

WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

In this resource you will find a curated list of books about foster care as well as a variety of accompanying materials.

How to Use This Resource

1. Choose a title from the animal main character 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

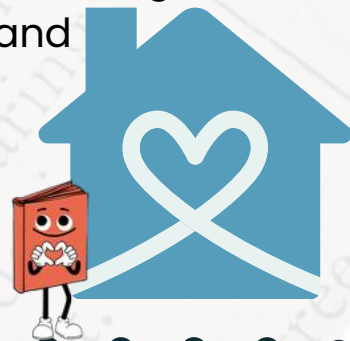
Pages 10-21 Individual Book First Chapter Friday Sheets

Pages 23-34: 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!



Word Nerd Daily

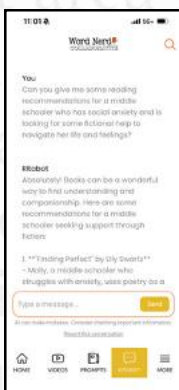
an app from Amanda Zieba

MUST TRY!



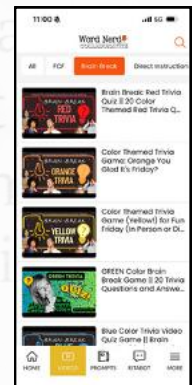
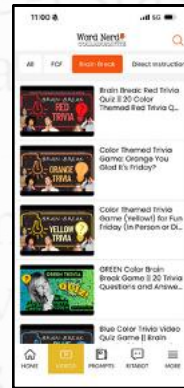
First Chapter Friday Videos

ChatBot for Reading Recs and Lesson Planning



Writing Prompt Library

Brain Break Videos



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](#).

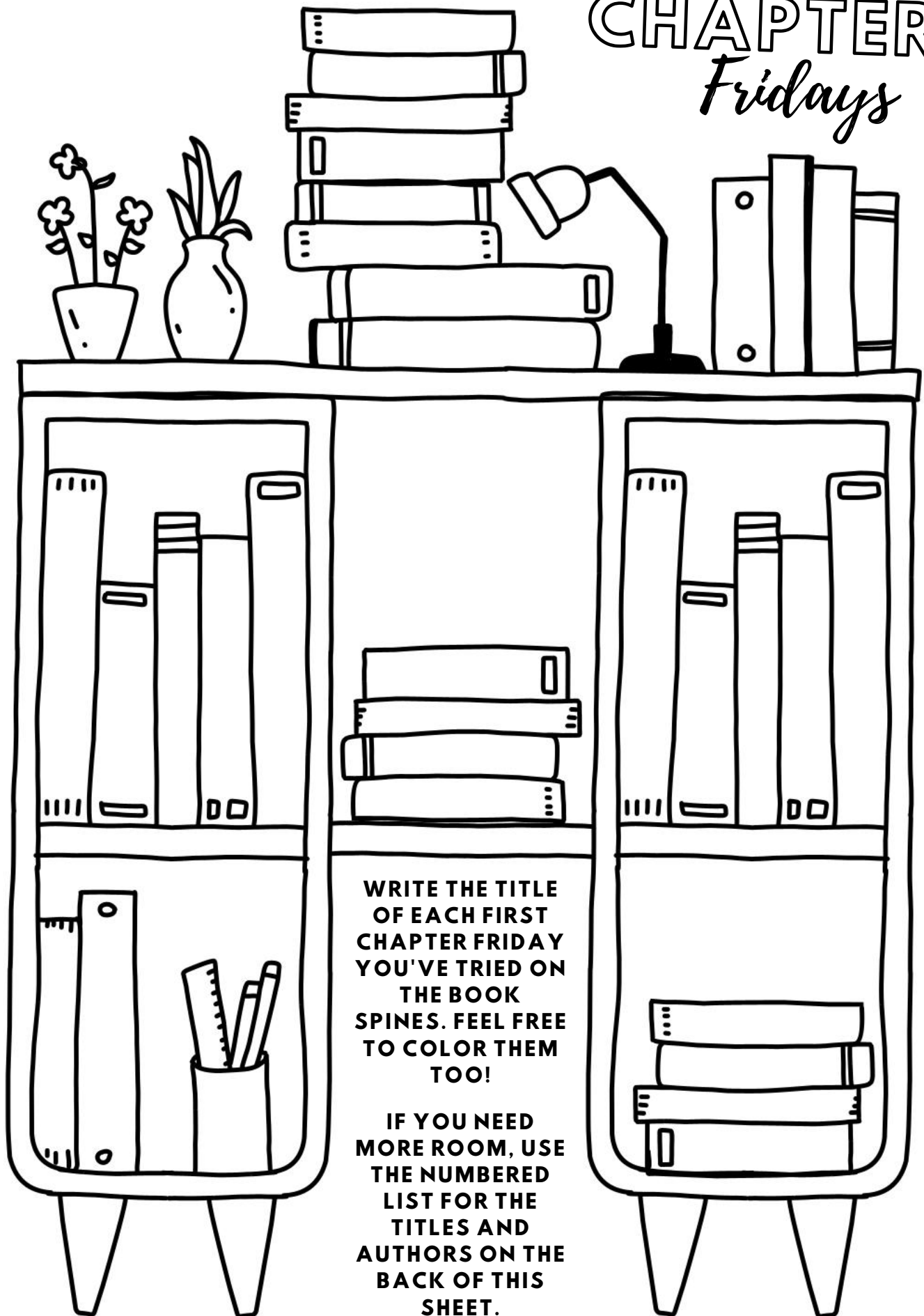
[Click here](#) for a live, continually updated, Google Doc of the First Chapter Friday videos on my channel. Additionally you will find links to purchase the books and watch the read aloud videos, as well as book reading levels, genre/format, video length and more!

All my best,
Amanda Zieba

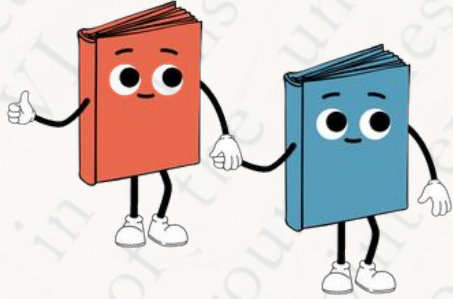
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NAME: _____

First CHAPTER *Fridays*



FOSTER CARE



The books on this list showcase characters who go through foster care experiences.



The Barren Grounds
by David Robertson

City Spies
by James Ponti

Closer to Nowhere
by Ellen Hopkins

Fighting Words
by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Free State of Jax
by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Free Verse
by Sarah Dooley

Gather
by Kenneth M. Cadow

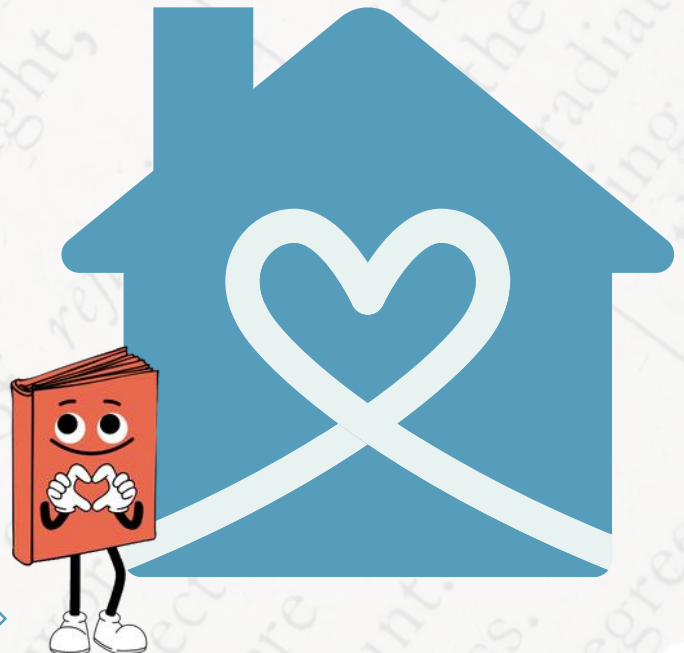
Greetings from Witness Protection
by Jake Burt

