On Thin Ice
by Michael Northrop
JF Northrop
Targeted by the school bully because of his differences, a 12-year-old social outcast and son of a gambler organizes an innovative but risky venture to save his home while finding a creative place to belong.

The Best at It
by Maulik Pancholy
JF Pancholy
12-year-old Rahul Kapoor, an Indian-American boy growing up in small-town Indiana, struggles to come to terms with his identity, including that he may be gay.

Strange Birds: A Field Guide to Ruffling Feathers
by Celia C. Pérez
JF Perez
A budding journalist, a bookish foodie and a birdwatcher forge a friendship with a fourth misfit when they organize an alternative sisterhood troop to protest their community’s scout traditions.

The Boy at the Back of the Class
by Onjali Q. Raúf
JF Rauf
When a Syrian refugee boy joins their class, the determined students in Mrs. Kahn’s schoolroom learn the newcomer’s sad story before concocting a plan to reunite him with his loved ones.

Operation Frog Effect
by Sarah Lynn Scheerger
JF Scheerger
When eight students take an assignment too far, they must take responsibility for their actions.

Pay Attention, Carter Jones
by Gary D. Schmidt
JF Schmidt
When a mysterious English butler appears one morning to help his troubled family, young Carter struggles to navigate middle school under the watch of the newcomer.

The Bridge Home
by Padma Venkatraman
JF Venkatraman
Two runaway sisters find shelter and friendship on an abandoned bridge with two homeless boys before an illness forces them to choose between survival and freedom.

Some Places More Than Others
by Renée Watson
JF Watson
Amara visits her father’s family in Harlem for her twelfth birthday, hoping to better understand her family and herself, but New York City is not what she expected.
All of Me
by Chris Baron
JF Baron
Moving across the country, a boy with body-image issues resulting from relentless bullying, makes new friends and struggles to manage his weight before realizations about his parents’ failing marriage help him find healing.

The Dog Who Lost His Bark
by Eoin Colfer
JF Colfer
Patrick always wanted a dog and now, with his father away, he longs for a canine friend more than ever. Meanwhile, in his short doggy life, Oz has struggled to survive and find a family. Maybe, when they find each other, Oz will learn to bark again.

Pie in the Sky
by Remy Lai
JF Lai
Feeling as out of place as if he landed on Mars when his family moves to Australia, Jingwen dreams about the cakes he would have baked with his late father, a hope that is challenged by his mother’s strict kitchen safety rules.

The Next Great Paulie Fink
by Ali Benjamin
JF Benjamin
Caitlyn struggles to fit in at the new small school she’s just moved to while listening to stories about a genius prankster class clown, who is conspicuously absent.

I Can Make This Promise
by Christine Day
JF Day
In a story based on the author’s real-life experiences, a girl uncovers a secret that connects her to her Native American heritage, throwing everything she believes about her family into question.

Not If I Can Help It
by Carolyn Mackler
JF Mackler
Struggling with changes that are made difficult by her Sensory Processing Disorder, young Willa is thrown for a loop when her father reveals that he has been dating her best friend’s mom.

Each Tiny Spark
by Pablo Cartaya
JF Cartaya
A young girl who struggles with attention-deficit challenges finds her world further complicated when her father returns from deployment and shuts himself away from their family.

Summer of a Thousand Pies
by Margaret Dilloway
JF Dilloway
Sent to live with the aunt she didn’t know after a homeless childhood with her father in San Diego, Cady is challenged to help save her aunt’s failing pie shop just as she is beginning to feel like she belongs.

Meena Meets Her Match
by Karla Manternach
JF Manternach
Third-grader Meena Zee navigates the triumphs and challenges of family, friendship and school while being diagnosed with epilepsy.

One-Third Nerd
by Gennifer Choldenko
JF Choldenko
Ten-year-old Liam and his two younger sisters, Dakota and Izzy, who has Down syndrome, face the possibility of losing their beloved dog, Cupcake, who keeps urinating on their apartment’s carpet.

More to the story
by Hena Khan
JF Khan
A Muslim-American writer’s ambition to win a national media contest is complicated by her family’s relocation overseas and her sister’s dangerous illness.