WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

JUSTICE INVOLVED



HOW TO USE
THIS RESOURCE

In this resource you will find a curated list of books with characters who are in jail/prison or otherwise involved in the justice system 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 Frist Chapter Friday?
Pages 5-6: Book Tracking Charts
Page 7: Book List
Page 8: Full List Book Cover Poster
Pages 10-15 Individual Book First Chapter Friday Sheets
Pages 18-24: 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!

MUST TRY

Word Nerd Daily

an app from Amanda Zieba



First Chapter Friday Videos

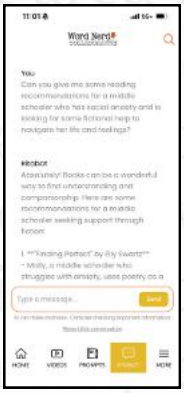


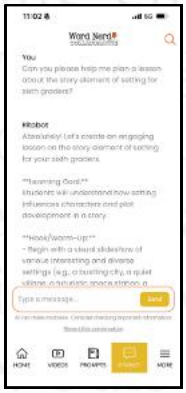
Writing Prompt Library

FREE!



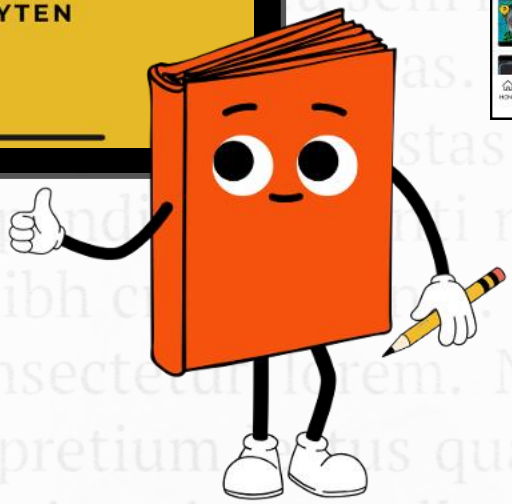
ChatBot for Reading Recs and Lesson Planning





Brain Break Videos





AVIALBLE 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

Teacher Planning Sheet

First CHAPTER Friday



DATE	TITLE	AUTHOR	GENRE	STUDENT REACTION?



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY *Tracker*

Name: _____ Class: _____

Date	Book Title & Author	Reaction	Continue Reading?
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No
			Yes / No

Created by Amanda Zieba, The Word Nerd

WNC BOOK LIST

JUSTICE INVOLVED

These book plot lines include characters who are in jail/prison or otherwise involved in the justice system.