Life in the Passenger Seat
by Amanda Zieba

One for the Murphys
by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

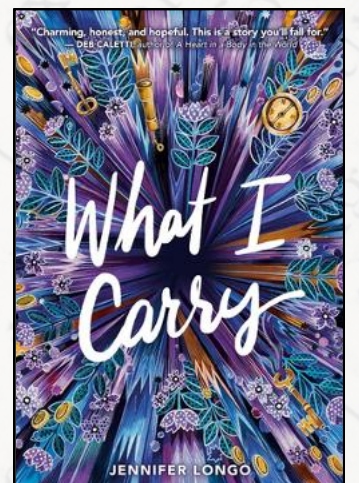
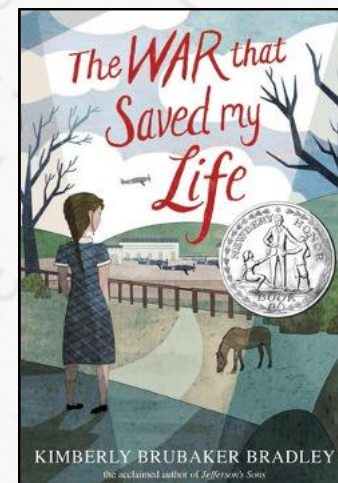
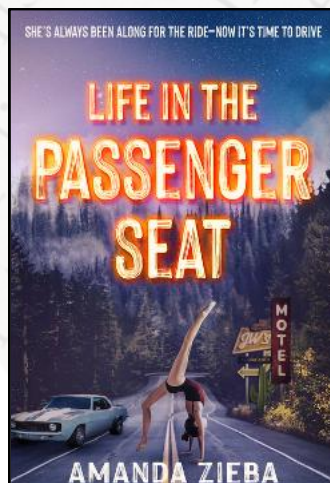
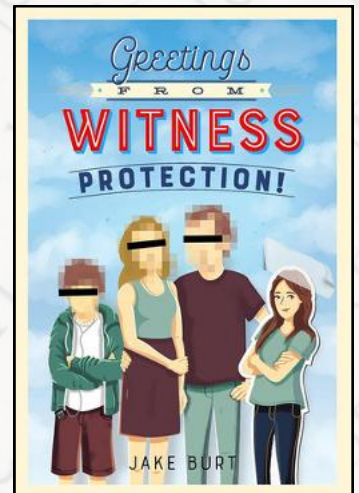
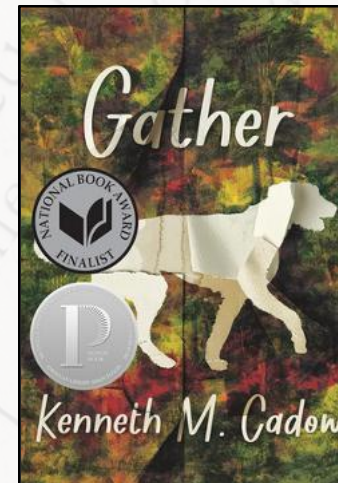
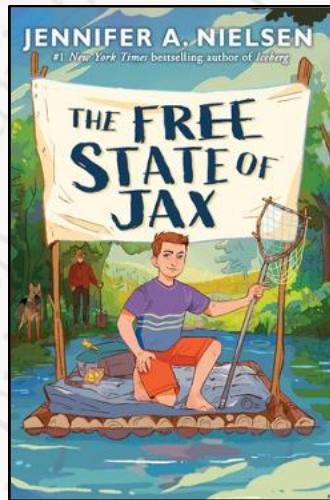
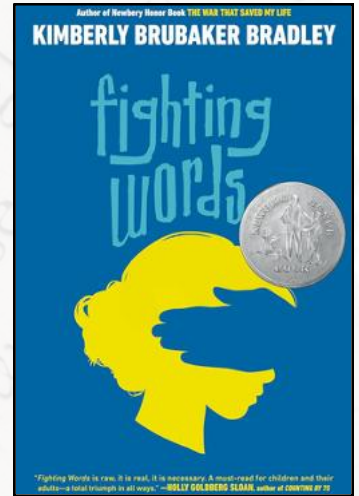
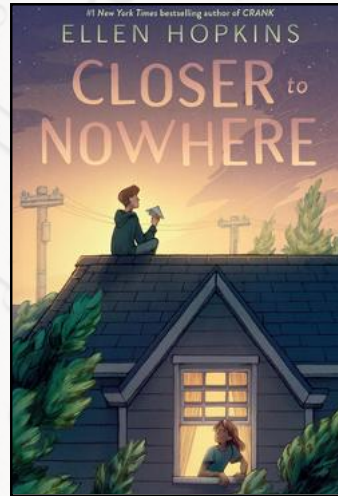
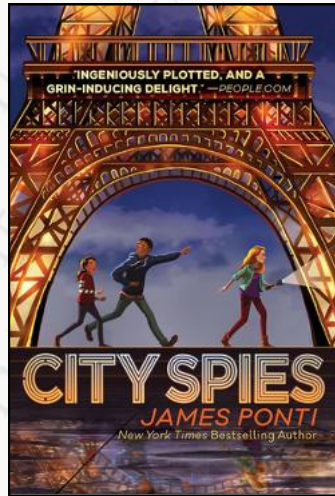
The War That Saved My Life
by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

What I Carry
by Jennifer Longo

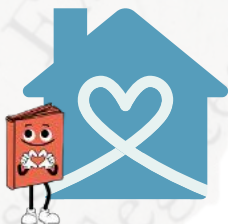


WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

BOOKS ABOUT: FOSTER CARE



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY



Name _____

Date _____



The Barren Grounds

by David A. Robertson

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?

Morgan and Eli, two Indigenous children forced away from their families and communities, are brought together in a foster home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They each feel disconnected, from their culture and each other, and struggle to fit in at school and at their new home -- until they find a secret place, walled off in an unfinished attic bedroom. A portal opens to another reality, Askí, bringing them onto frozen, barren grounds, where they meet Ochek (Fisher). The only hunter supporting his starving community, Misewa, Ochek welcomes the human children, teaching them traditional ways to survive. But as the need for food becomes desperate, they embark on a dangerous mission. Accompanied by Arik, a sassy Squirrel they catch stealing from the trapline, they try to save Misewa before the icy grip of winter freezes everything -- including them.

Fist book in a series of 6!!!!!!

Who Wrote It?

David A. Robertson is a multi-award winning Canadian author who has published over 25 books across a variety of genres including books for kids and adults as well as several graphic novels. David often chooses to write about the struggles and challenges of Indigenous people in hopes of bringing about awareness and inspiring change. He is also the writer and host of the Kíwew podcast. David is a member of Norway House Cree Nation and lives in Winnipeg.



You can learn more about David and his work at <https://www.darobertson.ca/>

AR Reading Level: 4.6

Lexile Level: 680L

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

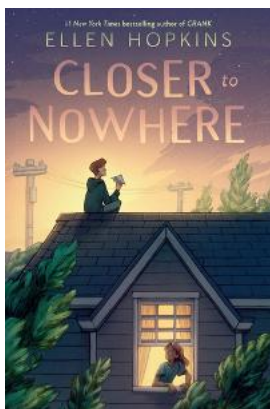
I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ 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
3/10/20	City Spies Trapped!
9/25/18	City Spies Vanished!
3/22/17	City Spies Framed!
8/23/16	Dead City Dark Days
10/6/15	Dead City Blue Moon
10/1/13	Dead City
10/2/12	



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



Name _____

Date _____

Closer to Nowhere

by Ellen Hopkins



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?

For the most part, Hannah's life is just how she wants it. She has two supportive parents, she's popular at school, and she's been killing it at gymnastics. But when her cousin Cal moves in with her family, everything changes. Cal tells half-truths and tall tales, pranks Hannah constantly, and seems to be the reason her parents are fighting more and more. Nothing is how it used to be. She knows that Cal went through a lot after his mom died and she is trying to be patient, but most days Hannah just wishes Cal never moved in.

For his part, Cal is trying his hardest to fit in, but not everyone is as appreciative of his unique sense of humor and storytelling gifts as he is. Humor and stories might be his defense mechanism, but if Cal doesn't let his walls down soon, he might push away the very people who are trying their best to love him. Told in verse from the alternating perspectives of Hannah and Cal, this is a story of two cousins who are more alike than they realize and the family they both want to save.

Who Wrote It?

Ellen was born in California and adopted soon after. She lived in Hollywood near famous people including Elvis Presley! She was a smart student who always liked to read and write, but admits to being a bit of a rebel! One of her hobbies as a child was riding horses. Now as an adult she likes to garden and cook. She also likes to travel and spends around 100 days a year, doing school and library visits, book signings and festivals, writers conferences, and other events. Before Ellen wrote books she wrote articles for newspapers and magazines.



Closer to Nowhere is Ellen's first middle grade book, but she has many other YA novels in verse. You can learn more about Ellen and her books on her website: www.ellenhopkins.com.

AR Reading Level: 3.7

Lexile Level: 490L

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 _____

Fighting Words

by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



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?

Ten-year-old Della has always had her older sister, Suki. When their mom went to prison, Della had Suki. When their mom's boyfriend took them in, Della had Suki. When that same boyfriend did something so awful they had to run fast, Della had Suki. Suki is Della's own wolf--her protector. But who has been protecting Suki? Della might get told off for swearing at school, but she has always known how to keep quiet where it counts. Then Suki tries to kill herself, and Della's world turns so far upside down, it feels like it's shaking her by the ankles. Maybe she's been quiet about the wrong things. Maybe it's time to be loud.

In this powerful novel that explodes the stigma around child sexual abuse and leavens an intense tale with compassion and humor, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley tells a story about two sisters, linked by love and trauma, who must find their own voices before they can find their way back to each other.

Who Wrote It?

I was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1967. I loved to read—I was the sort of kid who would skip recess to go talk with my school librarian—but I didn't know any writers, and I didn't think it was the sort of job I could have. I loved chemistry, too, and I majored in chemistry in college. I was lucky, though, to go to Smith, a liberal arts school where I was encouraged to learn everything that interested me, and I took lots of writing classes. I married my high-school sweetheart, and for awhile I worked as a research chemist and wrote stories late at night and on weekends. But I realized I really wanted to be a writer. My husband and I are still in Bristol, TN



where we live on a 52-acre farm. We love to travel and learn about history from all over the world. Learn more about Kimberly in the interview included at the end of this video!

AR Reading Level: 3.6

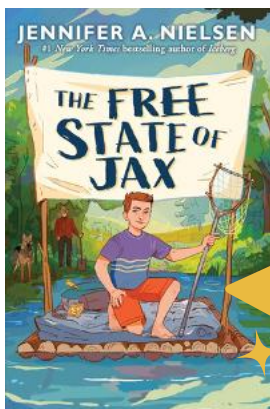
Lexile Level: currently unavailable

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 Free State of Jax

by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Includes
Author
Interview!

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?

Jaxon Averett has had some terrifically bad luck. Because only the worst luck in the world can account for the fact that he has to live with his Uncle Clive Grimmitz, Aunt Helga, and their six kids in dead-end Walkonby, Kansas. Life with Jax's cousins isn't easy -- they're all bullies, and his aunt and uncle can't even remember his name. Which is why, on the night before his twelfth birthday, Jax sneaks over to the neighboring property, floats a raft out into the middle of the hot springs lake, and drops anchor. Jax is now the president and sole citizen of his own micronation, the Free State of Jax. With the help of new friends, a local lawyer, and the property owner Owen O'Keefe, Jax's micronation begins to flourish. But the Grimmitzes will do anything to get him back and they are not above sabotage. On top of that, Jax is quickly embroiled in the mystery of Owen's missing brother -- and a lost windfall of the town's money. Investigating puts everything Jax has built at risk, and when long-buried family secrets are unearthed, he must find the courage to do what's right, even if it means losing his only chance at 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://jennielson.com/> or watching the interview at the end of this video.

AR Reading Level: N/A

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 _____



Free Verse by Sarah Dooley

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

Which cover do you like better? Why?
Teachers - find the Cover Comparison worksheet in the 2022 FCF pack!

What's It About?

When her brother Michael dies in a fire, Sasha Harless has no one left and nowhere to turn. He'd been her caretaker since their mother ran off and their father died in the mines. And before his accident, Michael made Sasha promise him that she would leave Caboose, West Virginia for a better life someday. Now, she's in foster care, feeling more stuck and broken than ever. Trying to cope with her brother's death, Sasha returns to school and is introduced to poetry and finds it's a new way to express herself when spoken words just won't do. She even discovers family she didn't know she had, including a younger Mikey Harless, who's just as broken as she is. But just as she's settling into her new life, tragedy strikes the mine her cousin works in. While fearing the worst, Sasha takes Mikey and finally makes her escape. But will running from Caboose really fix the pain in Sasha's life, or will she have to discover a new way to heal?

Free Verse was the 2012 winner of the Phyllis Naylor Working Writer Fellowship through the PEN American Center.

AR Reading Level: 4.7

Who Wrote It?

Sarah Dooley has lived in an assortment of small West Virginia towns, each of which she grew to love. Sarah is a former special education teacher who now provides treatment to children with autism. She lives in Huntington, West Virginia, where she inadvertently collects cats. She's a 2006 graduate of Marshall University and has written 4 middle grade books.



Photo by John McCoy

Lexile Level: 740L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

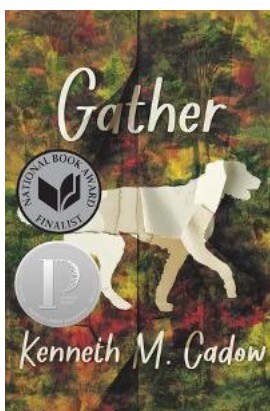
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



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

Name _____

Date _____



Gather

by Kenneth M. Cadow

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

** I'd recommend this book for grades 7+. Please know there are trigger warnings related to addiction and extreme poverty. More about this information can be found in the video description box. **

What's It About?

Ian Gray isn't supposed to have a dog, but a lot of things that shouldn't happen end up happening anyway. And Gather, Ian's adopted pup, is good company now that Ian has to quit the basketball team, find a job, and take care of his mom as she tries to overcome her opioid addiction. Despite the obstacles thrown their way, Ian is determined to keep his family afloat no matter what it takes. And for a little while, things are looking up: Ian makes friends, and his fondness for the outdoors and for fixing things lands him work helping neighbors. But an unforeseen tragedy results in Ian and his dog taking off on the run, trying to evade a future that would mean leaving their house and their land. Even if the community comes together to help him, would Ian and Gather have a home to return to?

Told in a wry, cautious first-person voice that meanders like a dog circling to be sure it's safe to lie down, Kenneth M. Cadow's resonant debut brings an emotional and ultimately hopeful story of one teen's resilience in the face of unthinkable hardships.

A 2023 National Book Award Finalist
A Michael L. Printz Honor Book

"Arguably one of the finest novels of the year."—Booklist (starred review)

Who Wrote It?

Ken grew up in Poughkeepsie, NY next to the Hudson River and surrounded by trees, as one of 7 siblings. He loved the outdoors and spent a lot of time exploring the woods and salt marshes around his house. He says he has terrible handwriting and sold his first story for twenty-five cents. Ken read A LOT. His fifth grade teacher told him, 'I hope you don't burn your eyes out this summer,' - meaning, don't read too many books! Lol! Old Yeller, The Animal Family, James and the Giant Peach and Dominic were some of his favorites. As grown up, Ken is a teacher and co-



Photo by Lars Blackmore

principal. He writes in a cabin near his house. Gather is his first book and it has won 3 awards. He has a wife, 3 children and a dog, Quinnie.

AR Reading Level: Unavailable

Lexile Level: 970L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

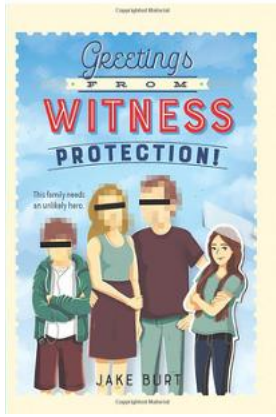
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



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

Name _____

Date _____



Greetings from Witness Protection

by Jake Burt



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?

Nicki Demere is an orphan and a pickpocket. She also happens to be the U.S. Marshals' best bet to keep a family alive. . . .

The Marshals are looking for the perfect girl to join a mother, father, and son on the run from the nation's most notorious criminals. After all, the bad guys are searching for a family with one kid, not two, and adding a streetwise girl who knows a little something about hiding things may be just what the marshals need.

Nicki swears she can keep the Trevor family safe, but to do so she'll have to dodge hitmen, cyberbullies, and the specter of standardized testing, all while maintaining her marshal-mandated B-minus average. As she barely balances the responsibilities of her new identity, Nicki learns that the biggest threats to her family's security might not lurk on the road from New York to North Carolina, but rather in her own past.

Who Wrote It?

Jake was born in Columbus, Ohio, but he's lived all over, in places called Cincinnati, Knightdale, Durham, and Hamden, and in countries like The United Kingdom and China. There hasn't really been a time that Jake wasn't in school – he did the whole preschool thing, then elementary, then middle, then high, then college, then sixth grade teacher, then English teacher in Jinan, then fourth grade teacher, then grad student, then fifth grade teacher. Now he works with a team that delivers breaking news to classrooms every morning. That's probably why so many of his stories are set in schools, and why they feature kids. He's an avid ultimate frisbee player and a huge sports fan, some of his favorite teams are The Ohio State



Buckeyes, the Cincinnati Reds, and the Golden State Warriors. He plays the banjo, reads lots of books, and tries really hard not to get yelled at by his teammates for dying in Overwatch and DOTA 2.

AR Reading Level: 5.1

Lexile Level: 750L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Name _____

Date _____



Life in the Passenger Seat by Amanda Zieba



Read Aloud Video and
Author Interview

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?

For readers who love emotional coming-of-age stories, underdog sports drama, and fierce teen girls fighting for their future.

Shelby has spent her life moving from place to place in her mom's classic Mustang, always one eviction away from starting over. But when they run out of gas in Michigan, Shelby finally gets a taste of something she's never had: stability. She joins a gymnastics team, starts making friends, and falls in love with a routine of regularity. Then her mom disappears—again—and Shelby is placed in foster care with her coach and his wife. These days, her biggest trouble is fighting for her spot in the line-up. But when her mom suddenly reappears, Shelby must confront the fact that she's just a passenger in her own life, and that perhaps it's time to take the wheel.

Perfect for fans of realistic YA fiction, foster care stories, sports novels for teens, and books for teen girls 14-18. Includes expert back matter from NFL player Alec Ingold and a collegiate sports psychologist.

Who Wrote It?

Amanda has likely always been a word nerd. Ever since she was born in Wisconsin, she's loved reading and writing. But just like anyone else, there's more than one side of her. Amanda was also a gymnast, a camp counselor, coach, teacher, and will forever be a sweet tooth. Amanda is also a mom, wife, daughter, sister, YouTuber, caffeine lover, and avid sports spectator. She loves her laptop, but prefers to brainstorm and draft with paper and pen. Amanda does not love bacon, nor animals (but hopes you will still like her anyway.) When she isn't creating content or writing, she might be getting a gel manicure,



watching HGTV or hanging out with her awesome family. To learn more, check out Amanda's other books, or just say hi, visit her word-nerdy website: www.amandazieba.com. She is so happy you have found her First Chapter Fridays!

