

Everyone: CHOOSE TWO

How I Found the Strong by Margaret McMullan

**Written from the perspective of a boy during the Civil War. He is too young to go fight with his father and older brother, so he must stay behind as the war gets closer to his front door. (Please read disclaimer 1.)

Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson

**Written from the perspective of a girl who feels she is always living in the shadow of her twin sister. (Please read disclaimer 2.)

Squashed by Joan Bauer

**Written from the perspective of a girl who feels like she doesn't fit in. She takes solace in growing a pumpkin to enter in the fair. Despite her father not accepting her, she finds a friend and also gets support from her grandmother.

Wolf Brother by Michelle Paver

**Written from the perspective of twelve-year-old Torak, along with his wolf-cub companion, who has the difficult task of defeating the evil that is lurking in the land. "Their journey together takes them through deep forests, across giant glaciers, and into dangers they never imagined."
(summary taken from *Google Book Search*)

Absolutely Normal Chaos by Sharon Creech

**Written from the perspective of Mary Lou Finney who is not looking forward to a summer assignment. She is required to keep a journal, and she is expecting it to be boring. By the end of one of the most exciting summers of her life, Mary Lou is nervous; she implores her teacher to not read it. Read it yourself to find out why.

Accelerated: In addition to the two choices above

The Slave Dancer by Paula Fox

**A young boy is abducted from his home to participate in the dark world of slavery. He is taken to Africa by slave traders who use him to play music on the long, dangerous journey home in order to keep the slaves strong for the purpose of selling them when they arrive back in America.

Disclaimer 1: This book contains some material that parents may not want their children to read. It describes a few scenes of war that may be too graphic for less mature students. However, I feel it is not inappropriate for seventh graders, and that it is not grotesque or exaggerated for the purpose of being violent. It is less graphic than most video games and movies that students of this age have watched.

Disclaimer 2: This book contains some material that parents may not want their children to read. It has the "d" word three times. It also describes a crush that a character has on an older man. This is in NO way acted upon, but the character describes what she is feeling. She identifies with him since she is an outsider, and he is also considered a "reject." I encourage mothers to read this with your daughters as a springboard for discussion of this very real issue.