A Wish in the Dark
by Christina Soontornvat

Breakout
by Kate Messner

From the Desk of Zoe Washington
by Jenae Marks

Ghost
by Jason Reynolds

Hidden
by Helen Frost

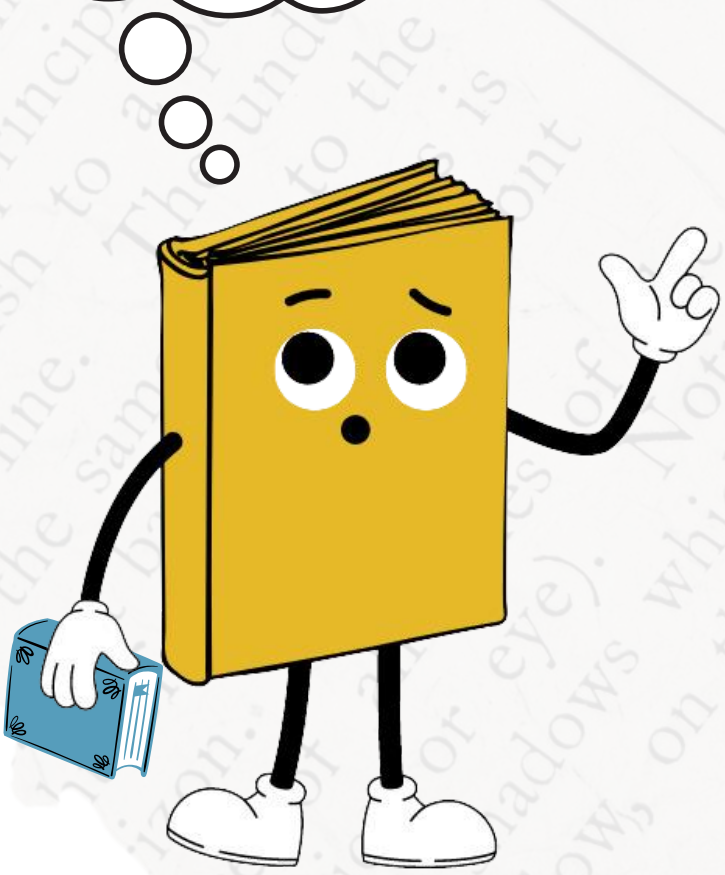
House Arrest
by K.A. Holt

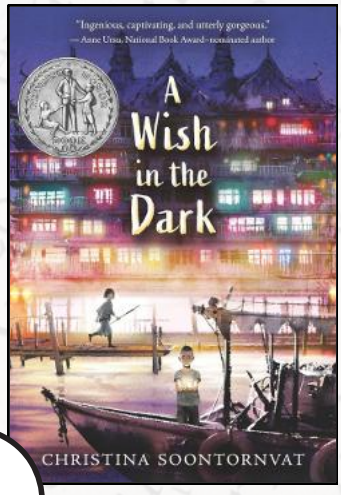
Wild Bird
by Wendelin Van Draanen

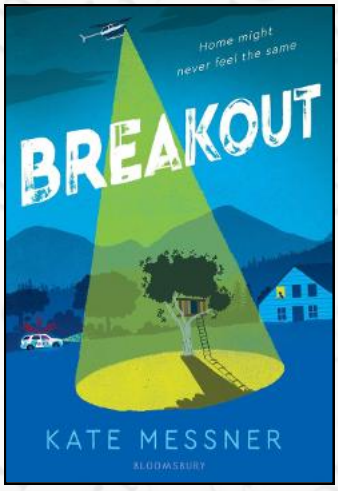


BOOKS ABOUT: PEOPLE WHO ARE JUSTICE INVOLVED

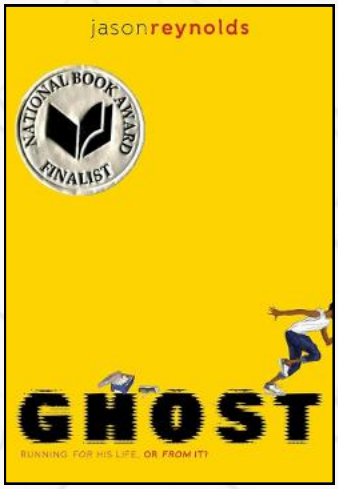




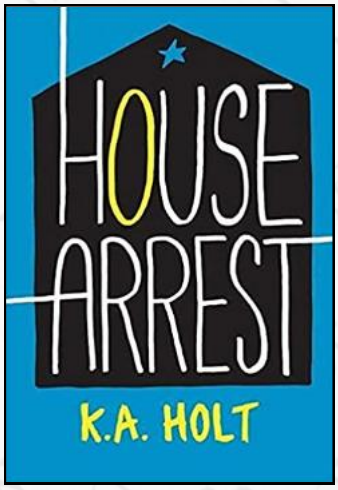


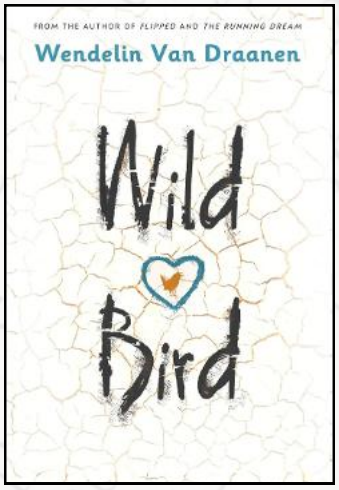












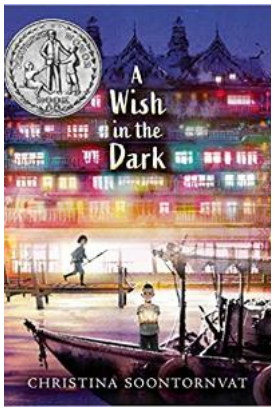
INDIVIDUAL BOOK SHEETS





FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

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Name _____ Date _____

A Wish in the Dark
by Christina Soontornvat

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?

All light in Chattana is created by one man — the Governor, who appeared after the Great Fire to bring peace and order to the city. For Pong, who was born in Namwon Prison, the magical lights represent freedom, and he dreams of the day he will be able to walk among them. But when Pong escapes from prison, he realizes that the world outside is no fairer than the one behind bars. The wealthy dine and dance under bright orb light, while the poor toil away in darkness. Worst of all, Pong's prison tattoo marks him as a fugitive who can never be truly free. Nok, the prison warden's perfect daughter, is bent on tracking Pong down and restoring her family's good name. But as Nok hunts Pong through the alleys and canals of Chattana, she uncovers secrets that make her question the truths she has always held dear. Set in a Thai-inspired fantasy world, Christina Soontornvat's twist on Victor Hugo's Les Misérables is a dazzling, fast-paced adventure that explores the difference between law and justice — and asks whether one child can shine a light in the dark.

Who Wrote It?

Christina Soontornvat grew up behind the counter of her parents' Thai restaurant in a small Texas town with her nose stuck in a book. She is very proud of both her Thai and her Texan roots, and makes regular trips to both Weatherford and Bangkok to see her beloved family members (and eat lots and lots of Thai food!). In addition to being an author, Christina holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and a master's degree in Science Education. She spent a decade working in the science museum field, where she designed programs and exhibits to get kids excited about science. She is passionate about STEM and loves learning new things. She lives in Austin, Texas with her husband, two young children, and one old cat. Learn more about Christina in this video's interview. :)



AR Reading Level: 5.2 Lexile Level: 720L

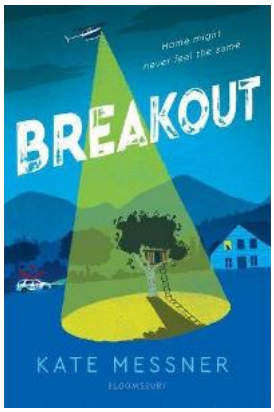
I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK



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

* FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY * FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY * FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY *



Name _____ Date _____

Breakout
by Kate Messner

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?

Nora Tucker is looking forward to summer vacation in Wolf Creek--two months of swimming, popsicles, and brushing up on her journalism skills for the school paper. But when two inmates break out of the town's maximum security prison, everything changes. Doors are locked, helicopters fly over the woods, and police patrol the school grounds. Worst of all, everyone is on edge, and fear brings out the worst in some people Nora has known her whole life. Even if the inmates are caught, she worries that home might never feel the same.

If you've ever wanted to be a journalist or poet, this book is for you!

This book will start great discussions about stereotypes.

This book was a Mighty Girl Best Book of the Year in 2019.

Who Wrote It?

Kate Messner is passionately curious and writes books that encourage kids to wonder. She writes picture books, chapter books and books for middle schoolers. Before becoming a full-time writer, Kate was a TV news reporter as well as an educator who spent fifteen years teaching middle school English. She lives on Lake Champlain with her family and is trying to summit all 46 Adirondack High Peaks in between book deadlines. Kate's writing advice? "I think one of the most important things to do if you want to be a writer is to lead an interesting life. Go outside. Try new things. Talk to people, especially people whose lives are different from yours. And don't pass up opportunities." You can learn more about Kate and her many books at her website: www.katemessner.com.



AR Reading Level: 5.4 Lexile Level: 720L

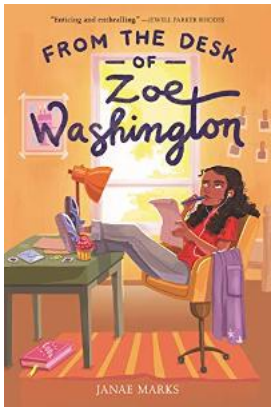
I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK



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Name _____ Date _____

From the Desk of Zoe Washington by Janae Marks

Includes Author Interview!