AR Reading Level: 4.7

Lexile Level: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

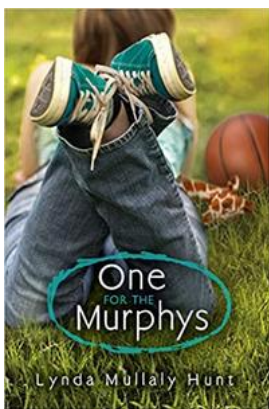
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



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

Name _____

Date _____



One for the Murphys

by Lynda Mullaly Hunt



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 heart-breaking betrayal, Carley Connors is thrust into foster care and left on the steps of the Murphys, a happy, bustling family. Carley has thick walls and isn't rattled easily, but this is a world she just doesn't understand. A world that frightens her. So, she resists this side of life she'd believed did not exist with dinners around a table and a 'zip your jacket, here's your lunch' kind of mom. However, with the help of her Broadway-obsessed and unpredictable friend, Toni, the Murphys do the impossible in showing Carley what it feels like to belong somewhere. But, when her mother wants her back, will she lose the only family that she has ever known?

Do you like the musical Wicked? This book mentions it (and it's songs) several times. How about basketball? Firemen? Giraffes? They are in this book too!

Who Wrote It?

Being the youngest of five children, I can fend for myself pretty well. I was a tom-boyish girl who loved skateboarding, climbing trees, playing baseball, and seeing everything there was to see on my bicycle. As a grown up, my first job was as a teacher. When my daughter was born, I left teaching to be home with her. After her brother joined us and I realized that I was finding Sesame Street to be genuinely stimulating, I told my husband that I was joining a writers group at the local bookstore. I did and the rest is history! Although I never scribbled in journals as a kid, I'd write song lyrics about the things



that bothered me. For example, my brother, Michael Eric, died shortly before his 4th birthday. I wrote songs about him for years. To learn more, head to www.lyndamullalyhunt.com.

AR Reading Level: 3.4

Lexile Level: 520L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

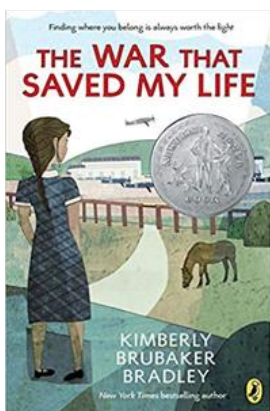
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



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 _____

What I Carry

by Jennifer Longo



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?

Growing up in foster care, Muir has lived in many houses. And if she's learned one thing, it is to Pack. Light. Carry only what fits in a suitcase. Toothbrush? Yes. Socks? Yes. Emotional attachment to friends? Foster families? A boyfriend? Nope! There's no room for any additional baggage. Muir has just one year left before she ages out of the system. One year before she's free. One year to avoid anything - or anyone - that could get in her way. Then she meets Francine. And Kira. And Sean.

And everything changes.

Who Wrote It?

A California native and San Francisco transplant, Jennifer lives with her husband and daughter on an island near Seattle, Washington. Jen holds a BA in Acting from San Francisco State University and an MFA in Writing For Theatre from Humboldt State University. As of 2024 she has written and published 3 young adult novels and also 3 scripts for plays. When not writing, Jen spends her days walking her dogs, recording podcast episodes with her daughter, and reading her way down her ridiculously long holds list at the library.



You can learn more about Jennifer on her website at: www.jenlongo.com

Photo Credit: Toni Pinto

AR Reading Level: 4.6

Lexile Level: 690L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



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INDIVIDUAL BOOK POSTERS



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE BARREN GROUNDS

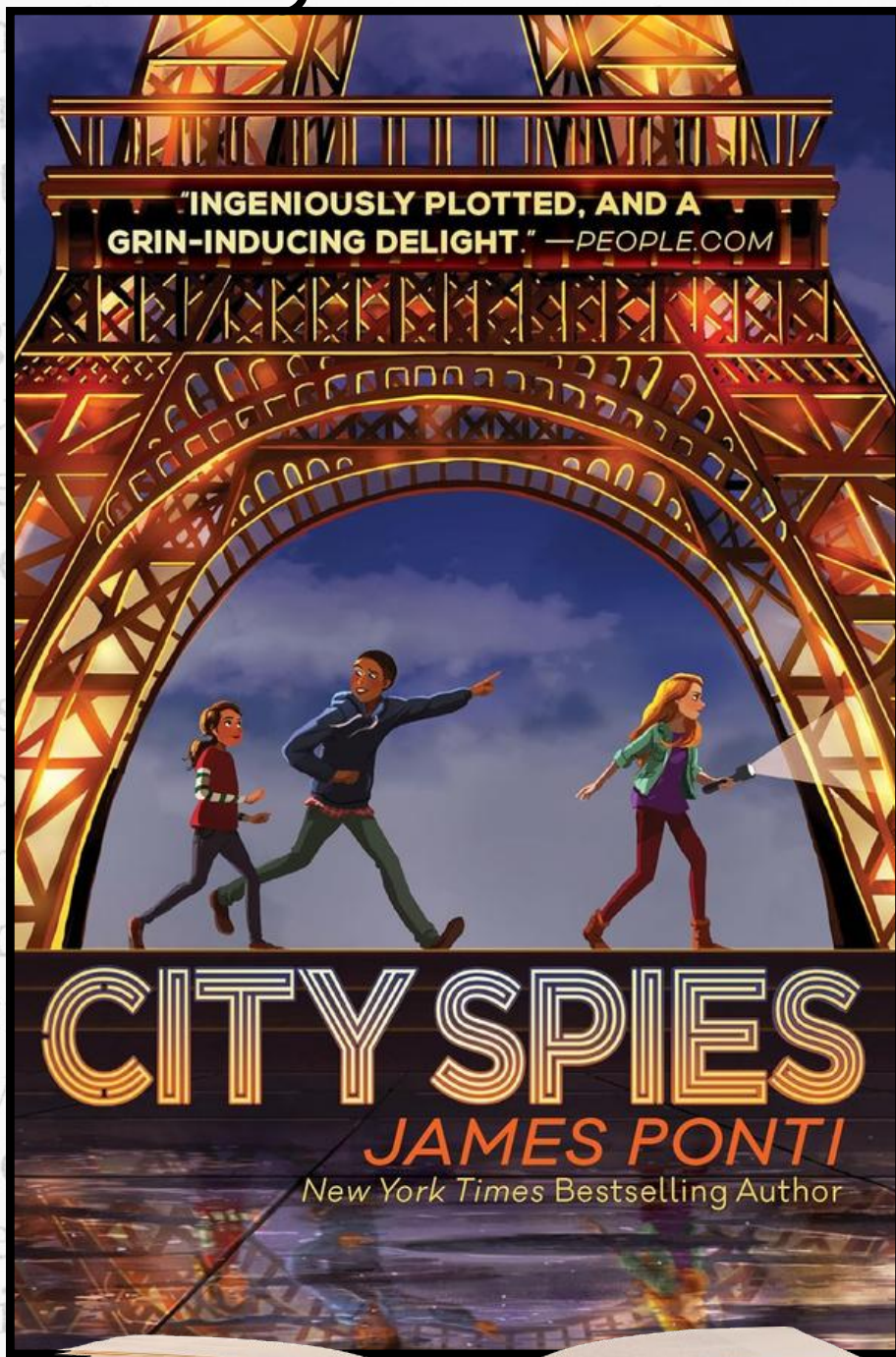
By David A. Robertson



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

CITY SPIES

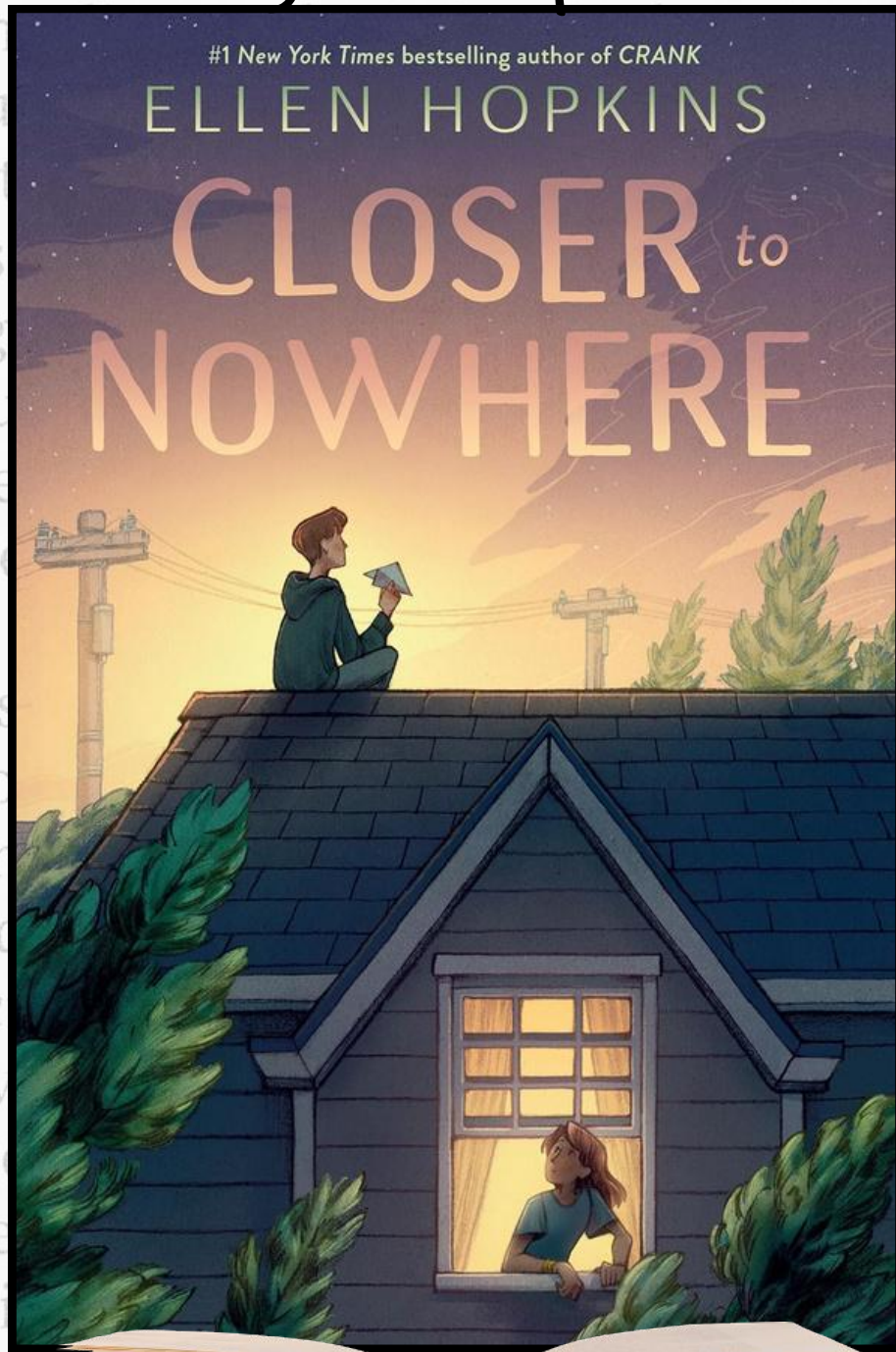
By James Ponti



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

CLOSER TO NOWHERE

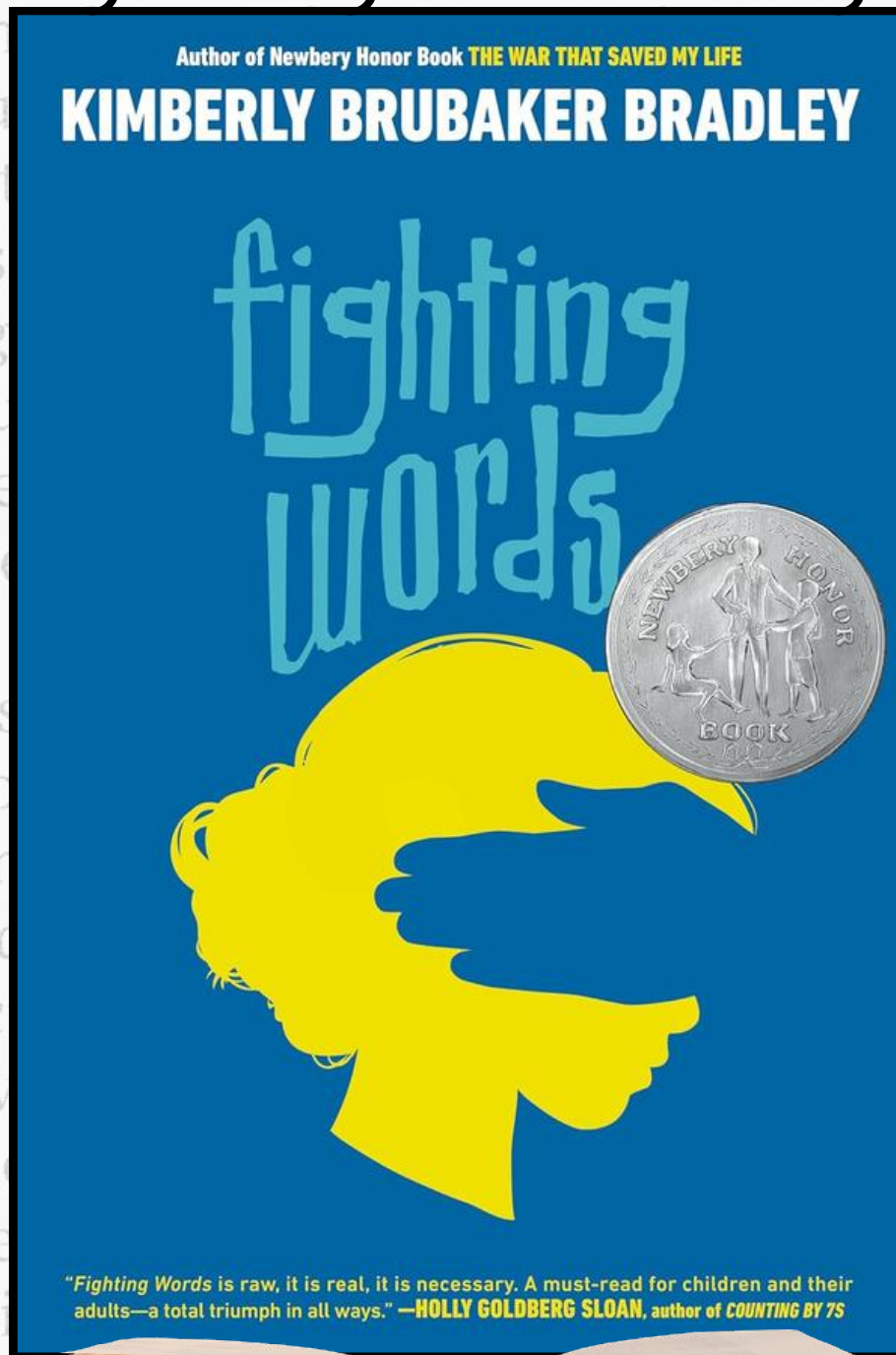
By Ellen Hopkins



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

FIGHTING WORDS

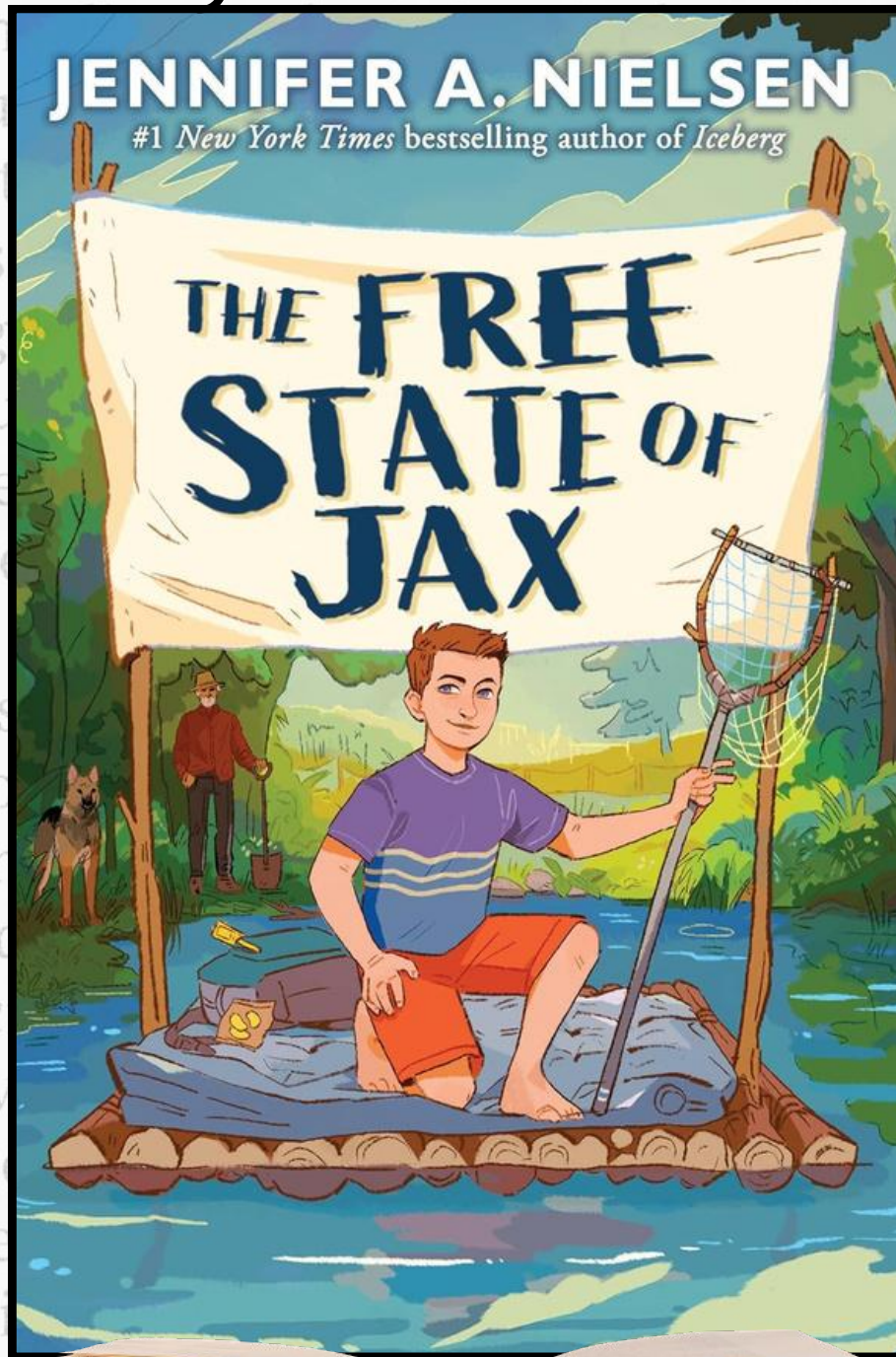
By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE FREE STATE OF JAX

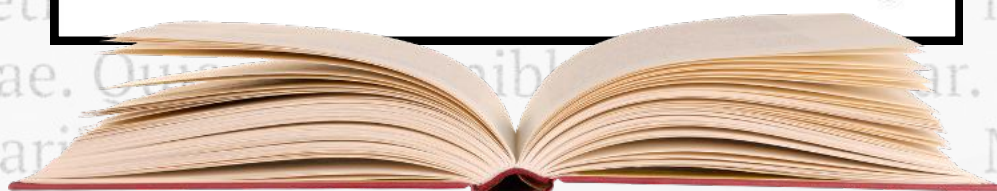
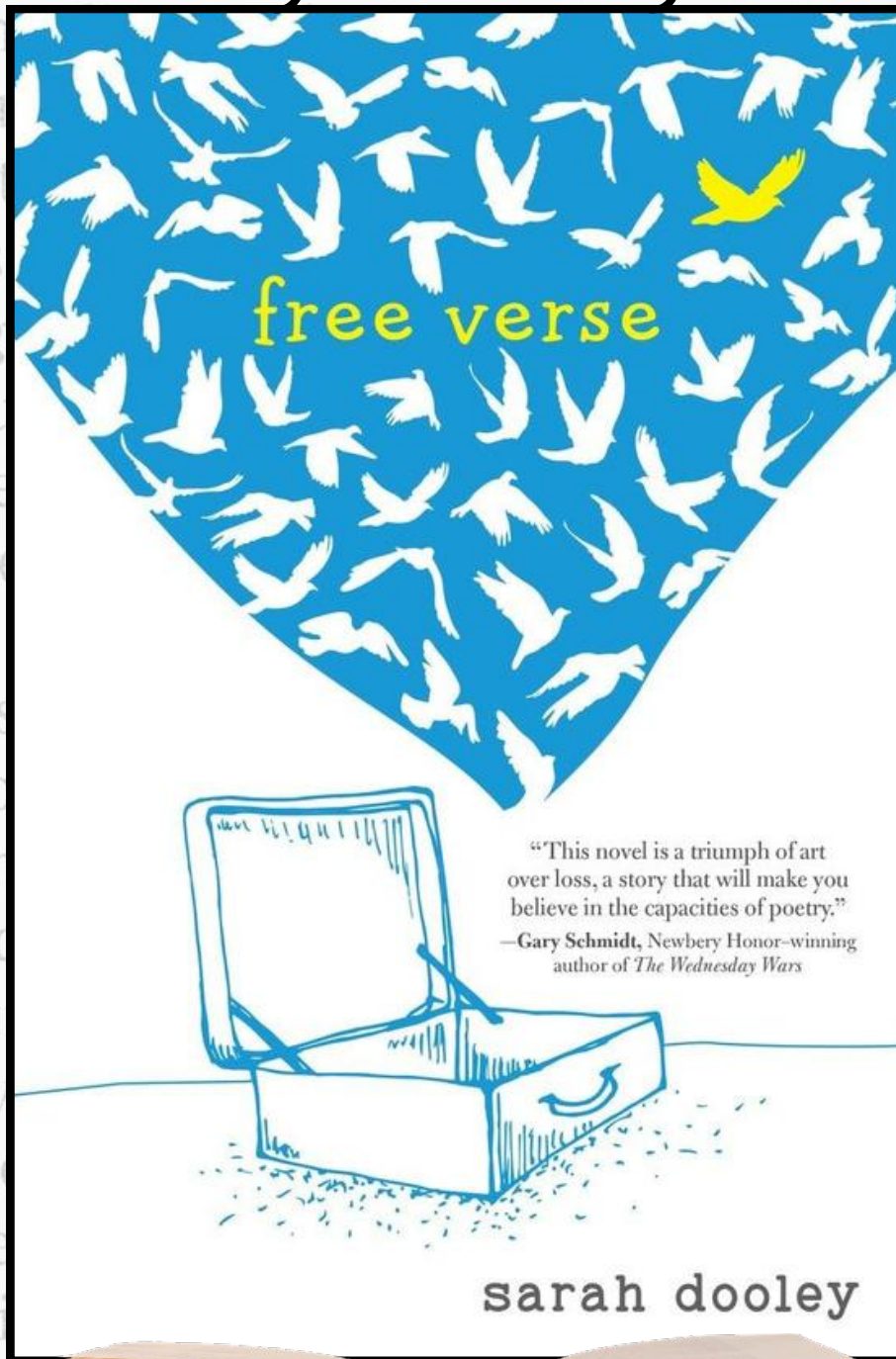
By Jennifer A. Nielsen



