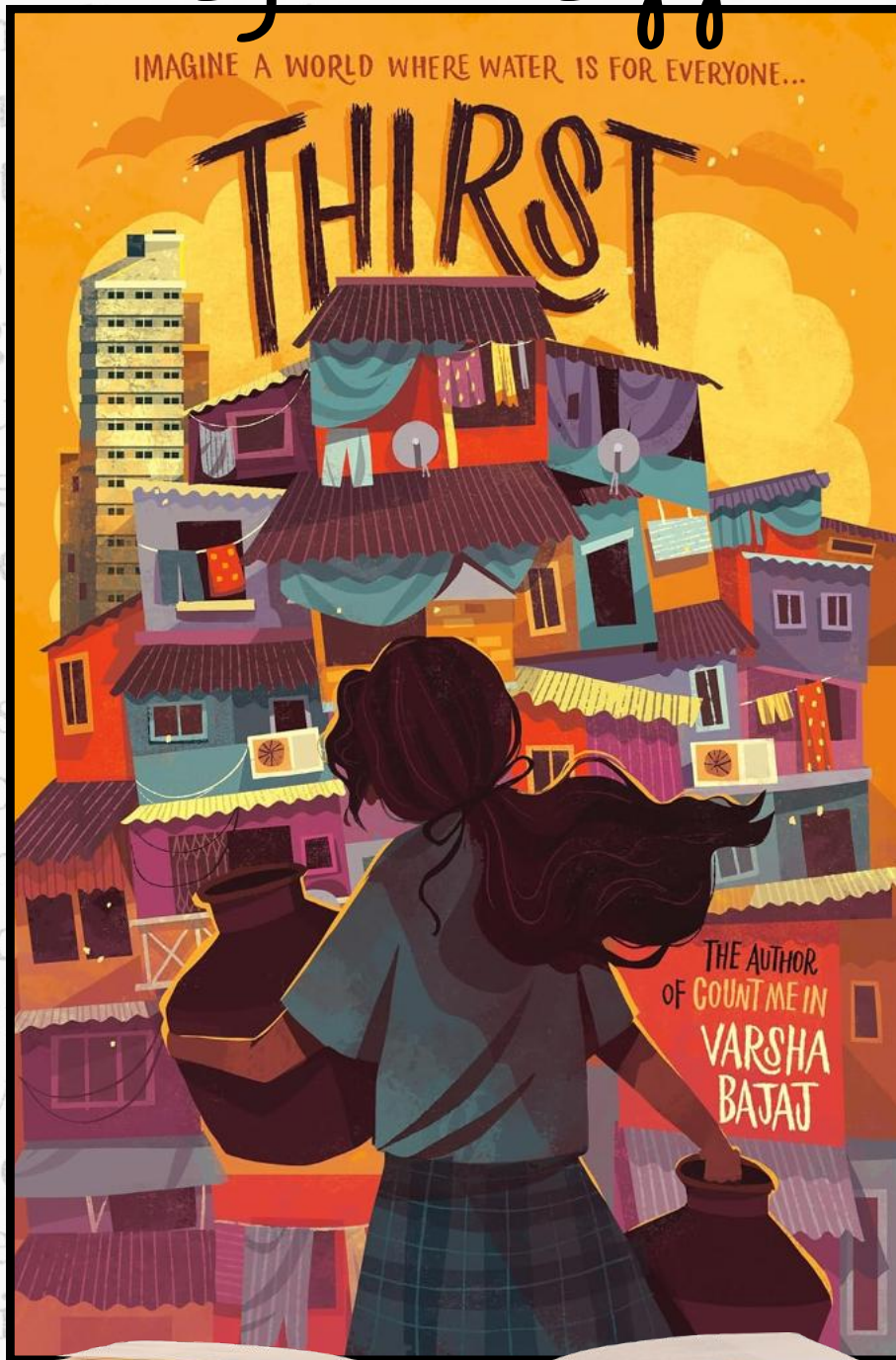
By Ann Brashares



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THIRST

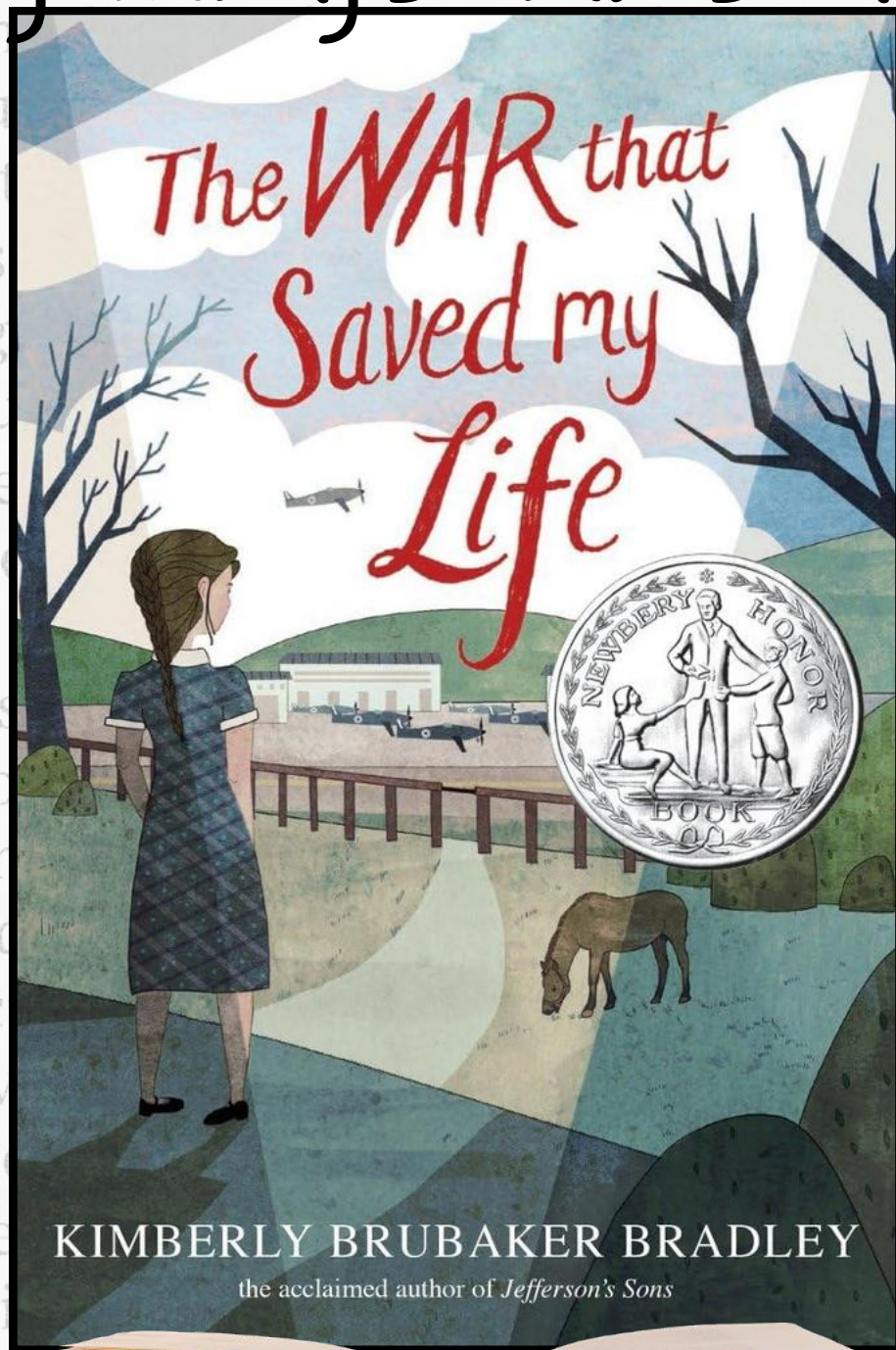