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?

Zoe Washington isn't sure what to write. What does a girl say to the father she's never met, hadn't heard from until his letter arrived on her twelfth birthday, and who's been in prison for a terrible crime? A crime he says he never committed. Could Marcus really be innocent? Zoe is determined to uncover the truth. Even if it means hiding his letters and her investigation from the rest of her family. Everyone else thinks Zoe's worrying about doing a good job at her bakery internship and proving to her parents that she's worthy of auditioning for Food Network's Kids Bake Challenge. But with bakery confections on one part of her mind, and Marcus's conviction weighing heavily on the other, this is one recipe Zoe doesn't know how to balance. The only thing she knows to be true: Everyone lies.

* Chicago Public Library Best of the Best Book of the Year * SLJ Best Book of the Year * Kirkus Best Book of the Year * Junior Library Guild Selection * Edgar Award Nominee * Four Starred Reviews * Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year * An Indie Bestseller *

Who Wrote It?

Janae grew up in the suburbs of New York City, where she always wrote. She started out writing illustrated autobiographical stories in kindergarten, and then journal entries, stories to submit to Seventeen Magazine's short story contests, and letters to her pen pals and summer camp friends. She read a lot too, of course. Her books were among her prized possessions. Janae went to college to earn a writing degree and afterward she got an inside look at the publishing world while spending 7 years working for a Big 5 Publisher. Janae wrote three young adult manuscripts before switching to middle grade and writing From the Desk of Zoe Washington. In 2017, that novel won the New Voices in Children's Literature Award in the middle grade category. Now, she lives in Connecticut with her husband, daughter, and miniature schnauzer named Cookie.



AR Reading Level: 4.4

Lexile Level: 660L

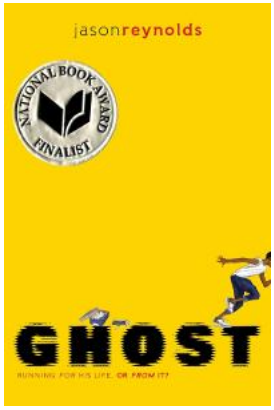
I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK



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

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Name _____ Date _____

Ghost

by Jason Reynolds

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?

Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves. Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?

Who Wrote It?

So, I'm a writer. And when I say I'm a writer, I mean it in the same way a professional ball player calls himself an athlete. I practice everyday and do the best I can to be better at this writing thing, while hopefully bringing some cool stories to the world. The stories are kinda like my slam dunks. Except, I'm dunking words. In your FACE! Ha! I graduated from the University of Maryland. Here's what I know: I know there are a lot of young people who hate reading. I know that many of these book haters are boys. I know that many of these book-hating boys, don't actually hate books, they hate boredom. If you are reading this, and you happen to be one of these boys, first of all... you're reading this so my plan is already working (muaahhaaha!)



Second of all, know that I feel you. I REALLY do. Because even though I'm a writer, I hate reading boring books too.

Learn more about Jason @ www.jasonreynolds.com

AR Reading Level: 4.6 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.

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Name _____ Date _____

Hidden

by Helen Frost

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?

When Wren Abbott and Darra Monson are eight years old, Darra's father steals a minivan. He doesn't know that Wren is hiding in the back. The hours and days that follow change the lives of both girls. Darra is left with a question that only Wren can answer. Wren has questions, too.

Years later, in a chance encounter at camp, the girls face each other for the first time. They can finally learn the truth—that is, if they're willing to reveal to each other the stories that they've hidden for so long. Told from alternating viewpoints, this novel-in-poems reveals the complexities of memory and the strength of a friendship that can overcome pain.

This book is a novel in verse and told in the two voices of the main characters.

Fun surprise poems await you at the end!

Who Wrote It?

Helen Frost was born in Brookings, South Dakota, the fifth of ten children. When she was 11, her family moved to Wilbraham, Massachusetts, where she spent her teenage years. She graduated from Syracuse University with a degree in Elementary Education and a concentration in English. She received her Masters degree in English from Indiana University in 1994. Throughout her career, writing and teaching have been inter-woven threads. She has published poetry, children's books, anthologies, and a play, as well as a book about teaching writing. She has taught writing at all levels, from pre-school through adults. You can learn more about Helen at www.helenfrost.net or in this video's interview with her!



AR Reading Level: 3.9 Lexile Level: 670L

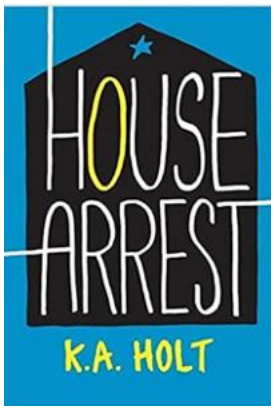
I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK



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Name _____ Date _____

House Arrest by K.A Holt

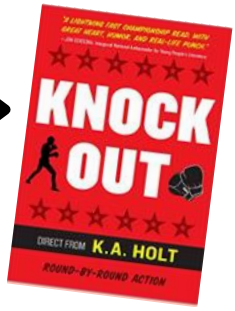
Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Timothy is a good kid who did a bad thing. Now he's under house arrest for a whole year. He has to check in weekly with a probation officer and a therapist, keep a journal, and stay out of trouble. But when he must take drastic measures to help his struggling family, staying out of trouble proves more difficult than Timothy ever thought it would be.

- A Novel in Verse
- This book has a sequel: Knock Out
- 800+ 5 star reviews on Amazon



Who Wrote It?

FIVE FAST FACTS ABOUT KA HOLT

1. Kari Anne was born in Atlanta, Georgia on September 10th, 19somethingsomething.
2. When she was 13, Kari Anne accidentally stomped through a gerbil cage, resulting in five stitches on her calf. You can still see the zigzag scar.
3. When she was young, her favorite author was Paula Danziger, followed closely by Lois Lowry.
4. Kari Anne's favorite food is almost always a taco, but there are times when a cheeseburger wins.
5. She has synesthesia, which means she sees letters and numbers as colors, and she sometimes mixes up other senses, too. (Examples: the letter C is orange, the number one is icy white)You can learn more about KA on her website or YouTube Channel www.kaholt.com.



