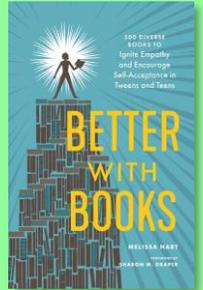


Contemporary Diverse Middle-Grade & Young Adult Novels to Celebrate Earth Day

from *Better with Books: 500 Diverse Books to Ignite Empathy and Encourage Self-Acceptance in Tweens and Teens* (Sasquatch, 2019), by Melissa Hart



Middle-Grade Novels

ENDLING # 1: THE LAST by Katherine Applegate (HarperCollins, 2018). Byx is the youngest of a pack of mythical doglike species hunted to near extinction. When her pack is killed, she goes in search of safety, meeting friends who join her adventures with their own motivations for seeking safety and survival.

FOREST WORLD by Margarita Engle (Atheneum Books, 2017). In this novel in verse, eleven-year-old Edver travels from the United States to meet his twelve-year-old sister, Luza, who lives in the Cuban jungle with their father. After the siblings post discovery of a new butterfly on the internet with the hope that their cryptozoologist mother will see it, a poacher threatens their finding.

THE SKELETON TREE by Iain Lawrence (Delacorte Press, 2016). Twelve-year-old Chris and his uncle take a sailing trip down the Alaska coast, but their boat sinks. Chris and a boy named Frank are the only survivors. The boys take an instant disliking to each other, but they realize they must work together to find food and shelter and help in the wilderness if they hope to survive.

AVENGING THE OWL by Melissa Hart (Sky Pony Press, 2016). Fourteen-year-old surfer Solo Hahn has to move with his family from Southern California to a trailer in Oregon after his father tries to commit suicide. When Solo accidentally injures a neighbor with Down syndrome, he must care for injured and orphaned birds of prey, and begins to develop a passion for the natural world.

Young Adult Novels

BALANCE OF FRAGILE THINGS by Olivia Chadha (AshlandCreek Press, 2012). High school student Vic Singh barely notices the strange new environmental oddities around his home in upstate New York because of bullying and parental pressures. Then his grandparents move in with his family, and three generations learn to survive in a world devastated by climate change.

THE FALL OF INNOCENCE by Jenny Torres Sanchez (Philomel Books, 2018). Crows in the forest around her help sixteen-year-old Emilia DeJesus survive after she's attacked behind her elementary school. But when new information comes to light about her attacker's identity, she finds herself struggling to overcome anxiety and depression again.

A SERIES OF SMALL MANEUVERS by Eliot Treichel (Ooligan, 2015). Fifteen-year-old Emma struggles at home and school. Her father, who has become distant, hopes to bond with her on a canoe trip. After Emma accidentally causes an incident that kills him, she's overcome by grief, but recovers thanks to a bond with her horse and the support of those who work on the river and her ranch.

BREATHE by Sarah Crossan (Greenwillow Books, 2012). Teens Bea and Quinn live in a world in which oxygen is rare and afforded mainly to the privileged, and they meet Alina, a girl who risks her life to plant trees and save the planet. When the government comes after Alina, she, Bea, and Quinn seek refuge in a rebel stronghold.