By Varsha Bajaj



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE WAR THAT SAVED MY LIFE

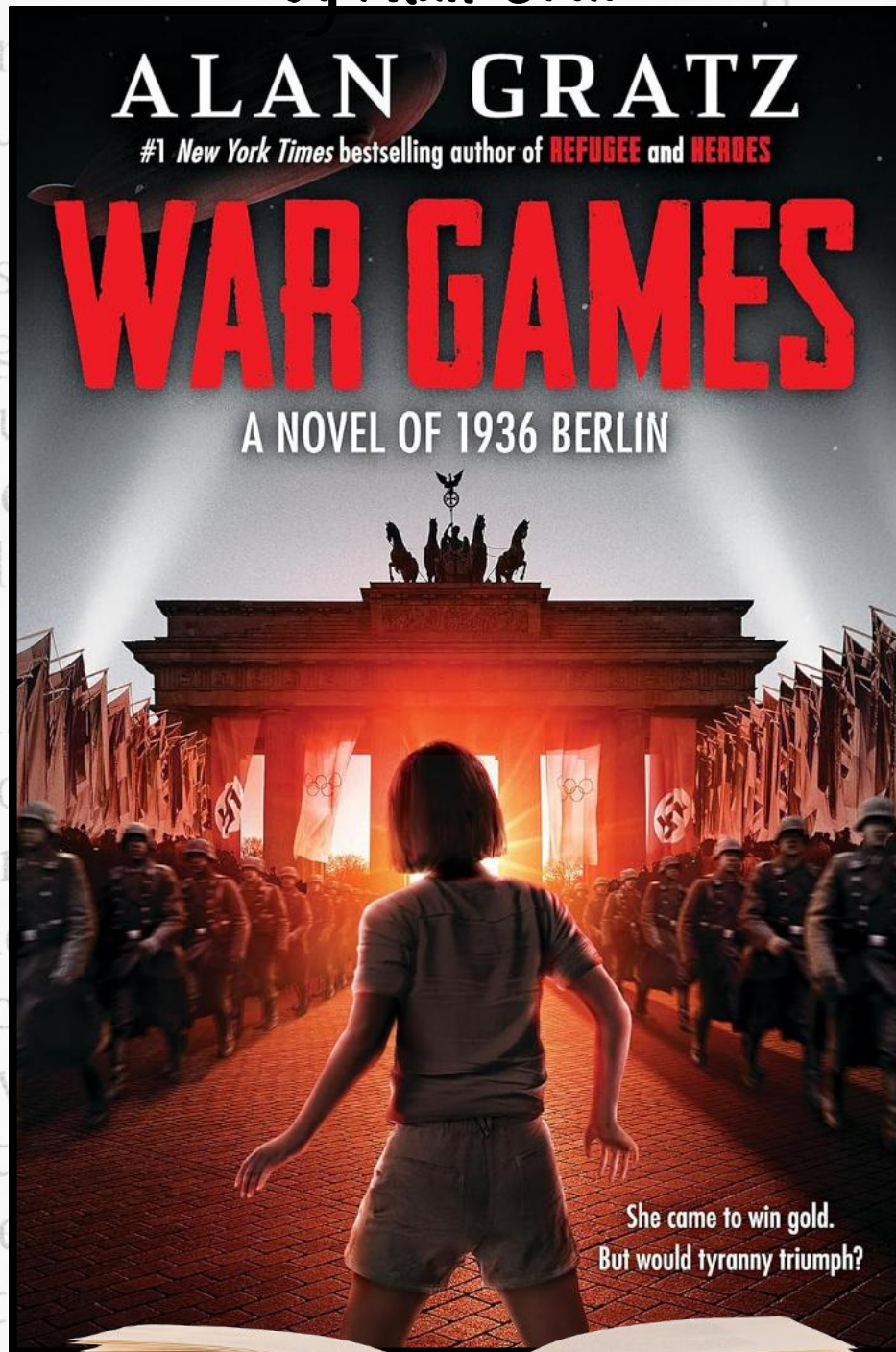
By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

WAR GAMES

by Alan Gratz



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY