



**EMMA S. CLARK MEMORIAL LIBRARY
TEEN BOOK REVIEW PROGRAM
FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 & UP**



We are looking for teens in Grades 6 & up to read and review books from the most recent lists (published by the Young Adult Library Services Association, aka YALSA) of extraordinary books for teens. These reviews will be uploaded to [the Library's teen webpage](#) for the benefit of local teens' perusal.

Reviewers will **earn three hours of community service credit** for each book that they review.

Reviewers can review up to 12 books per calendar year, for a total of 36 hours of credit.

Instructions:

1. Fill out the Writing-Based Community Service Registration Form:
<https://forms.gle/EtXZ7cNK86V3tbYF9>
2. Consult YALSA's 2025 Best Fiction for Young Adults and YALSA's 2025 Award for Excellence in Nonfiction lists for titles to review. The lists are attached to this packet. All books on the YALSA Lists are available as physical books at the library. Most are also available online through our free ebook/audiobook services, Libby/Libby (Libby is the newer form of the Libby app) and Hoopla. *Please note that the books on the YALSA list vary in maturity level, and may not all be appropriate for younger teens.*
3. After reading the Teen Review Formatting Guidelines, complete your review in a Word document or Google document and email it as an attachment to the Teen Services Librarian, Emily Ostrander, at teens@emmaclark.org. Be sure to include your full name in each email so we can send you your community service credit in a timely manner. Please save a copy of each review for your records. **All reviews must be a minimum of one page long, single-spaced, in 12pt Times New Roman font, and follow all the Teen Review Formatting Guidelines.** If the review is accepted, your certificate for three hours of community service credit will be emailed to you shortly after we receive the review, and your review will be uploaded to [the teen webpage](#).

Reviewers can receive 3 hours of community service credit for each accepted review, and may submit as many as 12 reviews a year. The most hours of credit a teen can earn participating in the Teen Book Review program is 36 hours. We reserve the right to reject and/or request revising of any review that does not meet these requirements. Please check with your organization(s) that participation in this program meets their community service requirements. Please direct any questions to Emily Ostrander at (631) 941-4080, or teens@emmaclark.org



In order to receive community service credit, you must follow these review guidelines.

Reviews must be of books from the YALSA lists attached to this form.

Reviews that do not meet the guidelines will be rejected and/or sent back for revision.

1. In a Word Document, using 12pt Times New Roman font, single-spaced, begin the review with a header containing the following pieces of information:
Title:
Author:
Genre:
Reviewer Name and Grade:
Date Reviewed:
2. In a new paragraph, or paragraphs, briefly summarize the book.
 - If the book is **fiction**, include the plot, setting, time period, main events, names and personalities of the main characters, and any other information that was important to the story.
 - If the book is **nonfiction**, include the type of information covered, how information is presented, if there is an index, appendixes, definition of terms, or cited sources, if it is successful in teaching the reader about the topic, and any other information that was important to the presentation of information in this book.

This section must be at least 300 words long, but also *should not exceed one page, single-spaced.*
3. In a new paragraph, answer the following questions:
Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for nonfiction) keep you interested?
Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?
What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?
What type of reader would you recommend this book to?
What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?
Please *italicize* the questions, and then answer them in a new line (like a new paragraph but not indented) using at least one full sentence. Cite specific examples from the book, as needed, to back-up your answers.
4. In a new paragraph, please rate the book. The rating system is as follows:
5 stars: I'm really glad I read this book; it was awesome!
4 stars: I enjoyed this book and found it worthwhile reading.
3 stars: It was okay; I had hoped for better.
2 stars: I did not like this book but somebody else might.
1 star: I would not recommend this book.
Please *italicize* the rating, then explain the reason for your rating in a new line. Using full sentences, cite specific examples of what was really good, just okay, or bad about the book.

At this point the review should be at least one page long, single spaced. If it is not, please revisit the review and see where you can dig deeper!

5. Once you are satisfied with the review, email the completed review as an attached Word or Google document to Emily Ostrander at teens@emmaclark.org. Please include your **full name** in the body of the email, so that we can send the community service credit to you in a timely manner. Please save a copy of the review for your records.

Thank you and happy reviewing!

A Quick Note on eFormats:

If you prefer to read on a device rather than print books, eFormats are a great option! Libby and Hoopla are eBook and Audiobook platforms available through the library. Libby has an app, which you can download and read or listen to books, if you prefer to use your phone or tablet instead the computer. Hoopla does not have an app, BUT unlike Libby where you might have to wait for a book (we purchase a limited number of licenses to the book, similarly to how we purchase a limited number of print copies), Hoopla's titles are always available! Most of the titles on this list are available on one or both of these platforms. If you need help navigating either platform, ask a librarian, we're happy to help!

YALSA's 2025 Best Fiction for Young Adults

About this List: The Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA) Best Fiction for Young Adults list is comprised of fiction titles published for young adults in the past 14 months that are recommended reading for ages 12 to 18. "Best" is defined as: "Of the highest quality, excellence, or standing." As applied to teen fiction, this definition means that only the most outstanding, interesting, and valuable teen titles (according to YALSA) are found on this list.

Title and Author

Book Call Number

All the Fighting Parts by Hannah V. Sawyerr

YA SAWYE

Sixteen-year-old Amina Conteh clashes with her religious father in many ways, and is forced to spend more time at their church because of her rebelliousness. When she is assaulted by a church leader, Amina uses poetry to find her voice and seek justice for what happened to her.

Another First Chance by Robbie Couch

YA COUCH

A year after his friend Dylan's death in a texting-and-driving accident, River Lang vandalizes a billboard honoring Dylan and is blackmailed into joining the Affinity Trials, a study for socially struggling teens. There, he reconnects with Mavis, Dylan's ex, and meets charming Nash, while uncovering unsettling secrets about the trials.

Artifice by Sharon Cameron

YA CAMER

In Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, Isa de Smit forges priceless art to fund the resistance and save her family's gallery. This intricately plotted thriller delivers high stakes, moral complexity, and suspense as Isa risks everything for survival, loyalty, and the chance to fight back.

Bad Graces by Kyrie McCauley

YA MCCAU

Twins Violet (Liv) and Everly are opposites. Liv, struggling with her past, steals Everly's identity and lands a movie set internship, but a storm strands her and the crew on an island, facing harsh elements and a mysterious monster.

The Blood Years by Elana K. Arnold

YA ARNOL

In war-torn Czernowitz, young Rieke Teitler navigates the dangers of antisemitism and the horrors of World War II. Based on the experiences of Elana K. Arnold's grandmother.

The Breakup Lists by Adib Khorram

YA KHORR

Jackson keeps "breakup lists" about the worst features of former romantic partners for himself and his sister Jasmine until Liam, the seemingly straight swim captain, catches the attention of both siblings. Jackson insists he's uninterested—until Jasmine asks for a breakup list with Liam's name, and Jackson struggles to complete it.

Breathing Underwater by Abbey Lee Nash

YA NASH

Seventeen-year-old Tess has been carefully balancing her grades and the swim team until a sudden epilepsy diagnosis upends it all. She's desperate to hold onto her swim career, but it seems like everyone is standing in her way: her parents, her doctors, and even the cute boy next door.

Bright Red Fruit by Safia Elhillo

YA ELHIL

When sixteen-year-old Samira's overprotective Sudanese immigrant mother grounds her for the umpteenth time, she takes refuge in an online poetry community. There she meets Horus, an older poet. When she ignores her friends' warnings about him, there's more at risk than her reputation, risks her mom didn't prepare her for.

The Color of a Lie by Kim Johnson

YA JOHNS

Calvin's careful work of passing as white in the suburban Chicago enclave his parents have moved to comes undone as he is confronted by his feelings for Lily and the awareness that his employer is redlining other black families.

Conditions of a Heart by Bethany Mangle

YA MANGL

Brynn Kwan had it all until a fight at school stripped her of her senior year activities and left her with a week-long suspension with nothing but time to focus on the chronic pain she has struggled to keep secret.

The Dark Parts of the Universe by Samuel Miller

YA MILLE

When Willie and his friends start exploring the possibly prophetic Manifest Atlas app, the last thing they expect is to find a dead body. The deeper the group delves into the app's inner workings, the more they uncover their small town's racist history.

Dead Things Are Closer Than They Appear by Robin Wasley

YA WASLE

Sid has never worried much about living on a fault line, one of the sites where the world's magic was sealed away because of its dangerous potential. But everything falls apart when someone opens the fault line, bringing magic back to the town along with zombie-like creatures and apocalyptic circumstances.

Dragonfruit by Makiia Lucier

YA LUCIE

As a child, Hanalei and the princess of Tamarind were poisoned. Hanalei's father stole a rare dragon egg intended to resurrect the princess and fed it to Hanalei, forcing them into exile. Now years later, Hanalei has a chance to find a new dragon egg and right the past.

Eighteen Roses by Shannon C.F. Rogers

YA ROGER

Almost eighteen, Lucia "Luz" Cruz faces a Filipino debut tradition needing eighteen friends but having only one: Esmé. With their friendship strained, her mom planning a surprise debut, and their favorite theater closing, Luz joins a comedy club to save both her friendship and the theater.

Gather by Kenneth M. Cadow

YA CADOW

Ian's dog, Gather, shows up at a time when Ian needs the companionship most. The name Ian gives his dog honors the members of the community who gather to support him after his mother dies of an overdose.

Grief in the Fourth Dimension by Jennifer Yu

YA YU

High schoolers Kenny Zhao and Caroline Davison are dead and trapped together in a mysterious alternate dimension where they watch their loved ones on a TV screen. Can they find a way to help their friends and family from the other side ... or is it already too late?

The Glass Girl by Kathleen Glasgow

YA GLASW

Bella's near-death experience with alcohol poisoning leads to a month-long stint at Sonoran Sunrise where she learns new ways of coping with her dysfunctional family and the grief of losing a dearly loved grandmother.

The Great Cool Ranch Dorito in the Sky by Josh Galarza

YA GALAR

Mexican-American comic artist Brett knows that drinking and binge eating are bad strategies for coping with his adopted mom's impending death, but what else is there? When someone posts his therapy journal online, will he accept a fat classmate's help or will he only spiral harder?

Gwen and Art are Not in Love by Lex Croucher

YA CROUC

Gwen and Arthur are set up for a marriage that will cement the alliance between their families, except for two problems. One: they hate each other. Two: they're both gay.

I Loved You in Another Life by David Arnold

YA ARNOL

Evan Taft and Shosh Bell are drawn together by mysterious songs that only they can hear. They find solace in each other and their collective heartbreak and sadness. Across decades, centuries, locations, and the song, they continually find each other.

The Invocations by Krystal Sutherland

YA SUTHE

Zara Jones believes in magic because the alternative is too painful to consider--that her murdered sister is gone forever and there is nothing she can do about it. Jude Wolf may be the daughter of a billionaire, but she is also undeniably cursed. Emer Byrne, an orphaned witch with a dark past and a deadly power, a.k.a. the solution to both Zara's and Jude's problems.

The Judgment of Yoyo Gold by Isaac Blum

YA BLUM

Yochaved (Yoyo) Gold, the Rabbi's daughter in Colwyn, Pennsylvania, questions her community's hypocrisy after her best friend Esti is sent away, leading Yoyo to explore TikTok, post viral videos, and ultimately confront the complexities of honoring her faith, family, and true self.

Just Say Yes by Goldy Moldavsky

YA MOLDA

Jimena Ramos is dreaming of college in LA with her best friend. Her plans come to an abrupt halt when she learns she is an undocumented immigrant. To save her future in the country she considers home, Jimena embarks on a mission to find her ticket to citizenship--a husband.

Libertad by Bessie Flores Zaldivar

TEEN ZALDI

Libertad Morazán creates an anonymous Instagram profile to share her political poetry about the 2017 Honduran presidential election, while trying to reconcile her feelings for her best friend, Cami, and her new girlfriend, Dani. After tragedy strikes her family, Libertad has to decide the best course of action for her future.

Looking for Smoke by K.A. Cobell

YA COBEL

When a Blackfeet girl is found murdered during a giveaway honoring a missing teen girl, four teens with complicated pasts find themselves named suspects. They have to work together to clear their names. But as time goes on, it looks increasingly likely that one of the four is the murderer.

The Maid and the Crocodile by Jordan Ifueko

YA IFUEK

Sade, a disabled curse-eater, tries to find work as a maid where she can clean the spirit silt that weighs down the wealthy. However, she inadvertently becomes bonded with a dangerous god known as the Crocodile who might just kill her.

The Meadows by Stephanie Oakes

YA OAKES

Eleanor dreams of being one of society's best and brightest, but quickly learns that to survive in her dystopian society, she'll have to cut out parts of herself. Eleanor must decide what's more important, being true to herself and who she loves or conforming to survive.

The Merciless King of Moore High by Lily Sparks

TEEN SPARK

Exiled from her school and left to fend for herself against the monsters outside, Kay seeks shelter with the rival school, Moore High, and its king. However, she soon discovers a deadly secret that could destroy both schools.

The No-Girlfriend Rule by Christen Randall

YA RANDA

Hollis has always wanted to play Secrets and Sorcery, but her boyfriend and his friends hold strictly to their 'no-girlfriend rule.' So Hollis finds her own S&S group, joining an all-girl, queer-friendly game.

Not About a Boy by Myah Hollis

YA HOLLI

Seventeen-year-old Amélie Cœur navigates grief, mental health challenges, and the complexities of foster care while trying to rebuild her life.

Now, Conjurers by Freddie Kölsch

YA KOLSC

Nesbit Nunez and his friends make up the North Coven, a group of witches using their power to change the lives of their loved ones for the better, led by Nesbit's boyfriend Bastion. When Bastion is brutally murdered, Nesbit and his friends vow to find out who did it.

Old Wounds by Logan-Ashley Kisner

YA KISNE

Erin and Max, two transgender teens, are stranded in a small Kentucky town where a monster demands a female sacrifice. As they face transphobic locals and fight for survival, they must confront their past and the horrifying reality of the woods.

A Place for Vanishing by Ann Fraistat

YA FRAIS

Libby is feeling fragile from her recent suicide attempt when she moves with her mom and sister to a Victorian mansion with macabre stained glass windows and odd bug-shaped masks. The house has been the source of several disappearances over decades, and before long, Libby begins to uncover its sinister intentions.

Queerceañera by Alex Crespo

YA CRESP

Joaquin is out and proud. When his family decides to throw him a queerceañera, a queer coming out/coming of age party, Joaquin has to find a chambelán to escort him. Things get complicated when real feelings for his fake date surface amid Joaquin's mother's reluctance to publicly support her son.

The Reappearance of Rachel Price by Holly Jackson

YA JACKS

When Bel Price's mother, Rachel, suddenly reappears after being missing for sixteen years, Bel is sure that Rachel is lying about where she's been and is determined to uncover the truth about her mother's sudden reappearance.

Red by Annie Cardi

YA CARDI

When church-going, Tess has a personal secret go public, she faces ostracism from her classmates, grandparents and faith community. Fortunately, she meets three new friends, who provide her with the love and support she needs to heal and break the community's cycle of abuse.

Remember Us by Jacqueline Woodson

TEEN WOODS

Twelve-year-old Sage faces a summer of turmoil as mysterious fires ravage her Bushwick neighborhood. Struggling with shifting friendships and personal loss, she finds solace in her bond with Freddy, helping her navigate grief and resilience while discovering the transformative power of memory and community.

Rez Ball by Byron Graves

YA GRAVES

Tre Brun is trying to prove he's a great basketball player, but it's hard when everyone compares him to his older brother Jaxon who died in a car accident. Jaxon nearly took Red Lake Reservation High School state. Now Tre is ready to take his team to state. . .and win.

Running Past Dark by Han Nolan

YA NOLAN

Scottie wants answers about her sister's death. Why was Cait in the car with the town hero, Coach Jory? Was Cait lying when she accused the popular coach of rape? As she returns to the hostile environment of school, Scottie finds healing through Hellgate--an Ultra Runner's nightmare.

Shut Up, This is Serious by Carolina Ixta

YA IXTA

Belén navigates her senior year while grappling with an absent father, academic challenges, and racial prejudices. Faced with her friend Leti's pregnancy, Belén seeks solace in temporary distractions, questioning her own future in this powerful debut that explores friendship, chosen family, and breaking generational cycles.

Sky's End by Marc Gregson

YA GREGS

Conrad and his airship crew must kill and harvest the most deadly gargantauns if he wants to win the gauntlet and save his sister from their murderous uncle.

Snow Globe by Soyoung Park

YA PARK

In a world plunged into eternal winter, only a chosen few get to live in the artificial climate of Snowglobe. Chobahm's dream is to be a director in Snowglobe, creating reality TV for those outside, but she's given a different chance. She's asked to replace everyone's favorite star.

The Space Between Here & Now by Sarah Suk

YA SUK

Aimee's mysterious condition causes her to time travel into her own memories. Her Korean immigrant parents offer little support, her dad withdrawn and her mother missing without a trace. When Aimee's condition worsens, the only way to reclaim both her past and present is to return to Korea for answers.

Strong Like You by T. L. Simpson

TEEN SIMPS

Football teammates and cousins, Walker and Sawyer, have a lot of reasons to be angry. When their fathers go missing, the boys vow to stay strong, just like their dads taught them to be. But as time passes, the new football coach shows them a different way to be strong.

A Tempest of Tea by Hafsah Faizal

YA FAIZA

Criminal mastermind and tearoom/illegal vampire speakeasy proprietor, Arthie Casimir, forges a band of unlikely partners to bring down the corrupt monarchy threatening her tearoom's existence. But when their inner circle is betrayed, Casimir and her friends find themselves fighting for more than just the tearoom. A captivating tale of vampires, found family and political intrigue.

That's Not My Name by Megan Lally

TEEN LALLY

Mary is trying to figure out who she is and why her "father" has forgotten critical details about her health. Drew is the main suspect in the disappearance of his girlfriend. His search for Lola leads him to Mary and some unexpected answers.

These Bodies Between Us by Sarah Vanna

YA VANNA

Callie is looking forward to a typical summer with her friends Cleo, Talia, and Polly, but her plans are quickly turned upside down. Cleo has found forums about girls turning themselves invisible, and she wants them all to try it. Callie's skepticism turns into amazement when they actually do it.

These Deadly Prophecies by Andrea Tang

YA TANG

Tabatha Zeng finds herself drawn into the mystery behind the grisly death of her mentor, Julian Solomon. He bequeaths his entire sorcerer's legacy to her, but extracts a promise that she will stick close to his youngest son. Together, they attempt to identify who--or what--killed Julian Solmon.

Thieves' Gambit by Kayvion Lewis

YA LEWIS

Rosalyn Quest, a Black seventeen-year-old, is a master thief put into a desperate situation when her mother is captured and held for an unpayable ransom. The only way to save her is to participate in the dangerous Thieves' Gambit competition and win at any cost.

Thirsty by Jas Hammonds

YA HAMMO

As a biracial girl from a poor background, Blake Brenner has just wanted to feel seen. Now four years into a relationship with her beautiful and rich girlfriend who enables her drinking problem, Blake must navigate the summer before college and pledging a secret sorority for women of color.

This Day Changes Everything by Edward Underhill

YA UNDER

Abby Akerman, from small town Missouri, plans to confess her love to best friend Kat at Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Meanwhile, Leo Brewer, a trans boy from North Carolina, dreads being outed on live TV. They meet by chance in NYC, embarking on a journey that could change everything.

Twenty-Four Seconds from Now...A Love Story by Jason Reynolds

YA REYNO

Neon is just twenty-four seconds away from losing his virginity to Aria, but nerves are getting the best of him. Told in reverse, the story unravels the moments that brought Neon to this moment, highlighting the relationship advice he receives from significant figures in his life.

Unbecoming by Seema Yasmin

TEEN YASMI

In an alternate Texas where abortions are illegal, best friends Laylah and Noor work together to publish a teen guide to safe abortions.

Under This Red Rock by Mindy McGinnis

YA MCGIN

Neely, still reeling from her brother's suicide, has been secretly living with schizophrenia. She finds comfort and stability working as a guide in the caverns--until her coworker and crush Mila is found brutally murdered and Neely begins to worry she's the one responsible.

We're Never Getting Home by Tracy Badua

YA BADUA

College-bound Filipina Jana Rubio accidentally ends up at a music festival with the one person she wants to see least: her former best friend. Things go from bad to worse when their ride loses his keys, and she's already late getting home.

What the River Knows by Isabel Ibanez

YA IBANE

Society teen Inez will stop at nothing to find out why her archeologist parents died in the Egyptian desert, even if it means disobeying her guardian Uncle and his stubbornly attractive assistant, Whit.

Where He Can't Find You by Darcy Coates

TEEN COATE

The Stitcher has terrorized the residents of Doubtful for as long as anyone can remember, dismembering and reassembling his victims. When Abby's sister is kidnapped, she and her friends will risk their lives to discover the truth of their local serial killer.

The Worst Perfect Moment by Shivaun Plozza

YA PLOZZ

Tegan Masters is dead and for some reason is stuck forever in the hotel that represents the worst weekend of her life. Zelda, the angel who engineered Tegan's heaven, must convince her this is actually her happy memory or else she will be sent to purgatory for a thousand years.

YALSA's 2025 Award for Excellence in Nonfiction

About the Award:

YALSA's Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18) during the November 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024 publishing year. Five titles are deemed the finalists, and only one wins the award. The award is bestowed on the title that (according to YALSA), best honors a work for subject, treatment, and accessibility to young adults.

2025 Winner

Rising from the Ashes: Los Angeles, 1992. Edward Jae Song Lee, Latasha Harlins, Rodney King, and a City on Fire by Paula Yoo YA 305.8009 YOO

Paula Yoo astutely tackles the events surrounding the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion through the personal stories of Latasha Harlins, Rodney King and Edward Jae Song Lee. Nuanced, balanced and empathetic, these accounts craft a compelling and unforgettable read about race, injustice and hope.

2025 Finalists

Shackled: A Tale of Wronged Kids, Rogue Judges, and a Town that Looked Away by Candy J. Cooper TEEN GN PARIS
YA 364.134 COOPE

Here is the explosive story of the Kids for Cash scandal in Pennsylvania, a judicial justice miscarriage that sent more than 2,500 children and teens to a for-profit detention center while two judges lined their pockets with cash, as told by Candy J. Cooper, an award-winning journalist and Pulitzer Prize finalist.

Homebody by Theo Parish TEEN GN PARIS

In their comics debut, Theo Parish masterfully weaves an intimate and defiantly hopeful memoir about the journey one nonbinary person takes to find a home within themselves. Combining traditional comics with organic journal-like interludes, Theo takes us through their experiences with the hundred arbitrary and unspoken gender binary rules of high school, from harrowing haircuts and finally the right haircut to the intersection of gender identity and sexuality—and through tiny everyday moments that all led up to Theo finding the term "nonbinary," which finally struck a chord.

A Greater Goal: The Epic Battle for Equal Pay in Women's Soccer-and Beyond by Elizabeth Rusch YA 796.334 RUSCH

With the passage of Title IX in 1972, the doors opened for young women to play sports at a higher level. But for the women on the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, being able to compete at an international level didn't mean fair treatment and fair compensation. From economy-class airplane seats and inadequate lodging to minimal marketing and slashed wages, the women representing the United States at the Olympics, the World Cup, and other tournaments had reason to be fed up. They were expected to—and did—win, but they weren't compensated for their talent and dedication. With the help of their union and in collaboration with the men's team, they secured an equitable contract in 2022 that ultimately benefited both national teams as well as athletes of the future.

The Unboxing of a Black Girl by Angela Shanté YA 818.6 SHANT

National Book Award Finalist Written as a collection of vignettes and poetry, *The Unboxing of a Black Girl* is a creative nonfiction reflection on Black girlhood. The debut YA title, by award-winning author Angela Shanté, is a love letter to Black girls set in New York City and serves as a personal and political critique of how the world raises Black girls. As Shanté navigates the city through memory, she balances poetry with vignettes that explore the innocence and joy of childhood eroded by adultification. Through this book, she illuminates the places where Black girls are nurtured or exploited in stories and poems about personal and political boxes, love, loss, and sexual assault. Many entries are also studded with cultural footnotes designed to further understanding