



# 6-8 OBOD Books 2023-2024

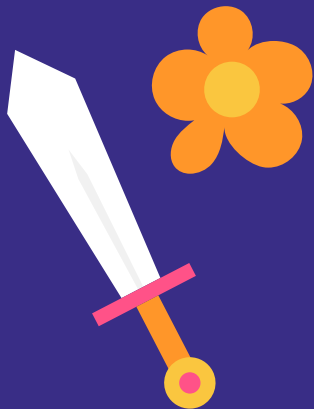
# What is **OBOB**?

**OBOB** stands for **Oregon Battle of the Books!**

- ★ The Battle of the Books is a friendly reading competition. You will get into teams of 4-5 students and read a list of 16 books. You do **NOT** have to read all 16 unless you want to! I suggest reading about 4 or 5 of the books. To battle, your team will compete against one other team answering questions about the books from the list.



# The Books!!



# Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna **Alda** **P. Dobbs**



It is 1913, and twelve-year-old Petra Luna's mama has died while the Revolution rages in Mexico. Before her papa is dragged away by soldiers, Petra vows to him that she will care for the family she has left—her abuelita, little sister Amelia, and baby brother Luisito—until they can be reunited. They flee north through the unforgiving desert as their town burns, searching for safe harbor in a world that offers none.

Each night when Petra closes her eyes, she holds her dreams close, especially her long-held desire to learn to read. Abuelita calls these barefoot dreams: "They're like us barefoot peasants and indios—they're not meant to go far." But Petra refuses to listen. Through battlefields and deserts, hunger and fear, Petra will stop at nothing to keep her family safe and lead them to a better life across the U.S. border—a life where her barefoot dreams could finally become reality.



Some people can do their homework. Some people get to have crushes on boys. Some people have other things they've got to do.

Seventh-grader Zoey has her hands full as she takes care of her much younger siblings after school every day while her mom works her shift at the pizza parlor. Not that her mom seems to appreciate it. At least there's Lenny, her mom's boyfriend—they all get to live in his nice, clean trailer.

At school, Zoey tries to stay under the radar. Her only friend Fuchsia has her own issues, and since they're in an entirely different world than the rich kids, it's best if no one notices them.

Zoey thinks how much easier everything would be if she were an octopus: eight arms to do eight things at once. Incredible camouflage ability and steady, unblinking vision. Powerful protective defenses.

Unfortunately, she's not totally invisible, and one of her teachers forces her to join the debate club. Even though Zoey resists participating, debate ultimately leads her to see things in a new way: her mom's relationship with Lenny, Fuchsia's situation, and her own place in this town of people who think they're better than her. Can Zoey find the courage to speak up, even if it means risking the most stable home she's ever had?

# *The Benefits of Being an Octopus* by Ann Braden

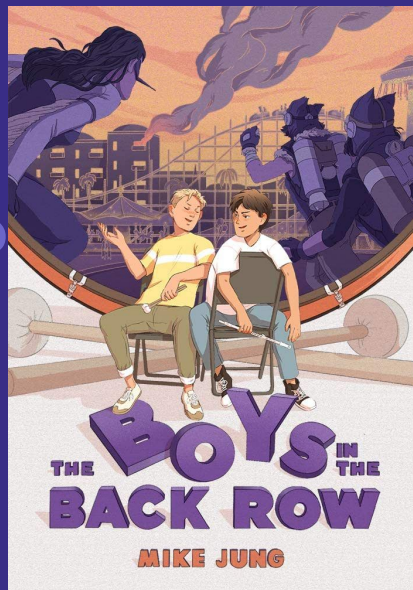


# *The Blackbird Girls* by Anne Blankman

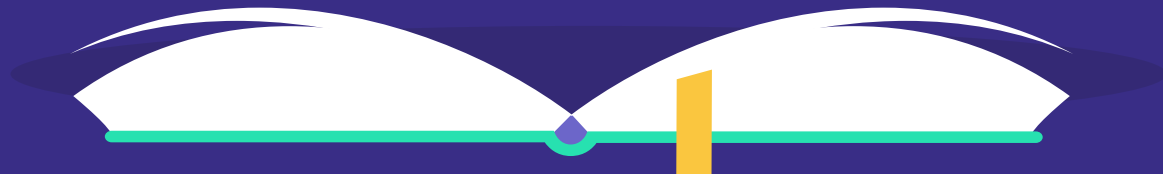
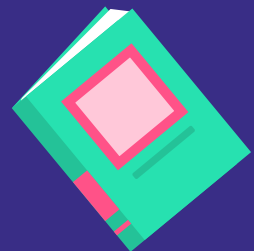
On a spring morning, neighbors Valentina Kaplan and Oksana Savchenko wake up to an angry red sky. A reactor at the nuclear power plant where their fathers work--Chernobyl--has exploded. Before they know it, the two girls, who've always been enemies, find themselves on a train bound for Leningrad to stay with Valentina's estranged grandmother, Rita Grigorievna. In their new lives in Leningrad, they begin to learn what it means to trust another person. Oksana must face the lies her parents told her all her life. Valentina must keep her grandmother's secret, one that could put all their lives in danger. And both of them discover something they've wished for: a best friend. But how far would you go to save your best friend's life? Would you risk your own?



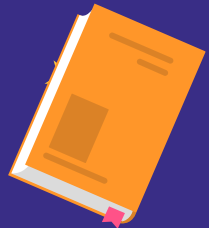
# *The Boys in the Back Row* by Mike Jung



Best friends Matt and Eric are hatching a plan for one big final adventure together before Eric moves away: during the marching band competition at a Giant Amusement Park, they will sneak away to a nearby comics convention and meet their idol—a famous comic creator. Without cell phones. Or transportation. Or permission. Of course, their final adventure together is more than just that—really, it's a way for the boys to celebrate their friendship, and their honest love and support for one another. That's exactly what we love so much about *The Boys in the Back Row*: it's an unabashed ode to male friendship, because love between boys, platonic or otherwise, is something to celebrate. And of course, because this is Mike Jung, we'll be celebrating it with hilariously flawed hijinks and geekiness galore!







# *Focused* by Alyson Gerber



Clea can't control her thoughts. She knows she has to do her homework . . . but she gets distracted. She knows she can't just say whatever thought comes into her head . . . but sometimes she can't help herself. She know she needs to focus . . . but how can she do that when the people around her are always chewing gum loudly or making other annoying noises? It's starting to be a problem-not just in school, but when Clea's playing chess or just hanging out with her best friend. Other kids are starting to notice. When Clea fails one too many tests, her parents take her to be tested, and she finds out that she has ADHD, which means her attention is all over the place instead of where it needs to be. Clea knows life can't continue the way it's been going. She's just not sure how you can fix a problem that's all in your head. But that's what she's going to have to do, to find a way to focus.





# The Girl and the Ghost

## by Hanna Alkaf

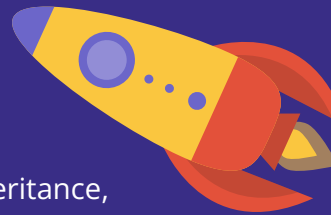


I am a dark spirit, the ghost announced grandly. I am your inheritance, your grandmother's legacy. I am yours to command.

Suraya is delighted when her witch grandmother gifts her a pelesit. She names her ghostly companion Pink, and the two quickly become inseparable.

But Suraya doesn't know that pelesits have a dark side—and when Pink's shadows threaten to consume them both, they must find enough light to survive . . . before they are both lost to the darkness.

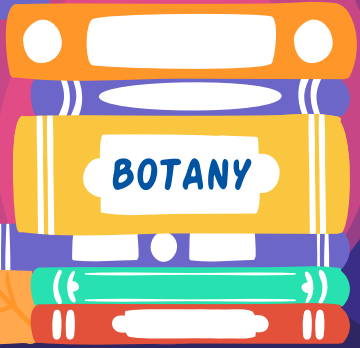
Fans of Holly Black's *Doll Bones* and Tahereh Mafi's *Furthermore* series will love this ghostly middle grade debut that explores jealousy, love, and the extraordinary power of friendship.



# *A High Five for Glenn Burke* by Phil Bildner



When sixth grader Silas Wade does a school presentation on former Major Leaguer Glenn Burke, it's more than just a report about the irrepressible inventor of the high five. Burke was a gay baseball player in the 1970s—and for Silas, the presentation is his own first baby step toward revealing a truth about himself he's tired of hiding. Soon he tells his best friend, Zoey, but the longer he keeps his secret from his baseball teammates, the more he suspects they know something's up—especially when he stages one big cover-up with terrible consequences.



# *The Hobbit*

## by J. R. R. Tolkien

Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit who enjoys a comfortable, unambitious life, rarely traveling any farther than his pantry or cellar. But his contentment is disturbed when the wizard Gandalf and a company of dwarves arrive on his doorstep one day to whisk him away on an adventure. They have launched a plot to raid the treasure hoard guarded by Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. Bilbo reluctantly joins their quest, unaware that on his journey to the Lonely Mountain he will encounter both a magic ring and a frightening creature known as Gollum.



# ★ *Invisible*

## by Christina Diaz Gonzalez and Gabriela Epstein

Can five overlooked kids make one big difference?

There's George: the brain

Sara: the loner

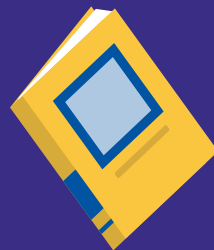
Dayara: the tough kid

Nico: the rich kid

And Miguel: the athlete

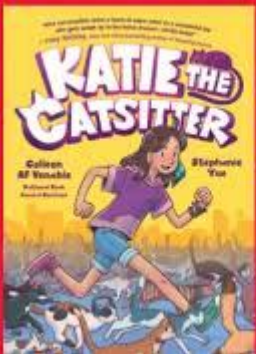
And they're stuck together when they're forced to complete their school's community service hours. Although they're sure they have nothing in common with one another, some people see them as all the same . . . just five Spanish-speaking kids.

Then they meet someone who truly needs their help, and they must decide whether they are each willing to expose their own secrets to help . . . or if remaining invisible is the only way to survive middle school.

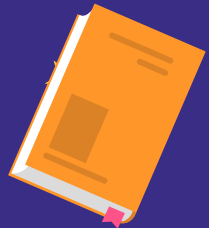


# Katie the Catsitter

by Colleen AF Venable and  
Stephanie Yue

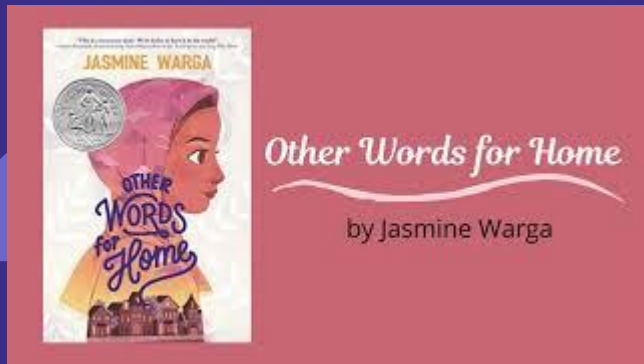


Katie is dreading the boring summer ahead while her best friends are all away at camp--something that's way out of Katie and her mom's budget, UNLESS Katie can figure out a way to earn the money for camp herself. But when Katie gets a job catsitting for her mysterious upstairs neighbor, life get interesting. First, Madeline has 217 cats (!) and they're not exactly . . . normal cats. Also, why is Madeline always out EXACTLY when the city's most notorious villain commits crimes?! Is it possible that Katie's upstairs neighbor is really a super villain? Can Katie wrangle a whole lot of wayward cats, save a best friendship (why is Beth barely writing back? And who's this boy she keeps talking about?!), AND crack the biggest story in the city's history? Some heroes have capes . . . Katie has cats!



# Other Words for Home

## by Jasmine Warga



Jude never thought she'd be leaving her beloved older brother and father behind, all the way across the ocean in Syria. But when things in her hometown start becoming volatile, Jude and her mother are sent to live in Cincinnati with relatives.

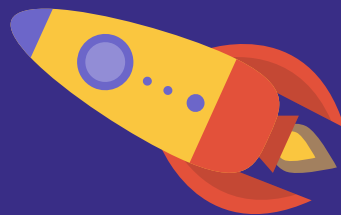
At first, everything in America seems too fast and too loud. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the US—and her new label of "Middle Eastern," an identity she's never known before.

But this life also brings unexpected surprises—there are new friends, a whole new family, and a school musical that Jude might just try out for. Maybe America, too, is a place where Jude can be seen as she really is.





# Partly Cloudy by Tanita S. Davis



Lightning couldn't strike twice, could it? After a terrible year, Madalyn needs clear skies desperately. Moving in with her great-uncle, Papa Lobo, and switching to a new school is just the first step.

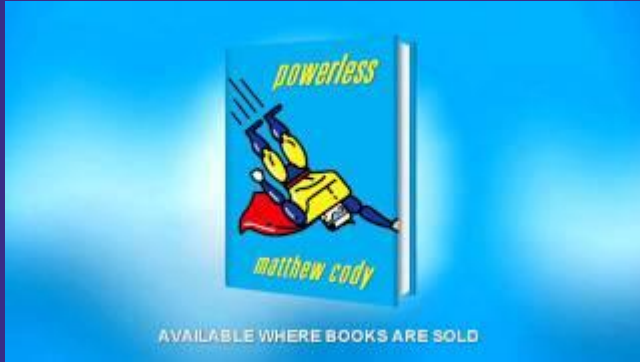
It's not all rainbows and sunshine, though. Madalyn discovers she's the only Black girl in her class, and while most of her classmates are friendly, assumptions lead to some serious storms.

Papa Lobo's long-running feud with neighbor Mrs. Baylor brings wild weather of its own, and Madalyn wonders just how far things will go. But when fire threatens the community, Madalyn discovers that truly being neighborly means more than just staying on your side of the street—it means weathering tough conversations—and finding that together a family can pull through anything.



# Powerless

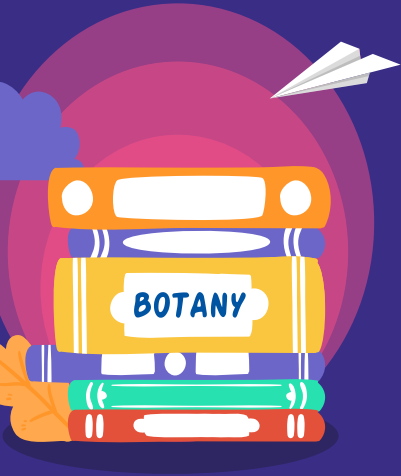
## by Matthew Cody



Superheroes soar in this promising debut—and they're kids!

Twelve-year-old Daniel, the new kid in town, soon learns the truth about his nice—but odd—new friends: one can fly, another can turn invisible, yet another controls electricity. Incredible. The superkids use their powers to secretly do good in the town, but they're haunted by the fact that the moment they turn thirteen, their abilities will disappear—along with any memory that they ever had them. Is a memory-stealing supervillain sapping their powers?

The answers lie in a long-ago meteor strike, a World War II-era comic book (Fantastic Futures, starring the first superhero, Johnny Noble), the green-flamed Witch Fire, a hidden Shroud cave, and—possibly, unbelievably—“powerless” regular-kid Daniel himself.



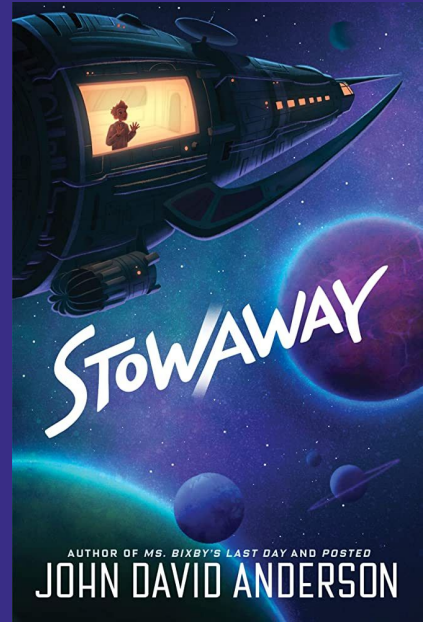
# Stowaway

by John David Anderson

When scientists discover a rare and mysterious mineral buried in the Earth's crust, they have no idea that it just happens to be the most valuable substance in the entire universe. It's not long before aliens show up to our little corner of the galaxy offering a promise of protection, some fabulous new technology, and entry into their intergalactic coalition—all in exchange for this precious resource. A material so precious that other alien forces are willing to start a war over it. A war that soon makes its way to Earth.

Leo knows this all too well. His mother was killed in one such attack, and soon after, his father, a Coalition scientist, decides it would be best for them to leave Earth behind. It's on this expedition that their ship is attacked, Leo's father is kidnapped, and Leo and his brother are stranded in the middle of space. The only chance they have is for Leo to stow away on a strange ship of mercenary space pirates bound for who knows where and beg the captain to help him find his father.

But the road is dangerous, and pirates, of course, only look out for themselves. Leo must decide who to trust as he tries to stay alive and save his family, even as he comes to understand that there aren't many people—human or alien—that he can count on in this brave new universe.





# Wink

## by Rob Harrell

Ross Maloy just wants to be a normal seventh grader. He doesn't want to lose his hair, or wear a weird hat, or deal with the disappearing friends who don't know what to say to "the cancer kid." But with his recent diagnosis of a rare eye cancer, blending in is off the table.

Based on Rob Harrell's real life experience, and packed with comic panels and spot art, this incredibly personal and poignant novel is an unforgettable, heartbreaking, hilarious, and uplifting story of survival and finding the music, magic, and laughter in life's weirdness.



# ★ *Yusuf Azeem is Not a Hero* by Saadia Faruqi ★

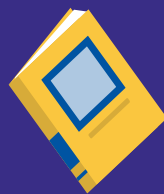
## by Saadia Faruqi

At a time when we are all asking questions about identity, grief, and how to stand up for what is right, this book by the author of *A Thousand Questions* will hit home with young readers who love Hena Khan and Varian Johnson—or anyone struggling to understand recent U.S. history and how it still affects us today.

Yusuf Azeem has spent all his life in the small town of Frey, Texas—and nearly that long waiting for the chance to participate in the regional robotics competition, which he just knows he can win.

Only, this year is going to be more difficult than he thought. Because this year is the twentieth anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, an anniversary that has everyone in his Muslim community on edge.

With “Never Forget” banners everywhere and a hostile group of townspeople protesting the new mosque, Yusuf realizes that the country’s anger from two decades ago hasn’t gone away. Can he hold onto his joy—and his friendships—in the face of heartache and prejudice?



# Start reading this summer!

The Multnomah County Library will have copies of the OBOB books and so will local bookstores. You can listen to audio versions too! The Multnomah County Library will have audio versions, and they can also be purchased online. Sometimes, you can even find people reading the book on YouTube! These all count as ways to read the books.

**\*\*Our closest MCL location now is the Woodstock Library.\*\***

