



Rhode Island Middle School Book Award 2027 Nominees

*Please remember not all books
are suitable for all readers*

***All the Blues in the Sky* by Renee Watson**

A novel-in-verse about 13-year-old girl Sage who is grieving the sudden death of her best friend. Sage struggles with guilt, loneliness, and the fear of moving forward, and finding ways to carry love and memories while continuing to live her life. **Realistic Fiction. (Novel in Verse)**

***Blood in the Water* by Tiffany Jackson**

This summer there's blood in the water. Is the shocking death a drowning or a shark attack? Kaylani is determined to find the answer. **Mystery.**

***Boy 2.0* by Tracy Baptiste**

Win "Coal" Keegan is a boy who discovers he has mysterious technological abilities after surviving a dangerous explosion. He may be part human and part machine, making him the target of powerful people who want to control him. With help from friends and his own courage, Win must figure out his identity and decide what kind of future he wants. **Science Fiction.**

***Bye Forever I Guess* by Jodi Meadows**

When a wrong-number text sparks a mysterious new friendship (and maybe more!), Ingrid is forced to decide if she's brave enough to let her real self be seen. Funny, heartfelt, and full of fandom and first crushes, this is a story about finding where you truly belong. **Realistic Fiction.**

***Camp Prodigy* by Caroline Palmer**

What if one summer totally changed your life? In this vibrant, manga-inspired graphic novel, a cast of diverse campers blend music, identity, and friendship during one transformative summer. **Realistic Fiction. (Graphic Novel)**

***Find Her* by Ginger Reno**

Will Wren ever find her mom? Find out in this gripping mystery about determination, friendship, and the search for truth. **Realistic Fiction.**

***Gloom* by Jack Mackay**

13 year old Gwen must defend her family's home from a babysitter with a "monstrous" secret! **Horror.**

***How to Talk to Your Succulent* by Zoe Persico**

Adara forms an unexpected bond with a prickly little plant as she struggles to find her voice in a world that feels overwhelming. As her friendship with the succulent grows, she begins to untangle her fears and discover new ways to connect—with others and with herself. This charming story is about growth - in many forms. **Fantasy. (Graphic Novel)**

***The Ink Witch* by Steph Cherrywell**

Becca Slugg has always felt out of place until she discovers a hidden world where words hold magic—and stories can come alive! **Fantasy.**

***Mystery James Digs Her Own Grave* by Ally Russell**

Mystery James was abandoned in a cemetery and raised in a funeral home, so she is used to ghosts. But her already strange world is turned upside down when a priceless heirloom goes missing—and her aunt is accused of the crime. **Horror.**

***Neshama* by Marcella Pixley**

Anna carries a secret—she can sense spirits lingering between worlds, and they're drawn to her in ways she doesn't fully understand. When she encounters a restless ghost with a painful past, Anna must confront her own fears and her connection to something deeper and ancient. Haunting, lyrical, and deeply emotional, it's a story about identity, grief, and the power of listening to unseen voices. **Horror**

***Popcorn* by Rob Harrell**

Seventh-grader Andrew just wants to survive picture day—but everything that can go wrong does, sending his anxiety spiraling out of control. As pressures pile up at school and at home, he fears he might "pop," like a kernel under too much heat. This book captures what it feels like to struggle—and find strength—on your hardest day. **Realistic Fiction.**

***Rabbit Rabbit* by Dori Hillestad Butler & Sunshine Bacon**

When 12-year-old cousins Alice and Bee meet for the first time at their grandparents' anniversary party, they quickly become close friends. But when a conflict between their mothers divides the family, the girls team up to uncover a long-hidden secret. Told through alternating perspectives and text messages, the story highlights the importance of empathy and understanding—even toward those who seem very different from us. **Realistic Fiction**

***The Right Call* by Tommy Greenwald**

Cal is a gifted young pitcher who faces the challenges in front of him to succeed both on the baseball field and in life. **Realistic Fiction.**

***The Trouble with Heroes* by Kate Messner**

7th grader Finn gets caught vandalizing a cemetery so he's given an unusual chance to make things right: spend the summer climbing all 46 Adirondack High Peaks with a slobbery dog as his companion. As Finn struggles up these mountains, will he find a path toward healing, courage, and finding his own kind of heroism? **Realistic Fiction.**

***Ultraviolet* by Aida Salazar**

Eighth grade is overwhelming for Elios Solis. His emotions feel out of control, his father pressures him to "man up," and he struggles to navigate his first relationship. When heartbreak hits, Elios must confront his anger before it destroys the person he wants to be. **Realistic Fiction. (Novel in Verse)**

***The Undead Fox of Deadwood Forest* by Aubrey Hartman**

Clare, a silver-tailed fox, was run over as a kit six years ago. But rather than go on to the Afterlife, he has stayed behind in a small cottage in Deadwood Forest where he guides the souls of animals to their final resting place. When a lively badger spirit arrives and he fails to guide her on to another realm, he realizes his time as an Usher may be coming to an end. **Fantasy.**

***Uprooted: a memoir about what happens when your family moves back* by Ruth Chan**

Ruth's life is turned upside down when she moves to a new place and feels completely out of sync with everything around her. As she navigates unfamiliar surroundings, shifting friendships, and her own emotions, she begins to discover that growth often comes from the hardest changes. **Realistic Fiction. (Graphic Novel)**

***What is Color?* By Steven Weinberg**

Go on a vivid journey into the science, art, and magic of color. From how our eyes and brains perceive it to the ways colors shape culture and creativity, the book makes complex concepts accessible and fascinating - a captivating exploration that makes you see the world in a whole new light. **Nonfiction.**

***Will's Race For Home* by Jewell Parker Rhodes**

Will faces the challenges of life during a pivotal moment in the historic 1889 Oklahoma Land Rush balancing family responsibilities with his own dreams. When a big opportunity comes his way, he must summon courage, resilience, and quick thinking to find his path. **Historical Fiction.**

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