



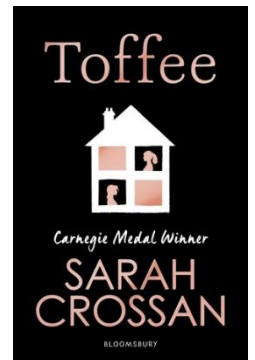
Reading List # 30 *DEATH, GRIEF AND LOSS* *through Fiction* *for Students in Years 7-9*

Toffee by Sarah Crossan, 2019

Allison has run away from her abusive father, hoping to find his ex-fiancee, Kelly-Anne, who cared for her in a way he never could. Stranded in a Cornish seaside town, she takes refuge in the garden shed of an apparently abandoned house – and discovers that Marla, an elderly woman with dementia, still lives there. When Marla greets Allison as Toffee, a friend from her past, Allison willingly accepts the role. As she grows closer to Marla, however, she becomes less inclined to keep the deception alive, beginning to search, instead, for the shape of her true self.

Trauma, grief and belonging are all addressed in this poignant verse novel from the Irish children's laureate.

A profoundly moving YA novel in verse.



Lenny's Book of Everything by Karen Foxlee, 2018

Lenny Spink is the sister of a giant. Her little brother, Davey, suffers from a rare form of gigantism and is taunted by other kids and turned away from school because of his size. To escape their cruel reality, Lenny and Davey obsess over the entries in their monthly instalment of Burrell's Build-It-at-Home Encyclopaedia set. Lenny vows to become a beetle expert, while Davey decides he will run away to Canada and build a log cabin. But as Davey's disease progresses, the siblings' richly imagined world becomes harder to cling to in this deeply moving and original novel about grief and family, who together navigate the harsh realities of life, loss and wonder.



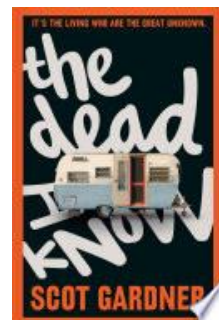
The Other Side of Summer by Emily Gale

Summer's brother, Floyd, is killed in an accident. Unsure how to cope with the loss, Summer clings to his Ibanez Artwood guitar (Floyd was giving her lessons before he died) while her dad moves the family from London to Melbourne. Away from her best friend and her mum, who chooses to stay in England, and in a strange country with her older sister acting even stranger, Summer feels alone and angry. So, when she finds some sheet music her brother had obviously intended for her, she decides to continue Floyd's lessons without him. But she is interrupted by the arrival of a mysterious boy. Each time she plays and the boy, Gabe, appears, they learn a little more about each other and Summer begins to suspect he is linked with her dead brother.



The Dead I Know by Scot Gardner

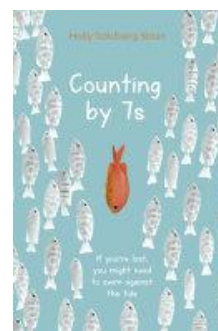
Aaron Rowe walks in his sleep and is constantly haunted by dreams he can't explain and memories he can't recover. Death doesn't scare him—his new job with a funeral director may even be his salvation. But if he doesn't discover the truth about his hidden past soon, he may fall asleep one night and never wake up. In this dark and witty psychological drama about grief and survival, Aaron finds that making peace with the dead may be easier than coming to terms with the living.



Counting By 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Tells the story of Willow Chance, a twelve-year-old genius who is obsessed with diagnosing medical conditions and finds comfort in counting by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now.

Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. Her journey through grief to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.



The Fault in our Stars by John Green

Despite the tumour-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal. But when a gorgeous, teenage patient named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, *The Fault in Our Stars* is award-winning author John Green's most ambitious and heart-breaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of grief, death, being alive and being in love.



The Art of Taxidermy by Sharon Kernot, 2018

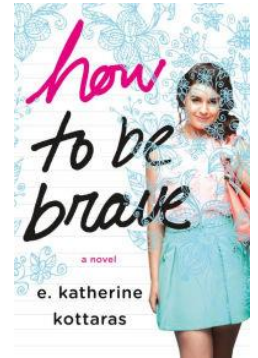
Lottie collects dead creatures and lovingly cares for them, hoping to preserve them, to save them from disintegration. Her father understands—Lottie has a scientific mind, he thinks. Her aunt wants it to stop, and she goes to cruel lengths to make sure it does. And her mother? Lottie's mother died long ago. And Lottie is searching for a way to be close to her.

The Art of Taxidermy is a heart-breaking verse novel exploring love and death, grief and beauty, and the ways we try to make sense of it all.



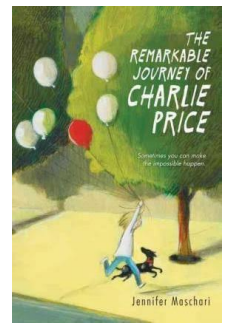
How to Be Brave by E. Katherine Kottaras

For Georgia, the loss of her mother was a truly life-altering one, and as she works through her grief to pick up the pieces, the hardest one to figure out might be who she is now that the closest person in the world to her is gone. Georgia doesn't want to fade away; she wants to *live*. So, what better way than to make a list of all the things she's always wanted to do and to go ahead and do them, no matter how much they scare her? As Georgia embarks on her bucket list, her brave endeavours definitely have mixed results. But real life is made up of both triumphs and failures, and Georgia will have to experience a whole lot of both to find herself along the way.



The Remarkable Journey of Charlie Price by Jennifer Mascheri

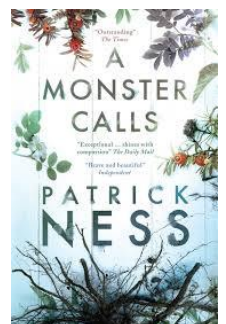
A heartfelt, beautifully written novel of love, loss, and math—perfect. Ever since twelve-year-old Charlie Price's mom died, he feels like his world has been split into two parts. Before included stargazing and Mathletes and Saturday scavenger hunts with his family. After means a dad who's completely checked out, comically bad dinners, and a grief group that's anything but helpful. It seems like losing Mom meant losing everything else he loved, too. Just when Charlie thinks things can't get any worse, his sister, Imogen, starts acting erratically--missing school and making up lies about their mother. But everything changes when one day he follows her down a secret passageway in the middle of her bedroom and sees for himself. Imogen has found a parallel world where Mom is alive There's hot cocoa and Scrabble and scavenger hunts again and everything is perfect . . . at first. But something doesn't feel right. Whenever Charlie returns to the real world, things are different, and not in a good way. And Imogen wants to spend more and more time on the other side. It's almost as if she wants to leave the real world for good. If Charlie doesn't uncover the truth, he could lose himself, the true memory of their mother, and Imogen . . . forever.



A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness

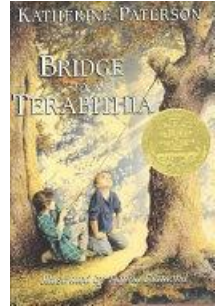
One night Conor wakes from his nightmare to find a monster at his window. He isn't scared. Since his mother started her treatment for cancer, he's had other things to worry about. Anyway, monsters aren't real, monsters are for babies. But this monster wants the truth...

Conor's story is interspersed with the old stories the monster tells. These stories each have a lesson and raise provoking questions for Conor. The illustrations by Jim Kay are brilliant and surreal and are an integral part of the book. Original, haunting and heartbreakingly sad, this is a story about loss, hope and letting go.



Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson 1977

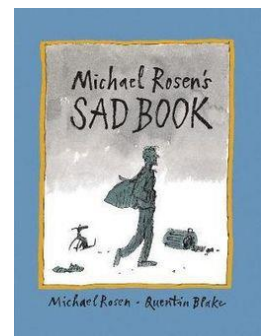
All summer, Jess pushed himself to be the fastest boy in the fifth grade, and when the year's first school-yard race was run, he was going to win. But his victory was stolen by a newcomer, a girl, one who didn't even know enough to stay on the girls' side of the playground. Then, unexpectedly, Jess finds himself sticking up for Leslie, for the girl who breaks rules and wins races. The friendship between the two grows as Jess guides the city girl through the pitfalls of life in their small, rural town, and Leslie draws him into the world of imagination, magic and ceremony called Terabithia. Here, Leslie and Jess rule supreme among the oaks and evergreens, safe from the bullies and ridicule of the mundane world. Safe until an unforeseen tragedy forces Jess to reign in Terabithia alone, and both worlds are forever changed.



A poignant, beautifully written novel, which weaves a powerful story of friendship, grief and courage.

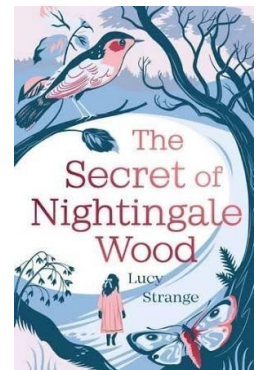
Michael Rosen's Sad Book by Michael Rosen, Quentin Blake (Illustrator) 2010

A heartbreakingly honest account of a father's grief for his son from the illustrious pairing of two former Children's Laureates. It chronicles Michael's grief at the death of his son Eddie from meningitis at the age of 19. A moving combination of sincerity and simplicity, it acknowledges that sadness is not always avoidable or reasonable and perfects the art of making complicated feelings plain.



The Secret of Nightingale Wood by Lucy Strange

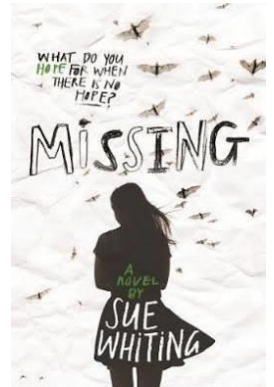
Henry moves to the countryside with her family, scarred by her brother's untimely death. Her only friends are characters from her favourite books - until, one day, she wanders into the woods and meets Moth, a striking witch-like woman. Together they form a bond that could help Henry save her family and overcome her grief.



Missing by Sue Whiting

What do you hope for when there is no hope? In search of this answer, award-winning Australian author Sue Whiting delivers a confronting mystery for younger readers. Mackenzie da Luca's mother is missing - she's vanished without a trace in the jungles of Panama. Now, 116 days later Mackenzie and her dad are in those same jungles. Her dad is desperate to find out what's happened to his wife. And Mackenzie is desperate to make sure he doesn't ...

This middle-grade novel is expertly structured, switching between the then and the now. There are many themes, such as acceptance, truth, grief and family that can be pulled out of the narrative and discussed.



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