The Best Bad Luck I Ever Had
By Kristen Levine
266 pages
In Moundville, Alabama, in 1917, twelve-year-old Dit hopes the new postmaster will have a son his age, but instead he meets Emma, who is black, and their friendship challenges accepted ways of thinking and leads them to save the life of a condemned man.

Breaking Stalin's Nose
By Eugene Yelchin
160 pages
In the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union, ten-year-old Sasha idolizes his father, a devoted Communist, but when police take his father away and leave Sasha homeless, he is forced to examine his own perceptions, values, and beliefs.

Bud, Not Buddy
By Christopher Paul Curtis
245 pages
Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father--the renowned bandleader, H.E. Calloway of Grand Rapids.

Collision Course
By Gordon Korman
166 pages
Within the luxury of the cabins and the dark underbelly of the Titanic, mysteries unfold--a secret killer who may be on board, a legacy that may be jeopardized, and a vital truth that will soon be revealed.

Dead End in Norvelt
By Jack Gantos
341 pages
In the historic town of Norvelt, Pennsylvania, twelve-year-old Jack Gantos spends the summer of 1962 grounded for various offenses until he is assigned to help an elderly neighbor with a most unusual chore involving the newly dead, molten wax, twisted promises, Girl Scout cookies, underage driving, lessons from history, typewriting, and countless bloody noses.

A Diamond in the Desert
By Kathryn Fitzmaurice
258 pages
After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, thirteen-year-old Tetsu and his family are sent to the Gila River Relocation Center in Arizona where a fellow prisoner starts a baseball team, but when Tetsu's sister becomes ill and he feels responsible, he stops playing.

The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate
By Jacqueline Kelly
340 pages
In central Texas in 1899, eleven-year-old Callie Vee Tate is instructed to be a lady by her mother, learns about love from the older three of her six brothers, and studies the natural world with her grandfather, the latter of which leads to an important discovery.

The Great Brain
By John D. Fitzgerald
175 pages
The exploits of the Great Brain of Adenville, Utah, are described by his younger brother, frequently the victim of the Great Brain's schemes for gaining prestige or money.

Island of the Blue Dolphins
By Scott O'Dell
177 pages
Left alone on a beautiful but isolated island off the coast of California, a young Indian girl spends eighteen years, not only merely surviving through her enormous courage and self-reliance, but also finding a measure of happiness in her solitary life.

I Survived the Attacks of September 11, 2001
By Lauren Tarshis
82 pages
One morning, Lucas takes the train to the city instead of the bus to school. It's a bright, beautiful day in New York. But just as Lucas arrives at his uncle's firehouse, everything changes -- and nothing will ever be the same again.
Ninth Ward
By Jewell Parker Rhodes
217 pages
In New Orleans’ Ninth Ward, twelve-year-old Laneshia, who can see spirits, and her adopted grandmother have no choice but to stay and weather the storm as Hurricane Katrina bears down upon them.

Number the Stars
By Lois Lowry
137 pages
In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

Salt
By Helen Frost
138 pages
Twelve-year-olds Anikwa, of the Miami village of Kekionga, and James, of the trading post outside Fort Wayne, find their friendship threatened by the rising fear and tension brought by the War of 1812.

Seven Stories Up
By Laurel Snyder
229 pages
In 1987, while her mother sits in a Baltimore hotel at the deathbed of a grandmother twelve-year-old Annie never knew, Annie travels back fifty years and shares adventures with the lonely girl who will grow up to be her feisty grandmother.

Will Sparrow’s Road
By Karen Cushman
216 pages
In 1599 England, twelve-year-old lying, thieving Will Sparrow runs away, meets many colorful characters on the road, and then reluctantly joins a traveling "oddities" exhibit, where he learns to see beyond appearances.

Woods Runner
By Gary Paulsen
164 pages
From his 1776 Pennsylvania homestead, thirteen-year-old Samuel, who is a highly-skilled woodsman, sets out toward New York City to rescue his parents from the band of British soldiers and Indians who kidnapped them after slaughtering most of their community.

Yellow Star
By Jennifer Roy
227 pages
From 1939 to 1945, a Jewish girl and her family struggle to survive in Poland’s Lodz ghetto during the Nazi occupation.