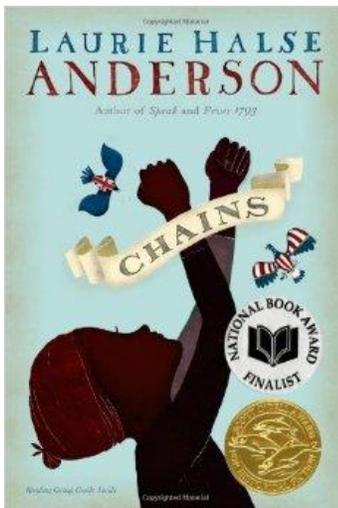


Coley, Liz. *Pretty Girl-13*. Liz Coley. 344 pages.
Recommended for Grades 9-12
Realistic Fiction

At thirteen years old, Angie went on a Girl Scout camping trip and didn't come home for three years. She returns in her old neighborhood at sixteen with no memory of the past three years. She doesn't even realize any time has passed. Upon learning that she had obviously been kidnapped and suffered severe trauma, Angie begins a series of heavy therapy. It is discovered quickly that she suffers from a mental disorder where she has several other "alters", which are other personalities. When a personality takes over, Angie has no memory of what she does or says. She uses therapy to try to piece together what she went through for those three missing years, and must decide whether these personalities are helping her or hurting her.

This novel is like nothing else I've ever read. Angie's struggle is based off a real-life mental disorder and experiencing it through her story is incredible. In some ways, Angie is relatable; she just wants everything to go back to normal. However, her strength is inspiring and difficult to imagine embodying. This novel deals with issues such as kidnapping and rape, and I would recommend it for older readers in high school. It's not a difficult read but the plot is very interesting. This is one novel I would definitely not judge by its cover.

–Casey S.



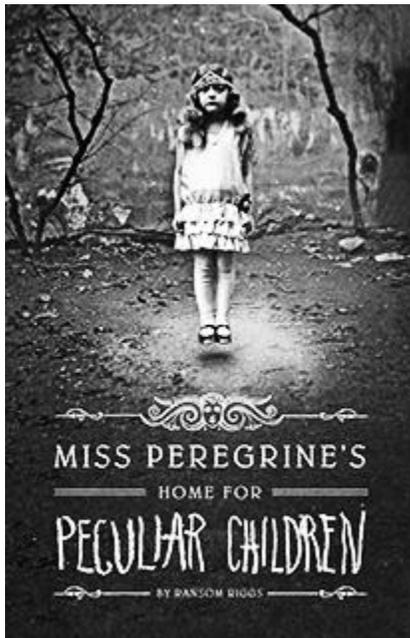
Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains*. 2008. 316 p.
Recommended for 9-12 grade
Historical Fiction

Chains is a book about a thirteen year old slave, Isabel, at the outset of the American Revolution. Isabel and her sister, Ruth, had just been bought by two masters, although Isabel was promised her freedom upon her former owner's death. The two sisters must battle their own war for freedom from the malicious New York City couple, the Locktons. Mr. Lockton and Mrs. Lockton were wealthy landowners who faked their patriotism in New York. When Isabel meets another slave boy named Curzon the two plot to reveal Isabel's masters for the traitors they are. With a twist of fate the two remain together while Mrs. Lockton gets crueler. Isabel and Ruth end up separated and Isabel and Curzon overcome many obstacles to search for Ruth. Always pledging that in life or death the family will be reunited.

Laurie Halse Anderson yet again, turns out a very well written book with mesmerizing, realistic characters. Anderson explores the themes of freedom, power, and the will to overcome in an extremely fascinating story. The book presents a very vivid picture of life as a house slave during the Revolutionary War, just like a prisoner of war, or a Patriot soldier. It also tackles the difference between a house servant and a slave. The beautiful language demonstrates the mood of the book and makes the readers

sympathize with the characters. This book is best suited for high school students, United States History students would especially benefit from reading this book as an outside source. It is jam-packed with battle scenes, politics, secret plots, and heroism. This is a truly inspirational book which will bring tears to your eyes with its strong morals.

– Shannon D, Teen Reviewer.



Riggs, Ransom. Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children. 2011. 348 pp.

Recommended for Grades 8-12

Horror

Sixteen-year-old Jacob Portman stopped believing in his grandfather's stories about the peculiar children long ago. There were stories about the children who lived on an island, the levitating girl and the boy who had live bees in his stomach, but one night he begins questioning their fiction when he sees a truly terrifying sight. "Find the bird. In the loop. On the other side of the old man's grave. September third, 1940." His grandfather's last words. What bird? What loop? The old man's grave? What does he mean? Then Jacob receives letters sent between his grandfather and someone named Miss Peregrine. Confused, Jacob manages to get his parents to let him go to Cairnholm, an island off the coast of Wales, where the home for peculiar children is. He arrives on the island that only has

one telephone and begins searching for the answers to the questions his grandfather left unsolved. What Jacob finds is terrifying, amazing and, well, peculiar.

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs is an amazing book. At first the story is slow but it quickly picks up once Jacob is on the island a few chapters in. This is a creepy book that has thrills in every chapter. The characters on the island are unique in every way except that they are all peculiar, meaning they each have a strange talent. There are some big words in this book that younger kids would need to look up. This book would probably be best for grades 8-12. The plot and writing make this book so enjoyable and make you not want to put the book down. This book is different because there are pictures in it. The pictures in it are mostly of children, for example, there is a levitating girl and invisible boy (you can see his clothes). All of the peculiar children in this story are based around these photographs, which are said to be real. This book is a must read!

Review by Moira S.



Dashner, James. *The Death Cure*. 2011. 325p.
Recommended for Grades 7-11
Science Fiction

The Death Cure picks up after the events of "The Scorch Trials". Thomas is being held in solitary confinement for the events in *The Scorch Trials*, but is eventually released. He, along with some others, soon discover from Assistant Director Janson that the claim of a cure for the Flare was a lie. Janson adds that while many of the people present are immune, not all of them have this natural immunity and that many of the people in the outside world hate the ones with immunity. Thomas and the other Gladers are warned about going outside. The Gladers are first offered the chance to restore their memories. It is also revealed that the controlling device in their brains will also be removed in the process, and Thomas, Teresa and Aris will no longer be able to communicate telepathically with each other. Most of them accept the procedure, except Thomas, Minho and Newt. But they are later forced into the process. They escape it at the last minute with the help of Brenda. Then, it is revealed that Newt is not immune to the Flare, so Thomas receives a letter from him to read when the time is right.

After narrowly escaping an attack, the group flies to Denver with Jorge as the pilot in the hopes of meeting a former Wicked neurologist, Hans. While in Denver, they meet up with Gally who tells them about an anti-Wicked organization. Then, they find Hans and WICKED controls Thomas to attempt to kill Hans. Brenda and Minho were able to stop him in time and Hans gets the controlling device out of Thomas's brain. Newt is later discovered to have gone missing. Thomas discovers that Newt has been taken to a Crank sanctuary. Thomas tries to get Newt to return, only for Newt to vehemently reject Thomas' gesture. Thomas and his group are caught in a Crank riot but manage to escape. It is at this point that Thomas reads Newt's letter, in which Newt begs Thomas to kill him out of friendship.

Thomas and the others are eventually captured by bounty hunters, where they convince their kidnapers to take them to the headquarters of the Right Arm, where they meet Vince, the group's leader and Gally. Along with Right Arm, plans are made to bomb Wicked's headquarters. Thomas has previously been invited back to participate in the third phase of the Trials, so he agrees to go alone to plant the device that would allow the Right Arm to enter the building. While driving to the building, Thomas sees and kills Newt, honoring his friend's wishes

Thomas manages to successfully plant the device, but is told by Janson that he is the Final Candidate. This means that they will have to take his brain, almost killing him in the process, to create a way to defeat the Flare. Thomas later discovers that Janson is suffering from the Flare and is eager for Thomas' operation in order to save himself. Just before the operation, Thomas is saved by Chancellor Ava Paige, Wicked's leader, who plans to have immune people replenish civilization after the Flare ends. She helps Thomas escape and in the process, also helps hundreds of other Flare-immune people escape. Thomas manages to escape, but at the cost of Teresa's life. He is then transported to an unknown location along with the other Flare-immune people. In the *Maze Runner Files* a book published after the *Death Cure* we find out that the Flare was released by the PCC, an organization set up by the surviving world governments to handle population control. When they realized the damage they had caused, they set up WICKED to try to make up for their actions.

I would recommend this book to a teenager (12-16) that likes to read books that show great action throughout the book and a great amount of conflict. The reason that I mostly recommend teens to read this book and series for that matter is because there is a lot of violence and killing throughout the series not appropriate for younger readers, but in my opinion the action and violence make the books a lot more interesting. I would also recommend reading the other two books as well as the prequel to the series *The Maze Runner* before reading the final book.

-Alex T, Teen Reviewer



Blundell, Judy. *Strings Attached*. 2010. 310p.

Recommended for Grades 8-12

Historical Fiction

Strings Attached is the story of Kit Corrigan, a dancer from Rhode Island with big dreams and a small budget. She moves to New York, trying to make it big on Broadway, only to find herself sleeping on couches and eating apples for dinner. Everything changed when Nate Benedict, her boyfriend Billy's father, stops by. He offers her her own apartment, and a job lead for the most glamorous nightclub in New York City, in return for a few small favors – handing off a package, checking in on some buddies. Kit knows she's getting herself into trouble – Nate's a lawyer involved in the mob – but decides to take the offer anyway. Everything is alright for Kit until a man involved with the mob is murdered at Kit's nightclub. The murder sets off a chain of events that will change Kit's life forever.

In my opinion, this was not the greatest book. It was not a light read, which, personally, I prefer. However, Blundell's attention to detail could truly make any reader feel like they were transported back to 1950. Many of the characters were likable as well. I also thought the flashbacks were interesting, but it could get confusing sometimes. I liked the idea of the plot, and though I thought the beginning and middle were interesting, I did not like the end. It became confusing, and a little far-fetched – not to mention sad! I probably wouldn't recommend this book, just because the ending was so upsetting. All in all, I loved the author's style, but the ending did not make for a great read.

-Emma O.