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

FREE VERSE

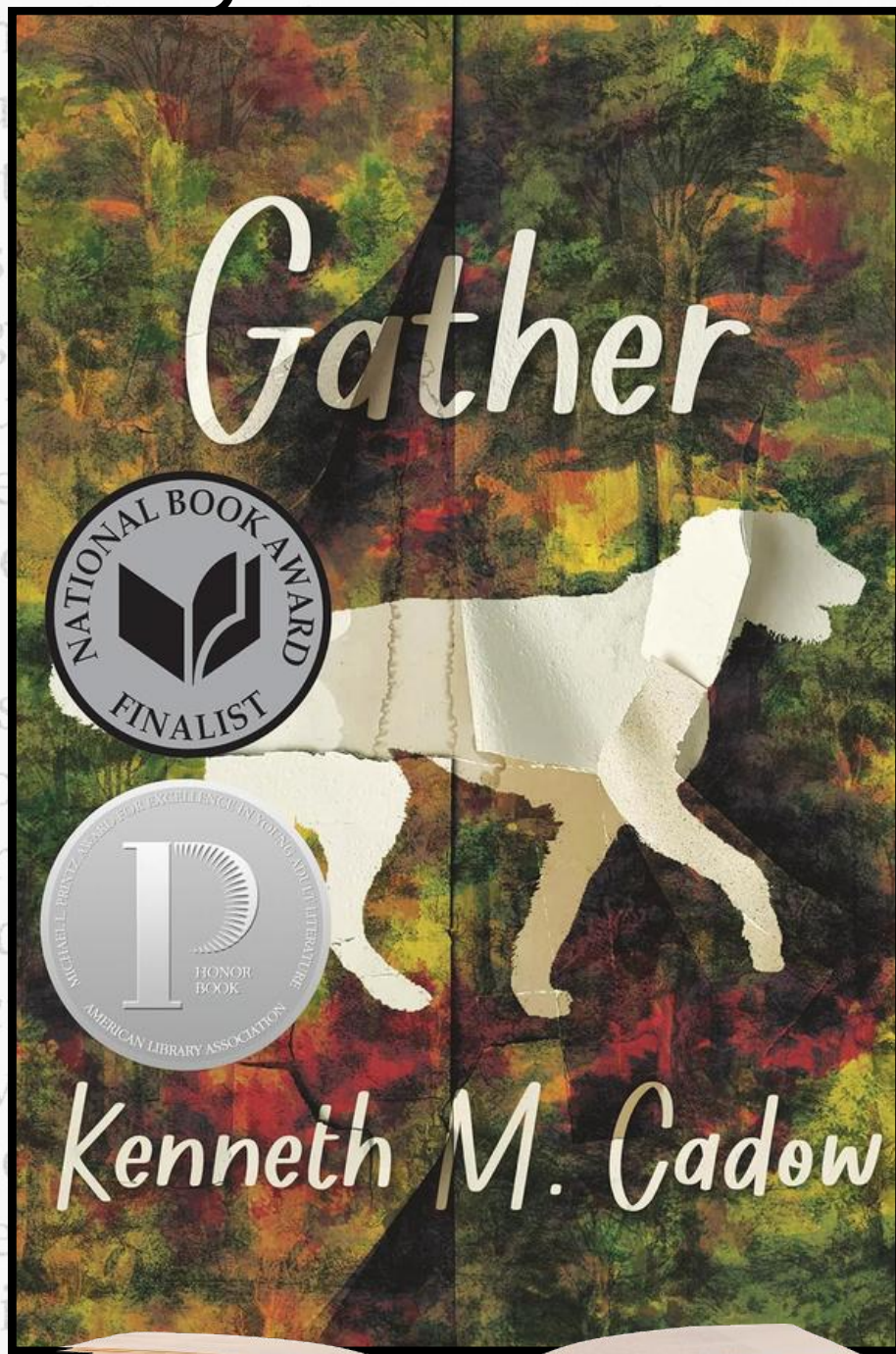
By Sarah Dooley



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

GATHER

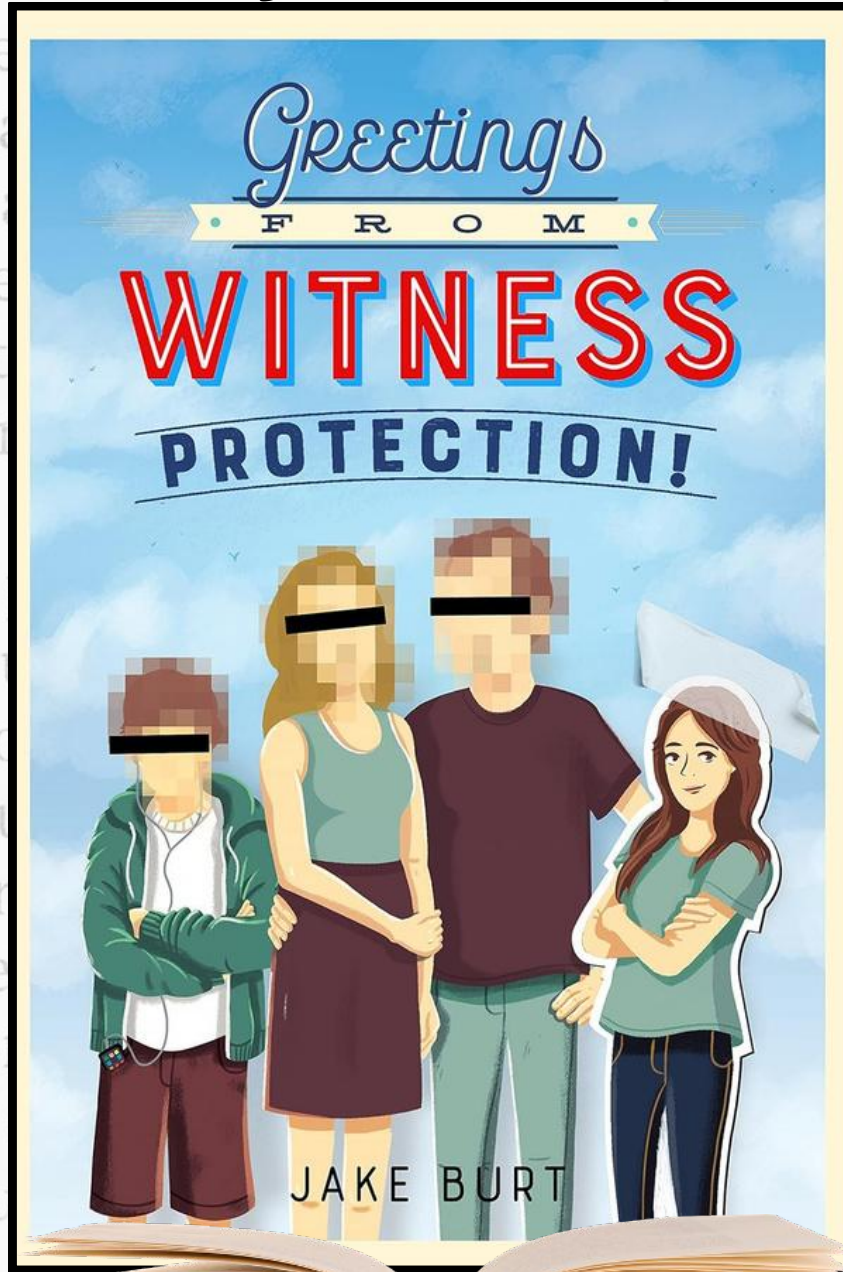
By Kenneth M. Cadow



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

GREETINGS FROM WITNESS PROTECTION!