AR Reading Level: 4.0

Lexile Level: 610L

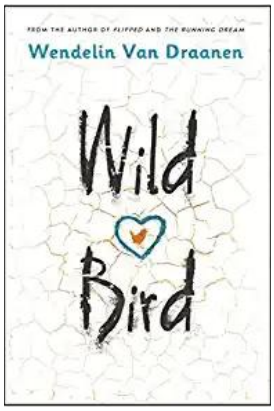
I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK



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

* FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY * FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY * FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY *



Name _____ Date _____

Wild Bird
by Wendelin Van Draanen

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?

3:47 a.m. That's when they come for Wren Clemmens. She's hustled out of her house and into a waiting car, then a plane, and then taken on a forced march into the desert. This is what happens to kids who've gone so far off the rails, their parents don't know what to do with them anymore. This is wilderness therapy camp. Eight weeks of survivalist camping in the desert. Eight weeks to turn your life around. Yeah, right.

The Wren who arrives in the Utah desert is angry and bitter, and blaming everyone but herself. But angry can't put up a tent. And bitter won't start a fire. Wren's going to have to admit she needs help if she's going to survive.

This book is for 7th graders and up.

This book has a connection to the story Jungle Book and other Disney movies!

Who Wrote It?

I was born on January 6th to Dutch immigrants (Peter & Mieske Van Draanen) in Chicago, IL. When I was very young, my family moved to California, where I still reside. I grew up with two brothers and a sister. We did a lot of camping and backpacking as a family, and also as Scouts, where we learned useful survival skills and also to appreciate nature. I taught computer science and math at the high school level for 15 years. I began writing because I went through some awful times and learned



that writing can help you sort out your troubles and find focus. To learn more about Wendelin, read her memoir: Hope in the Mail or in the interview at the end of this video.

AR Reading Level: 4.4 Lexile Level: 680L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

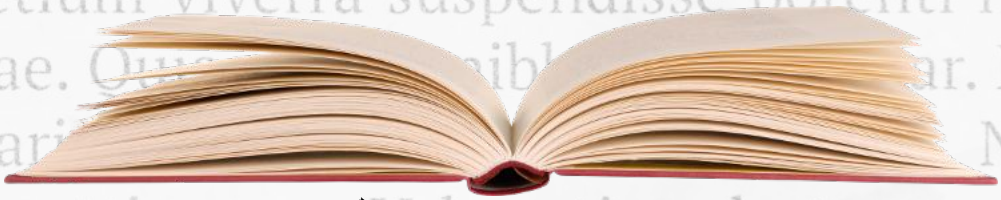
WHAT I THINK



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

INDIVIDUAL BOOK POSTERS

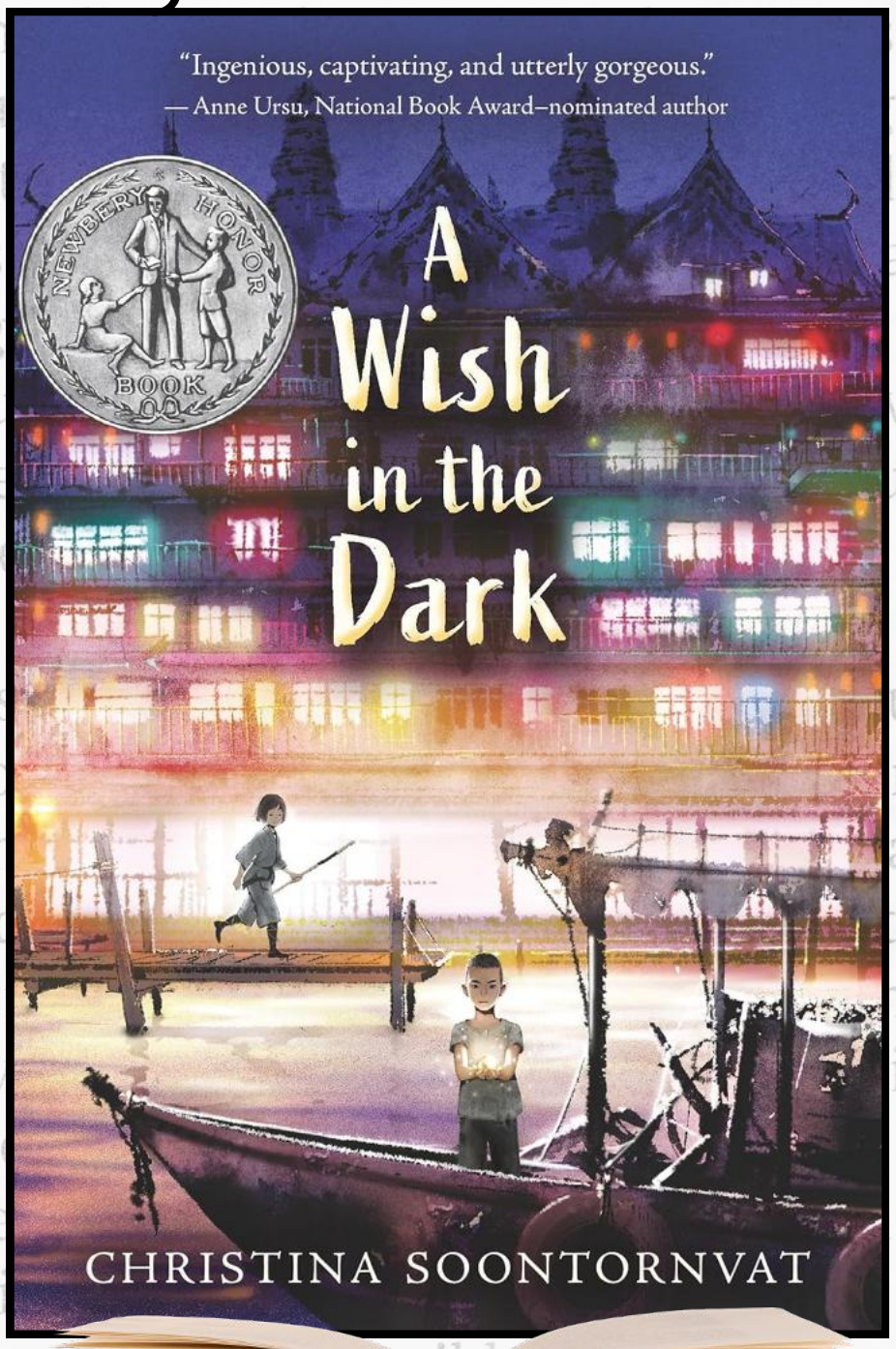




FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

A WISH IN THE DARK

By Christina Soontornvat

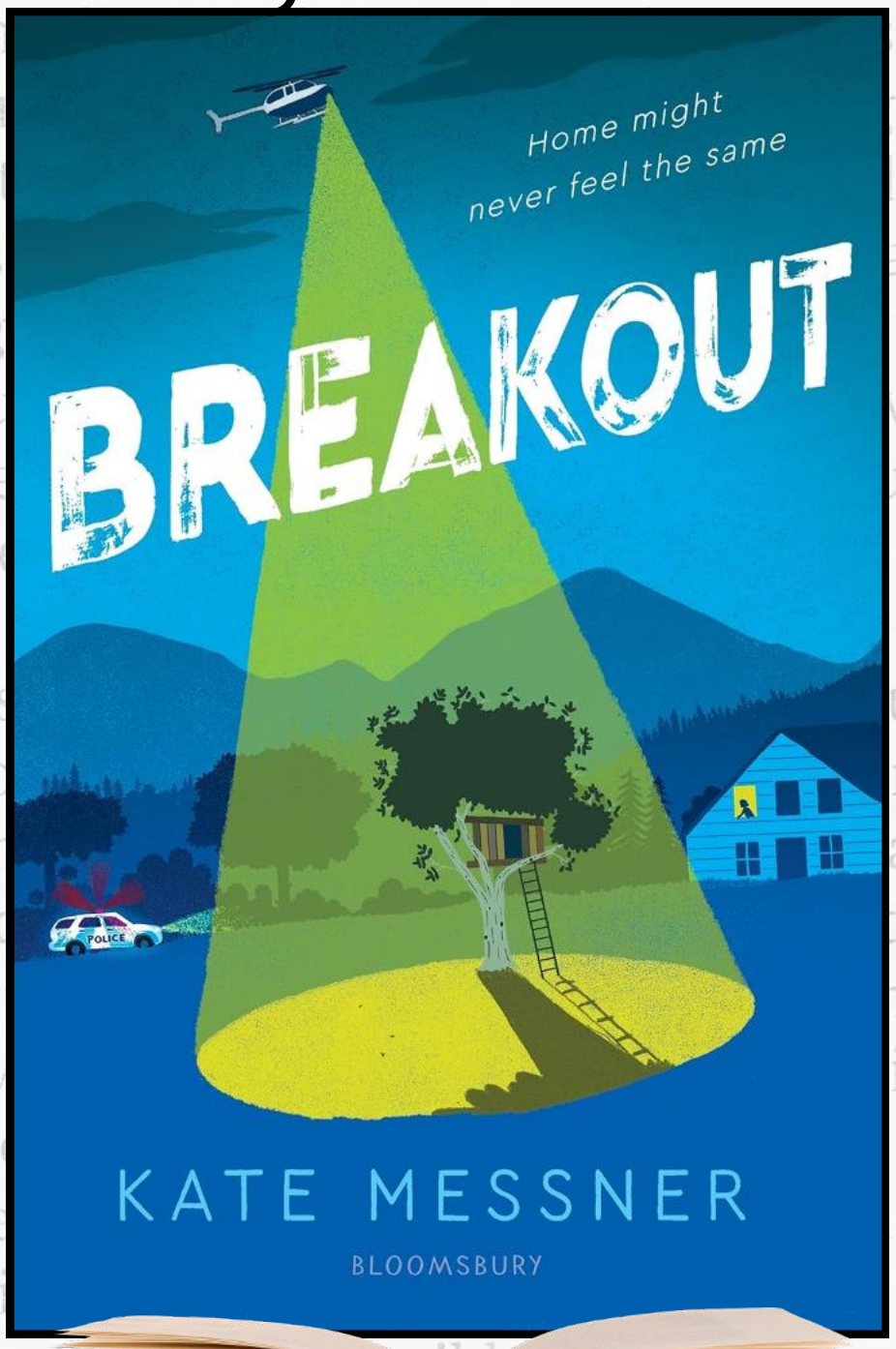




FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

BREAKOUT

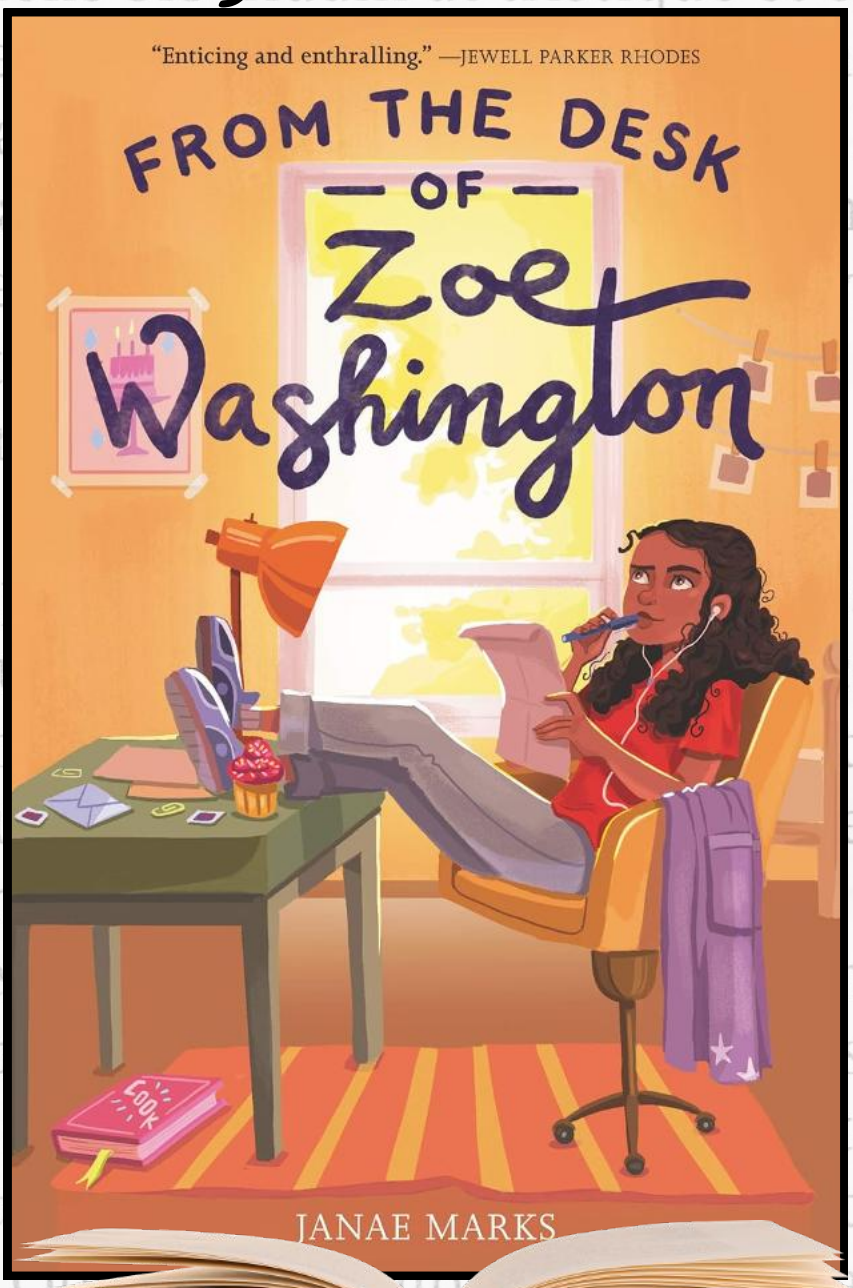
By Kate Messner



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

FROM THE DESK OF ZOE WASHINGTON

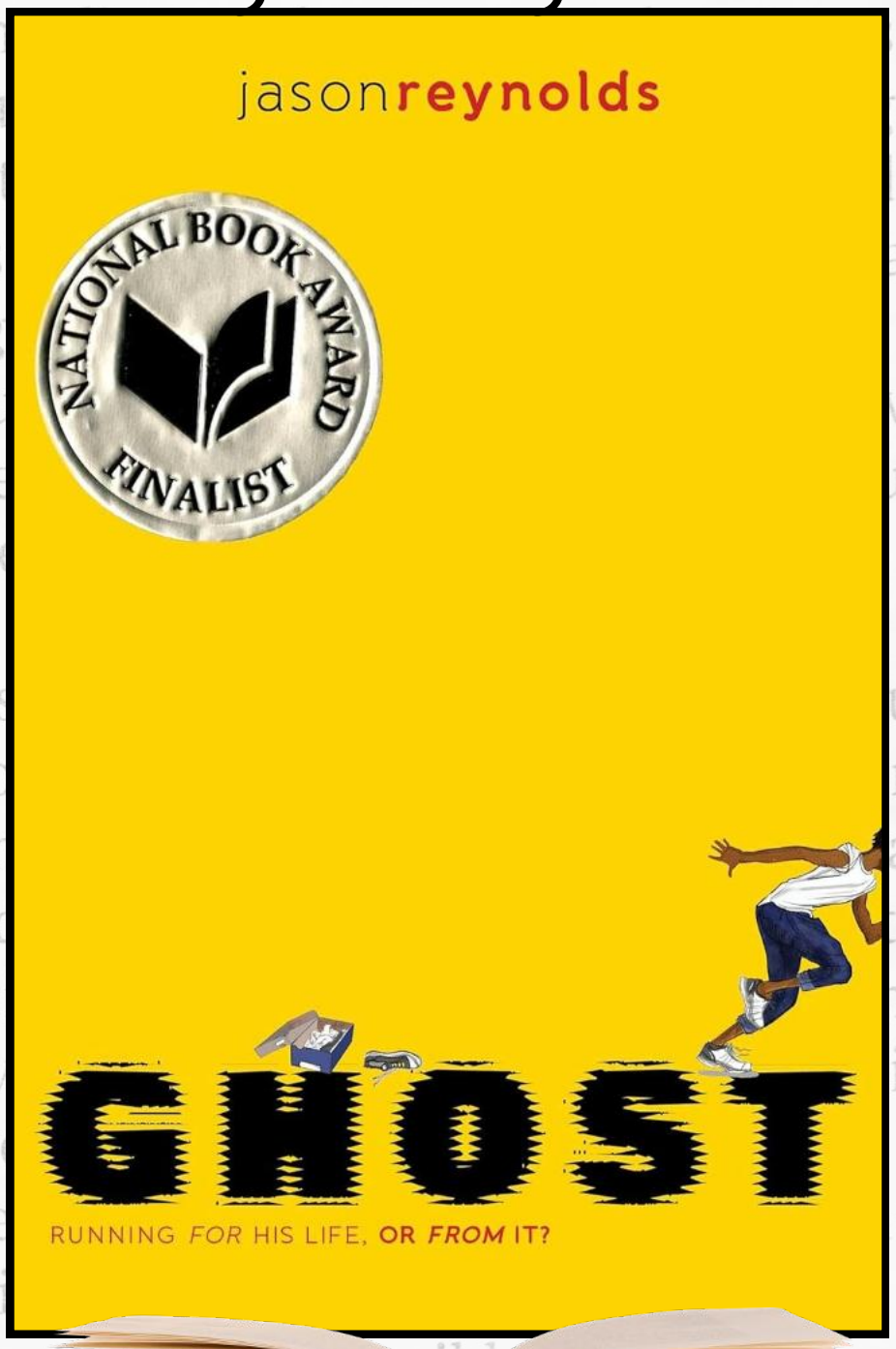
by Janae Marks



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

GHOST

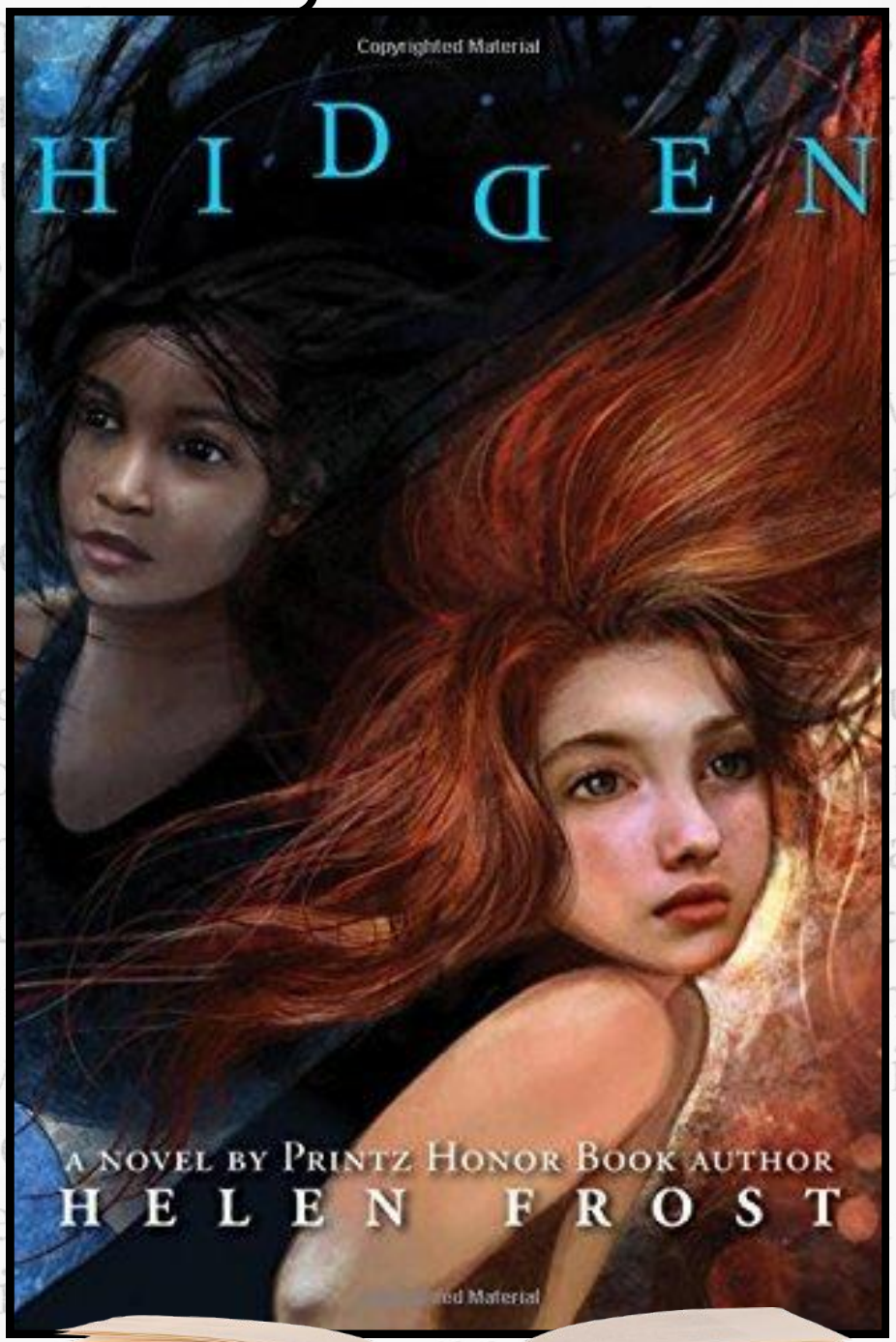
By Jason Reynolds



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

HIDDEN

By Helen Frost

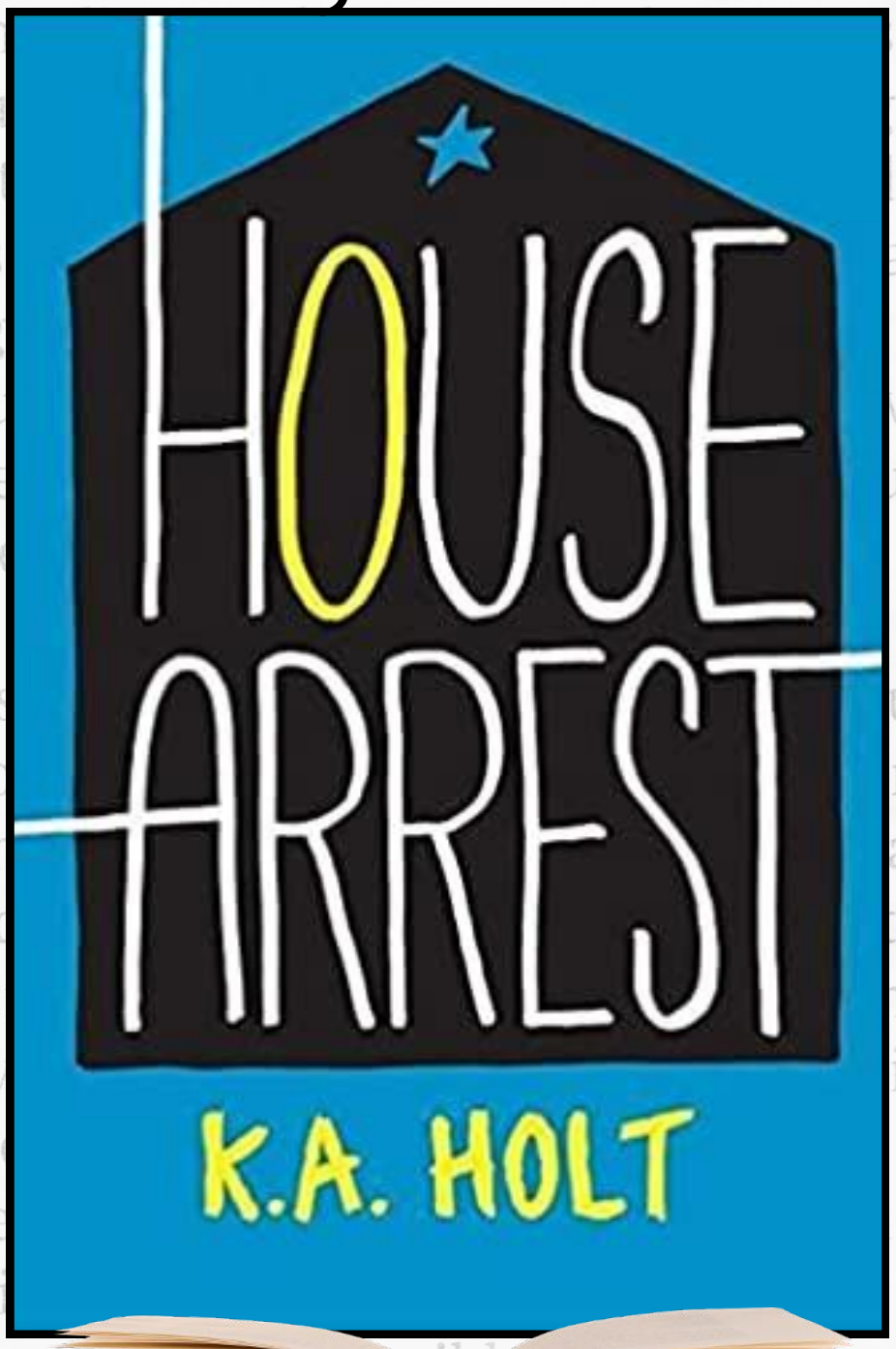




FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

HOUSE ARREST

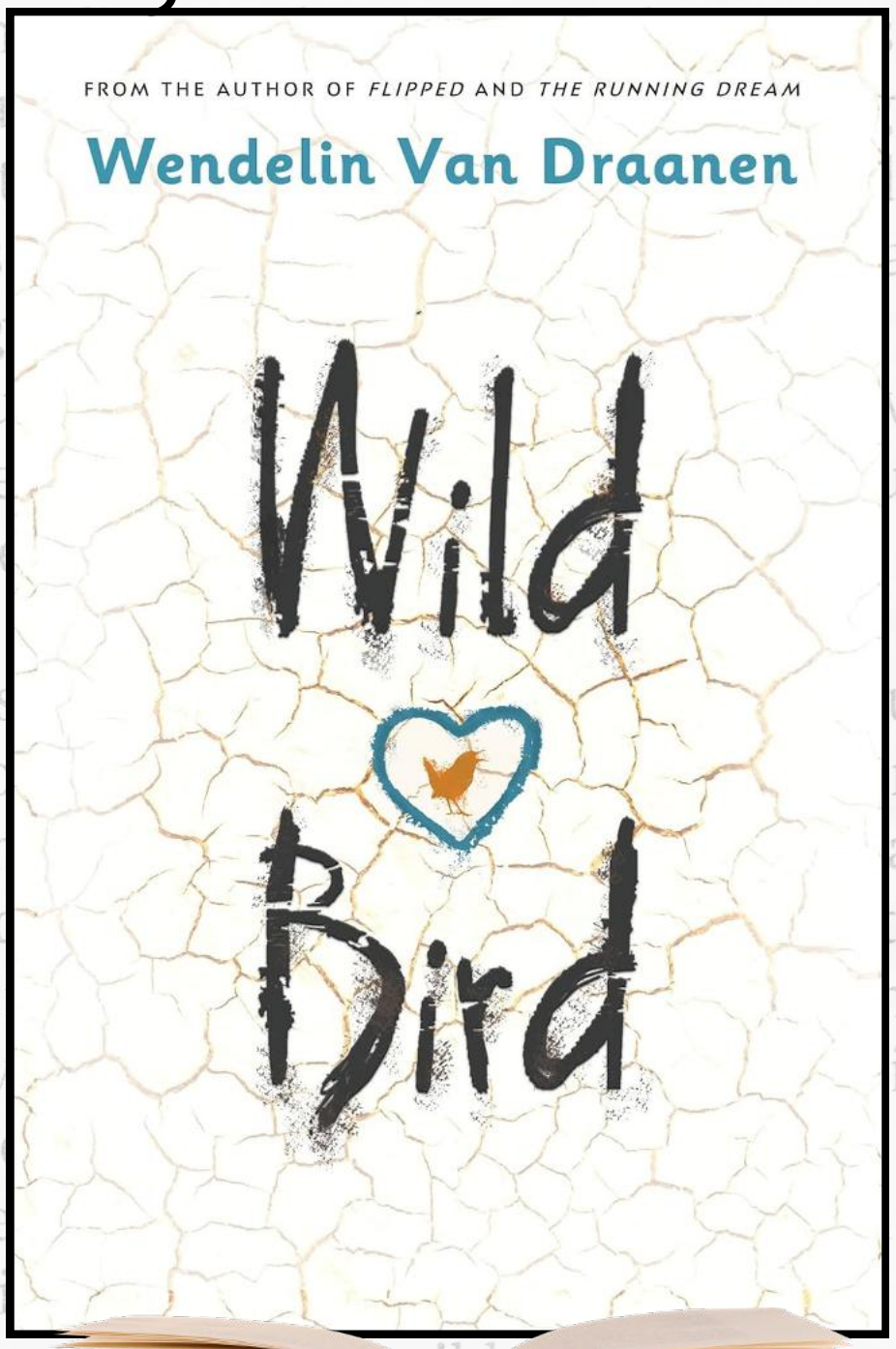
By K.A. Holt



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

WILD BIRD

By Wendelin Van Draanen



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY