

Independent Reading Novel Choices: First Quarter Select Two

Swim the Fly* by Don Calame. Matt and his buddies have one mission for the summer: see a naked girl. A nude beach, a cross-dressing incident in the girls' locker room, and several harebrained schemes later they just can't seem to get it done. Will that stop them? Of course not.

The Rules of Survival by Nancy Werlin. Told retrospectively as a very long letter to his young sister, an 18-year-old boy describes the efforts he and his other sister make to protect their baby sister from their beautiful but seriously deranged mother throughout his teen years.

Firestorm: The Caretaker Trilogy, Book One* by David Klass. Seventeen-year-old Jack Danielson has to find Firestorm and, with it, replenish the nearly irreparable damage done to the Earth's oceans; if he can't overcome the hungry sharks, Gorms, and his evil cousin, Dargon, the future will be lost.

Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher. Before Hannah Baker committed suicide she made audio tapes explaining the reasons why. As the tapes travel through the guilty listeners, the sexual harassment that snowballed through her life is exposed.

The Unspoken by Thomas Fahy. After cult leader Jacob Crawley's fiery death, five teens are reunited to fulfill his final prophecy—that each one of them will die in the face of his/her worst fear.

Deadline by Chris Crutcher. Eighteen-year-old Ben has leukemia and only a year to live, so in the time he has left, he connects with his crush, annoys the crap out of his pain-in-the-ass Government teacher, and goes out for football, living every minute.

Inside Out by Terry Trueman. Zach waits in a coffee house for his mother who brings his antipsychotic medication every day, but on this day, the coffee house is held up by two teens who have no idea that one of their hostages is a schizophrenic who hears voices far worse than anything they can do to him.

The Big Crunch by Pete Hautman. Wes and June can fight the brutal Minnesota winter and their long-distance relationship, but there's one thing they can't fight—the fact that they are meant for one another.

Sorta Like a Rock Star by Matthew Quick. Amber, who's so poor that she has to live in a bus, is a self-proclaimed "princess of hope," but a personal tragedy forces her to reevaluate her completely optimistic point of view on life.

Across the Universe* by Beth Revis. Amy and her parents are frozen to endure the 350 year voyage to a new planet, but when someone thaws the ice in Amy's cubicle, she awakens to discover she they are still far from their destination—and someone on board doesn't want them all to make it.

Twisted by Laurie Halse Anderson. Tyler rides several fine lines: crushing on the daughter of his father's boss and sister of the guy who torments him at school; living up to his father's impossible expectations; being implicated in a crime. Emotionally, he's a ticking time bomb.

Claws by Will Weaver. Jed's life is perfect—until a mysterious Goth girl stalks him with information that his dad is cheating on his mom. When it turns out to be true, Jed is faced with the fact that everything he knows is wrong.

Pop by Gordon Korman. Marcus loves football, and he's more than happy to get tips from an ex-pro like Charlie, but little by little, it's clear that something with Charlie's just not right, and his condition isn't just dangerous for himself, it's dangerous for Marcus.

I'll Be There* by Holly Goldberg Sloan. Everyone's life is changed after Sam and his little brother, Riddle, hear Emily sing "I'll Be There," bringing together three people whose lives will, before long, depend upon one another.

Acceleration by Graham McNamee. Duncan works in the Toronto subway system's lost and found where, one day, he comes across a journal left by a passenger—a man who's stalking a woman on the subway, a woman he means to kill.

Wherever Nina Lies by Lynn Weingarten. Two years after Ellie's sister, Nina, disappeared, she finds a piece of Nina's artwork and on it, a phone number that leads her on a cross-country road trip to find her sister. But the guy who's volunteered to go with her is harboring a deadly secret, and it's only a matter of time before Ellie discovers the truth.

My Friend Dahmer by Derf Backderf. Derf recounts his high school days with Jeffrey Dahmer, one of the most notorious serial killers in American history.

Before I Die by Jenny Downham. Tessa has six months to live and an even shorter time to accomplish a list of things she wants to do before she dies—like try drugs, have sex, and fall in love.

The First Part Last by Angela Johnson. After Bobby's girlfriend, Nia, tells him that they're going to have a baby (which she wants to put up for adoption), Bobby quickly learns how to be a man--and a father.

*Books with a sequel/companion.

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The Midnighters: The Secret Hour* by Scott Westerfeld. After Jessica moves to a small town in Oklahoma, she finds out that for her and a few mysterious other teens in town, time stops for an hour just at the stroke of midnight. It seems pretty cool, right up until the time she discovers that they're not alone in the darkness—the Darklings are there too, and they like to eat humans.

Bruiser by Neal Shusterman. When Bronte falls for Brewster, the guy most kids in their high school decide is a future criminal, she discovers his secret—a gift that has cursed him into an inability to care for others; when he does, it bruises him ... in every way possible.

Catalyst by Laurie Halse Anderson. After the death of her mother, Kate's only goal is to graduate and go to MIT, but when that falls through and her reverend father decides to host a neighbor who despises Kate, she learns about what it means to cope.

Stoner and Spaz* by Ron Koertge. Ben, who suffers from cerebral palsy, befriends Colleen, a drug-abusing girl who is the last person in the world Ben should be hanging around with—which is exactly why they're so good for one another.

Living Dead Girl by Elizabeth Scott. Fifteen-year-old Alice has been abducted by a man whose unconscionable abuse of her forces her to utterly detach from reality to survive.

What Happened to Cass McBride? by Gail Giles. After his brother David kills himself, Kyle kidnaps Cass McBride, the girl he blames, and buries her alive in a coffin-like box, leaving police a limited amount of time to find her before time runs out.

Before I Die by Jenny Downham. Tessa has six months to live and an even shorter time to accomplish a list of things she wants to do before she dies—like try drugs, have sex, and fall in love.

A Room on Lorelei Street by Mary E. Pearson. Fed up with her alcoholic mother, 17-year-old Zoe rents a room of her own from an eccentric old woman, but can she scrape together enough money from her part-time waitressing job to pay her rent and expenses to make it on her own?

I Hunt Killers* by Barry Lyga. Jazz's father is the most notorious serial killer in American history, and before he was put in prison for the rest of his life, he taught Jazz everything he knew about the business of killing which comes in handy when a new killer comes to town—one who appears to be copying Jazz's dad's kills, one at a time—and there's only one person qualified to stop him.

Between Shades of Gray by Ruta Sepetys. It's 1941, and Lina, her mother, and her brother are leaving their home in Lithuania to go on a terrifying journey by cattle car that spans 440 days all the way to Siberia. Why? Because Stalin's Soviet regime wanted them out, and he had no intention of them living long enough to return.

Son of the Mob* by Gordon Korman. Vince wants nothing to do with the family business, but can't avoid the pitfalls of having a father who's a mob boss—like getting involved with a girl whose dad is an FBI agent.

Fat Kid Rules the World by K. L. Going. About to throw himself off a bridge, Troy is interrupted by Curt, a legendary local musician whose life is, quite possibly, in worse shape than Troy's. But by

getting him to play the drums in his band, Curt brings Troy to a much-needed place of self-acceptance.

Shooting Star by Fredrick McKissack. Jomo loves football but, undersized, needs some help to compete at the level his coaches expect. Enter steroids and with them, the slow falling apart of every good relationship in his life.

Bonechiller by Graham MacNamee. Trapped in the wilds of a Canadian tundra, Danny is bitten by an ancient creature who's haunting his dreams, luring him into its icy lair; when the time comes, Danny and his friends will have to come face to face with the creature if they want to survive.

Crash into Me by Albert Borris. A group of depressed teens takes a road trip across the country in search of celebrity suicide sites. Their final destination? Death Valley, where they plan to kill themselves.

Glimpse by Carol Lynch Williams. Hope's big sister, Lizzie, attempts suicide, and is hospitalized, leaving Hope alone with their horrifying excuse for a mother; in time, Hope will discover the reasons for Lizzie's wanting to die.

Endgame by Nancy Garden. Told in flashbacks through interviews with his lawyer, fifteen-year-old Gray Wilton, accused school shooter, reveals the bullying he suffered at school by the football heroes and the tension at home that contributed to his taking the gun to school.

Undead* by Kirsty Mckay. When the school bus drops the kids off at a roadside restaurant during a school trip in the mountains, zombies come out, and the only ones left on the bus are Bobby (the new girl), Smitty (the juvenile delinquent), and Alice (the annoying cheerleader).

Duckling Ugly* by Neal Shusterman. Cara is so ugly that she shatters mirrors—literally—until she finds the fountain of youth, which not only makes her the loveliest girl in the world, but leaves, in her wake, the fetid remains of everything and everyone she must destroy to keep her beautiful.

Invisible by Pete Hautman. Dougie's building a town out of match-sticks in his basement and, just like his grip on reality, it's fragile, imaginary, and ever ready to burst into flames.

*books that are a part of a series, have sequels, or companion novels

Independent Reading Novel Choices: Quarter Three

Select Two

Unwind* by Neal Shusterman. America has banned abortion, but it's perfectly legal to "unwind" children up to the age of eighteen, when they're sent to a harvesting clinic and their parts given to others. Connor and Risa, both unwinds, try to escape their fate by running away; in the process, they find out that they're not the only ones.

Rash by Pete Hautman. In the late 21st century, violent sports have been outlawed, which doesn't stop Bo from having to play football to gain his freedom after being incarcerated; unfortunately, if his fellow inmates don't kill him, the starving polar bear on the other side of the fence just might.

Shine by Lauren Myracle. After Cat's former friend is assaulted in a hate crime that leaves him in a coma, she takes on the homophobic apathy of a small North Carolina town to find out who's responsible.

I Will Save You by Matt de la Pena. After Kidd pushes Devon off a cliff in chapter one, the story flashes back through the months of sheer despair that led him to the brink of total emotional breakdown—and total enlightenment.

Blood Red Road* by Moira Young. After her twin brother is kidnaped and her father killed, Saba vows to get him back, but she will have to fight cage matches, kill hellwurms, and survive deadly battles with the Tonton to do it.

Eleanor & Park by Rainbow Rowell. Eleanor and Park's love is first love—the kind that burns like a fire and can't be put out by abusive stepfathers, bullying, or physical separation.

The Burn Journals by Brent Runyon. In 1991, the 14-year-old author came home from school, doused his bathrobe in gasoline, put it on, and lit a match. This is his story.

Dark Angel by David Klass. After Jeff's older brother, a convicted murderer, is released from prison on a technicality and Jeff's rival on the soccer team goes missing, Jeff sets out to discover if his brother is involved, with shocking results.

Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys. At the end of WWII, four lives converge as refugees, Nazis, and Russian soldiers play their part in creating the true story of the worst maritime disaster in history (yes, worse than the *Titanic*).

The Sun Is Also a Star by Nicola Yoon. He's Korean, a philosopher, and a poet; she's Jamaican, a realist, and about to be deported. And in the span of less than 24 hours, they fall desperately in love.

The Last Summer of the Death Warriors by Francisco Stork. When Pancho goes to St. Anthony's Home to keep him from the violent impulses he has to find and kill his sister's murderer, he meets D. Q., a kid with brain cancer, who teaches him what it means to be a Death Warrior—one who lives life to the fullest in the time he has left.

The Dark Endeavor* by Kenneth Opiel. Viktor and Konrad Frankenstein stumble upon the Dark Library and in it, a book with the recipe for a secret Elixir of Life which, before long, they will desperately need to save one of their lives.

Feed by M. T. Anderson. Set in a dystopian future, Titus begins to question whether or not the “feed” that sends information coursing through his brain at hyper-speed is something anyone should want, especially after he meets Violet, whose feed is malfunctioning to the point that her life is in danger.

Beauty Queens by Libba Bray. Fifty Miss Teen Pageant contestants crash on an island and have to learn to survive with nothing but their knowledge of strutting down the runway, makeup application, and female relational aggression in this satire of a corporate world obsessed with beauty.

I’ll Be There* by Holly Goldberg Sloan. Everyone’s life is changed after Sam and his little brother, Riddle, hear Emily sing “I’ll Be There,” bringing together three people whose lives will, before long, depend upon one another.

An Abundance of Katherines by John Green. Colin, recently dumped by the umpteenth Katherine he’s dated, goes on a road trip with his best friend and ends up in Gutshot, Tennessee, where a girl named Lindsay has the potential to get him out of his romantic funk.

The Warrior Heir* by Cinda Williams Chima. After leading a normal life in contemporary Ohio, 16-year-old Jack Swift learns he has magical powers and has been chosen as a warrior to fight an unnamed opponent to the death in a tournament run by wizards that is hundreds of years old.

*title has a sequel/companion novel/is part of a series

As Always, Select Two

You by Charles Benoit. Kyle's got an anger management problem, and just as he's about to get it under control, a new kid in town, Zack, pushes every one of his buttons until Kyle is forced to do something about it—something violent.

Wintergirls by Laurie Halse Anderson. It's difficult to know which of the two will kill Lia first: her eating disorder or the guilt she feels over never having returned the 33 calls of her friend, Cassie, the night she committed suicide.

I Am the Messenger by Markus Zusak. Ed's got a pretty crappy life until he stops a bank robbery; after that, he starts receiving playing cards in the mail, each one a clue that leads him to someone who, in some way, needs his help.

The Sky Is Everywhere by Jandy Nelson. After her older sister dies, Lennie (named after John Lennon) tries to cope through poetry and music but can't shake her sudden feelings for her sister's boyfriend and a new guy who makes her feel like she might just make it.

Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue by Julius Lester. Through a variety of first-person points of view, Lester recreates a horrendous event in history: the largest slave auction (over 400 individuals) in America, held in Savannah, Georgia, in 1859.

She Loves You, She Loves You Not . . . by Julie Anne Peters. After Alyssa's father catches her in bed with her girlfriend, she has to live with her estranged mother in Colorado where new friends, a new girlfriend, and natural disasters show her the true meaning of acceptance.

Right Behind You by Gail Giles. When he's ten, Kip sets another boy on fire and, as a result, is locked up for many years. Once he's released, he learns how difficult it is to put the past behind him, especially when no one else will ever let him forget it.

Full Tilt by Neal Shusterman. Trapped in a surreal carnival hosted by an enigmatic redhead, Cassandra, Blake must survive seven rides—rides featuring his worst fears—if he is to save his brother Quinn from becoming a permanent fixture at this hellish amusement park.

The Last Summer of the Death Warriors by Francisco Stork. When Pancho goes to St. Anthony's Home to keep him from the violent impulses he has to find and kill his sister's murderer, he meets D. Q., a kid with brain cancer, who teaches him what it means to be a Death Warrior—one who lives life to the fullest in the time he has left.

The Dark Endeavor* by Kenneth Opper. Viktor and Konrad Frankenstein stumble upon the Dark Library and in it, a book with the recipe for a secret Elixir of Life which, before long, they will desperately need to save one of their lives.

The Survival Kit by Donna Freitas. After the death of her mother, Rose discovers a "survival kit" left for her—a paper bag that contains an iPod, a crystal heart, and a picture of peonies (among other things), all of which are meant to be clues for her to decipher as she learns how to cope with her loss.

Feed by M. T. Anderson. Set in a dystopian future, Titus begins to question whether or not the “feed” that sends information coursing through his brain at hyper-speed is something anyone should want, especially after he meets Violet, whose feed is malfunctioning to the point that her life is in danger.

I Forgive You, Leonard Peacock by Matthew Quick. Leonard Peacock has one goal for the day: Kill one of his classmates before taking his own life. But sometimes, even the best plans can be thwarted by someone who cares.

Runner by Carl Deuker. Chance needs money, so he starts running packages for a guy he doesn't know—a guy who requires that Chance ask no questions about what's in the packages. Eventually, though, he'll have to find out; in fact, his life will depend on it.

Playing in Traffic by Gail Giles. Matt becomes completely entangled by Skye, a crazy, sexy girl who will use her trance on him for a deadly favor.

Fangirl by Rainbow Rowell. Away at school, fan-fiction celebrity Cath does two things she never expected to do at school: learn to write for herself and fall in love.

The Realm of Possibility by David Levithan. In a series of poems, several teen's lives are explored as they navigate relationships, friendships, and the possibilities of love, in all its forms.

Period 8 by Chris Crutcher. A girl goes missing, and Paul is determined to figure out what happened to her. But it's complicated, to the tune of deception, criminal activity, and deranged behavior that may get Paul killed if he's not careful.

Feathered by Laura Kasischke. Three friends go to Cancun for spring break, and although all three return, none of them are the same after they decide to go on a road trip with the wrong people.