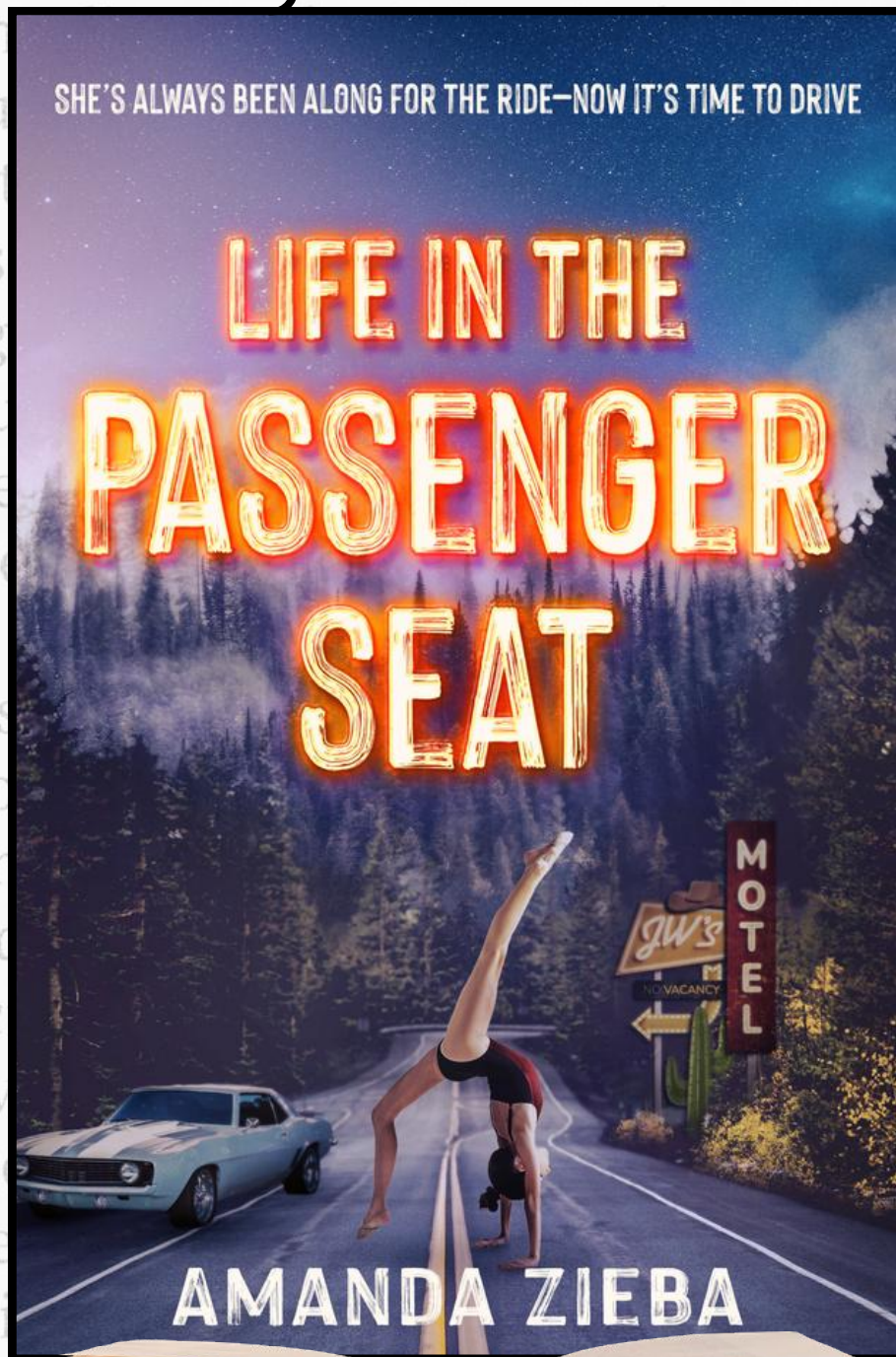
by Jake Burt



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

LIFE IN THE PASSENGER SEAT

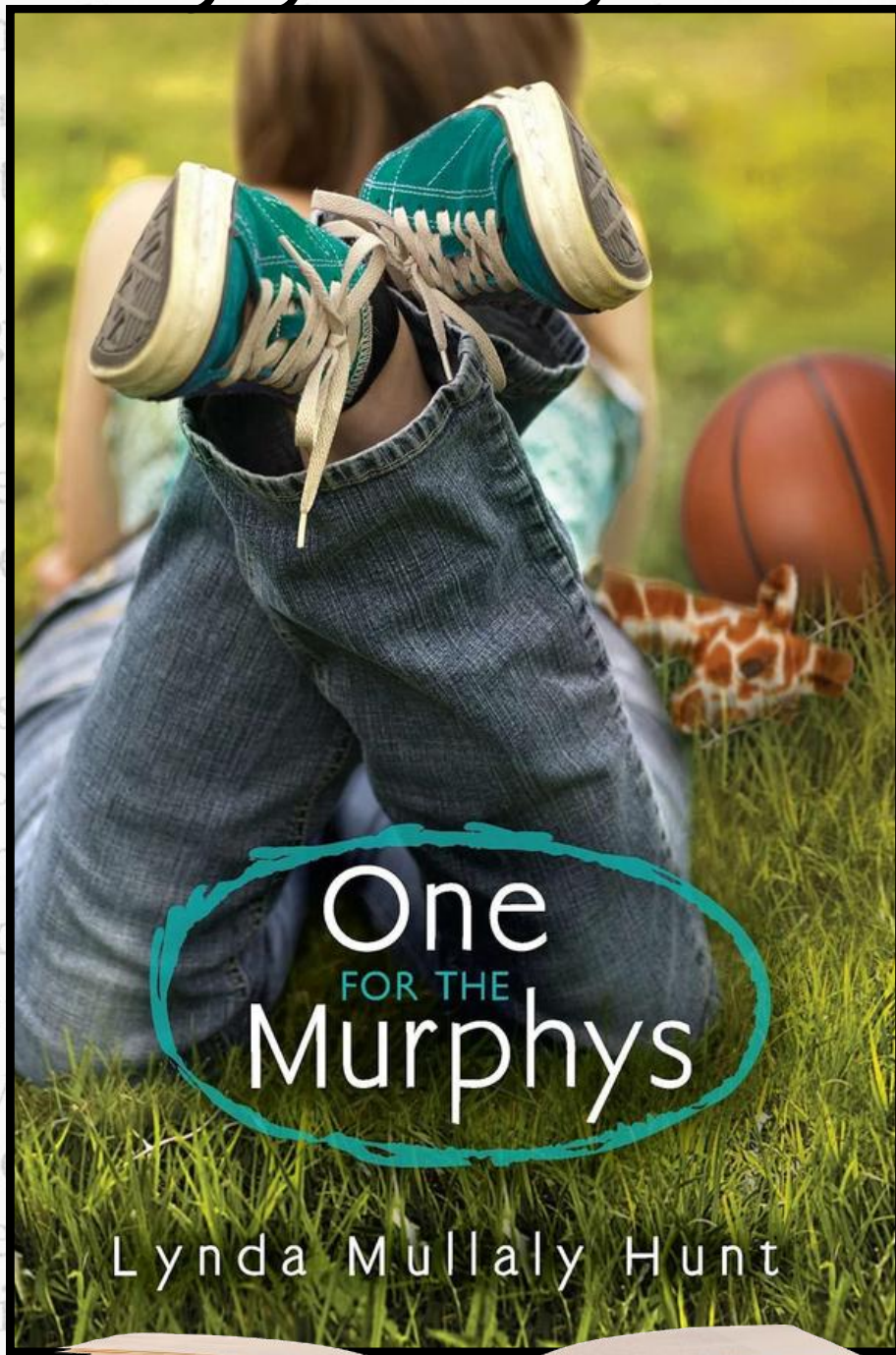
By Amanda Zieba



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

ONE FOR THE MURPHYS

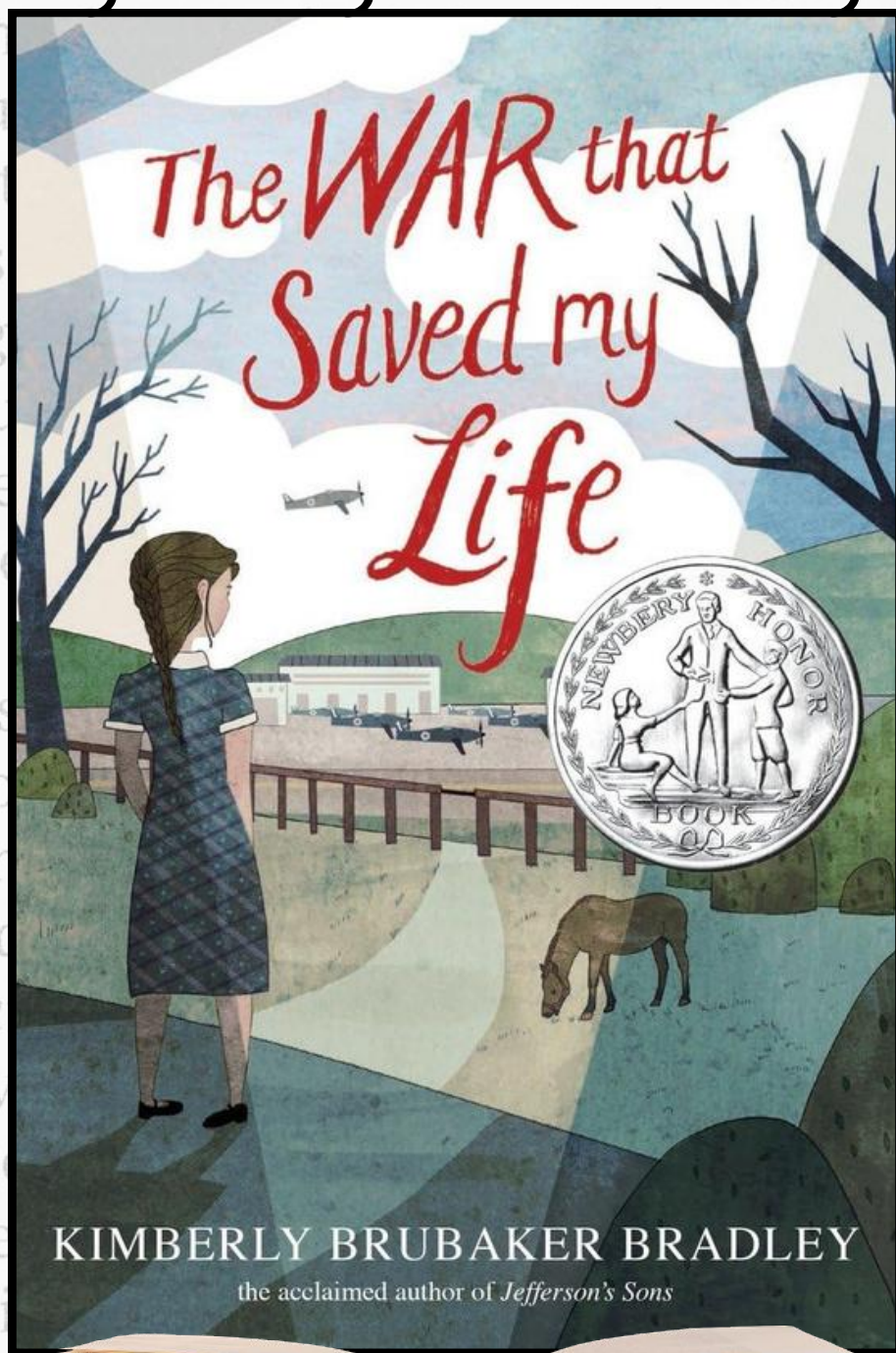
By Lynda Mullaly Hunt



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE WAR THAT SAVED MY LIFE

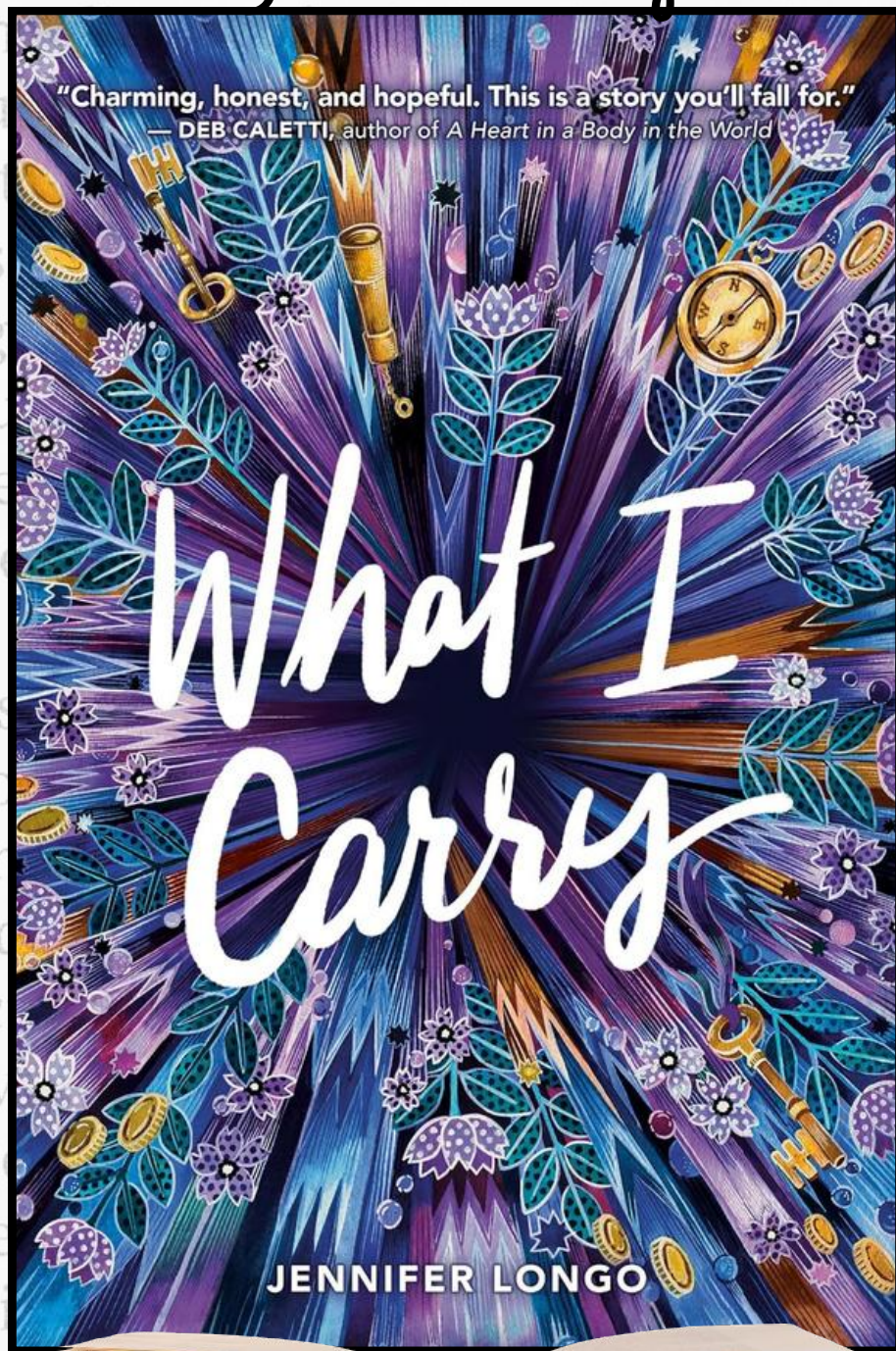
By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

WHAT I CARRY

By Jennifer Longo



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY