

Books on Genocide (Classroom List):

Bradley Beach

We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World

Malala Yousafzai

ISBN: 978-0316523653

Gr 7 Up-While Yousafzai's autobiography, *I Am Malala*, describes her life in Pakistan culminating in her dramatic altercation with the Taliban, this book highlights some of the work Yousafzai has done since she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The first part provides additional information on Yousafzai's life in Pakistan with an emphasis on her experience as an internally displaced person and the later challenges of acclimating to life as a refugee in Great Britain. In the second part of the book, readers are provided with narratives from other refugee girls who met with Yousafzai in different stages of her work. These stories depict the lives of girls from all over the world, pushed from their homes for different reasons and yet, Yousafzai highlights consistent themes found in each one. From the Middle East to South America, Africa to Asia, these girls and their families faced the same challenge: leaving their homes and the communities they love. Yousafzai writes with gut-wrenching detail, showing readers the many complex layers of life as a refugee including the struggle of escape, the frustrations of bureaucracy in the face of mortal danger, and the painful goodbyes along the way. She shines a light on the personal side of this international crisis and pushes every individual to find a way to contribute to the solution.

In Search of Safety: Voices of Refugees

Susan Kuklin

ISBN 978-0763679606

Representing Afghanistan, Myanmar, South Sudan, Iraq, and Burundi, these five refugees all offer testimony on the realities of growing up in a refugee camp, being sold into slavery, and then finding refuge. All five refugees possess the will to survive and to seek safety for themselves and their families...The book calls attention to problems in countries at war and how people can seek help, become a citizen, or resettle in the United States through certain agencies.

The Cat I Never Named

Amra Sabic-El-Rayess

ISBN 978-1547604531

Gr 8 Up-Sabic-El-Rayess, a Bosnian Muslim teenage girl, was in danger when the Bosnian War (1992-95) made its way to her home city of Biha. Her memoir begins in 1992; the first chapter details her homecoming from Belgrade, Serbia. Her parents, who fiercely believed in the power of education, had sent their daughter away for school. Upon returning to Biha, Sabic-El-Rayess found that things had quickly changed. School was suspended, her Serbian friends disowned her before moving away, and bombings became a regular occurrence. Food was in short supply, and family and friends died. Yet there was one small constant source of hope: an ever-present cat that saved her family's life several times over the six years chronicled in the text. Moving chronologically, the climactic events follow the time line of the war. Sabic-El-Rayess's experience spotlights a significant historical event that may be unfamiliar to the target audience. She

comprehensively addresses politics, genocide, rape camps, self-preservation, and, through it all, still being a teenager. Her prose balances verve and gentleness as she discusses the horrors of war alongside moments of levity, be it the cat or a love interest. The narrative is an innately human experience set against a backdrop of destruction and hatred. Her family's survival will pull readers into an emotional tale.

A Cave in the Clouds: A Young Woman's Escape from ISIS

Badeeah Hassan Ahmed

ISBN 978-1773212340

Badeeah Hassan was just 18 when she witnessed firsthand the horrors of the 2014 genocide of the Ezidi people by ISIS forces. Captured by ISIS, known locally as *Daesh*, Badeeah was among hundreds forced into a brutal human trafficking network made up of women and girls of Ezidi ethnicity, a much-persecuted minority culture of Iraq . . . Since her escape, Badeeah has brought her harrowing story of war and survival to the world's stage, raising awareness about the little-known acts of genocide against her culture and the strength of a people unknown to many around the world. This captivating account of courage extends beyond the confines of her experience; Badeeah's story is about the resilience of women, girls, and persecuted groups everywhere in the face of seemingly insurmountable oppression.

Child Soldier: When Boys and Girls are Used in War

Michel Chikwanine, Jessica Dee Humphreys, et al.

ISBN 978-1525304057 (Graphic Novel Format)

Michel Chikwanine was five years old when he was abducted from his school-yard soccer game in the Democratic Republic of Congo and forced to become a soldier for a brutal rebel militia. Against the odds, Michel managed to escape and find his way back to his family, but he was never the same again. After immigrating to Canada, Michel was encouraged by a teacher to share what happened to him in order to raise awareness about child soldiers around the world, and this book is part of that effort. Told in the first person and presented in a graphic novel format, the gripping story of Michel's experience is moving and unsettling. But the humanity he exhibits in the telling, along with Claudia Dávila's illustrations, which evoke rather than depict the violent elements of the story, makes the book accessible for this age group and, ultimately, reassuring and hopeful. The back matter contains further information, as well as suggestions for ways children can help. This is a perfect resource for engaging youngsters in social studies lessons on global awareness and social justice issues, and would easily spark classroom discussions about conflict, children's rights and even bullying.

Year of the Rabbit

Tian Veasna

ISBN 978-1770463769 (Graphic Novel Format)

Year of the Rabbit shows the reality of life in the work camps, where Veasna's family bartered for goods, where children were instructed to spy on their parents, and where reading was proof positive of being a class traitor. Constantly on the edge of annihilation, they realized there was only one choice—they had to escape Cambodia and become refugees.

First They Killed My Father

Loung Ung

ISBN 9780060856267

Loung Ung lived a privileged life in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh until the age of five. Then, in April 1975, Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge army stormed into the city, forcing Ung's family to flee and, eventually, to disperse. Loung was trained as a child soldier in a work camp for orphans, her siblings were sent to labor camps, and those who survived the horrors would not be reunited until the Khmer Rouge was destroyed. Harrowing yet hopeful, Loung's powerful story is an unforgettable account of a family shaken and shattered, yet miraculously sustained.

Never Fall Down

Patricia McCormick

ISBN 978-0061730955

When soldiers arrive in his hometown, Arn is just a normal little boy. But after the soldiers march the entire population into the countryside, his life is changed forever. Arn is separated from his family and assigned to a labor camp: working in the rice paddies under a blazing sun, he sees the other children dying before his eyes. One day, the soldiers ask if any of the kids can play an instrument. Arn's never played a note in his life, but he volunteers. This decision will save his life, but it will pull him into the very center of what we know today as the Killing Fields. And just as the country is about to be liberated, Arn is handed a gun and forced to become a soldier.

A Long Walk To Water

Linda Sue Park

ISBN 978-0547577319

Newbery Medalist Linda Sue Park interweaves the stories of two Sudanese children who overcome mortal dangers to improve their lives and the lives of others. *A Long Walk to Water* begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours' walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way. Includes an afterword by author Linda Sue Park and the real-life Salva Dut.

Tree Girl

Ben Mikaelson

ISBN 978-0060090067

They call Gabriela Tree Girl. Gabi climbs trees to be within reach of the eagles and watch the sun rise into an empty sky. She is at home among the outstretched branches of the Guatemalan forests. Then one day from the safety of a tree, Gabi witnesses the sights and sounds of an unspeakable massacre. She vows to be Tree Girl no more and joins the

hordes of refugees struggling to reach the Mexican border. She has lost her whole family; her entire village has been wiped out. Yet she clings to the hope that she will be reunited with her youngest sister, Alicia. Over dangerous miles and months of hunger and thirst, Gabriela's search for Alicia and for a safe haven becomes a search for self.

The Cellist of Sarajevo

Steven Galloway

ISBN 978-1594483653 (Novel)

A novel of great intensity and power, and inspired by a true story, *The Cellist of Sarajevo* poignantly explores how war can change one's definition of humanity, the effect of music on our emotional endurance, and how a romance with the rituals of daily life can itself be a form of resistance.

Forgotten Fire

Adam Bagdasarian

ISBN 978-0440229179

Vahan Kenderian lives a life of privilege as the youngest son of a wealthy Armenian family in 1915 Turkey. His secure world is shattered when some family members are whisked away while others are murdered before his eyes. Vahan loses his home and family, and is forced to live a life he would never have dreamed of. Somehow Vahan's incredible strength and spirit help him endure.

Daughter of War

Marsha Forchuk Skyrpuch

ISBN 978-1554550449

Grade 9 Up—Betrothed teens Kevork and Marta have been apart since being removed from their orphanage in Marash, Turkey, during the Armenian Genocide of 1915 when they were marched into the Syrian Desert without food or water. Separated by distance and the necessity of hiding, neither of them knows if the other is still alive. Kevork, rescued by nomads and now disguised as an Arab, is determined to return to the orphanage but faces many obstacles, including the opportunity to help smuggle funds and resources to the Armenians in concentration camps. Marta, meanwhile, had been taken in by a Muslim family in Aintab and forced to be a concubine. Now pregnant, she returns to the orphanage and helps protect its residents, still hoping to be reunited with Kevork. A fairly detailed historical note and map provide context for readers who have likely heard very little about the second-largest genocide in history. This is a powerful, often harrowing novel that will appeal to those who appreciate books about people surviving in spite of grave injustices.

Broken Memory: A Novel of Rwanda

Elisabeth Combres

ISBN 978-0888998934

Hiding behind the old sofa, five-year-old Emma does not witness the murder of her mother, but she hears everything. And when the assassins finally leave, the young Tutsi girl somehow manages to stumble away from the scene, motivated only by the memory of her mother's last words: "You must not die, Emma!" Taken in by an old Hutu woman,

Mukecuru, Emma is still haunted by nightmares long after the war ends. When the country establishes gacaca courts to allow victims to face their tormenters in their villages, Emma is uneasy and afraid. But through her growing friendship with a young torture victim and the gentle encouragement of an old man charged with helping child survivors, Emma finds the courage to return to the house where her mother was killed and begin the journey to healing.

Untamed: Beyond Freedom

Celine Uwineza

ISBN 978-1091975088

For ten-year-old Celine Uwineza, the 7th of April, 1994 was supposed to start out like any other day. By nightfall, the horrors of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda had begun, claiming the lives of her family and one million others who were brutally massacred to death. Celine miraculously survived. Severely traumatized, she spent months on end being shunted from one refugee camp to another, eventually being rescued and reunited with the surviving members of her family. Although the emotional and psychological scars of the brutality she witnessed and experienced tore her apart on the inside, Celine, with her untamed spirit, was determined to rise above her circumstances and use her God-given talents to help rebuild her country.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

Sherman Alexie

ISBN 978-0316013697

Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings by Ellen Forney that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live.

Between Shades of Gray

Ruta Sepetys

ISBN 978-0142420591

Fifteen-year-old Lina is a Lithuanian girl living an ordinary life -- until Soviet officers invade her home and tear her family apart. Separated from her father and forced onto a crowded train, Lina, her mother, and her young brother make their way to a Siberian work camp, where they are forced to fight for their lives. Lina finds solace in her art, documenting these events by drawing. Risking everything, she imbeds clues in her drawings of their location and secretly passes them along, hoping her drawings will make their way to her father's prison camp. But will strength, love, and hope be enough for Lina and her family to survive?