



2026 Nutmeg Book Award Middle School Nominees Grades 7-8

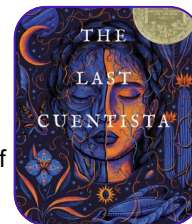


ALONE by Megan E. Freeman

After staying secretly in her grandparents' summer house overnight, Maddie awakens to discover the entire town has been evacuated. With only the neighbor's dog for company, Maddie must use all of her wits to fight for survival. Can she live long enough for someone to realize she is missing?

THE LAST CUENTISTA by Donna Barba Higuera

In 2061, twelve-year-old Petra and her family are on a journey to a new planet. When the passengers and crew undergo a mysterious transformation, Petra becomes sole guardian of Earth's memories and her grandmother's Mexican folklore. As the last cuentista, Petra maintains hope through the power of storytelling.

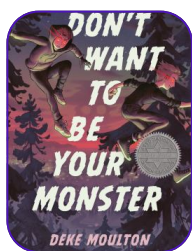
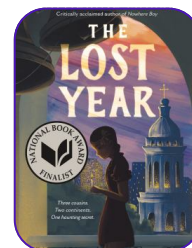


CONCEALED by Christina Diaz Gonzalez

On her x name in y years, "Katrina" is tired of being in the Witness Protection Program. She doesn't remember her past and has little hope for the future. When her family's location leaks and her parents disappear, "Katrina" vows to save her parents and discover her true identity.

THE LOST YEAR by Katherine Marsh

It's 2020, and thirteen-year-old Matthew is grappling with the COVID-19 lockdown. Stuck caring for his 100-year-old great-grandmother, GG, Matthew learns bits and pieces of GG's traumatic past in Ukraine's Holodomor, unraveling a story that changes his family's history.

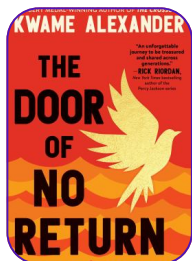


DON'T WANT TO BE YOUR MONSTER by Deke Moulton

When a series of murders strikes their small hometown, vampire siblings Adam and Victor must put aside their competing views of what it means to be a vampire in order to solve the mystery and protect their family.

SIMON SORT OF SAYS by Erin Bow

Most kids might not love the idea of moving to a place with no internet, cell phones, or even microwaves, but for Simon and his family the National Quiet Zone is just about perfect. When Simon and his friends pull a well-meaning prank, Simon's secret past is revealed.

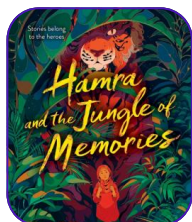


THE DOOR OF NO RETURN by Kwame Alexander

When a tragic event occurs during a wrestling match between rival villages, Kofi's life takes an unforeseen turn. The life he loved with family, friends, and his beloved river is snatched from him as he is forced into an unimaginable journey.

TEAM CHU AND THE BATTLE OF BLACKWOOD ARENA by Julie C. Dao

Super-competitive siblings, Sadie and Chip, have little in common except for their love of laser tag. When a new VR laser tag arena comes to town, they are each determined to win at any cost. But when they find a deadly glitch in the game, can they work together?



HAMRA AND THE JUNGLE OF MEMORIES by Hanna Alkaf

On her 13th birthday, Hamra ventures into the Langkawi jungle, where magic and adventure call to her. Defying the rules of the jungle, Hamra encounters a dark entity and must learn to harness her inner magic to confront it.

WHAT HAPPENED TO RACHEL RILEY? by Claire Swinarski

Once popular Rachel Riley has disappeared from social media and is now a social outcast, but why? New student Anna's relentless investigation reveals that there is more than one side to Rachel's story...but which side is telling the truth?

