**2016-17 Oregon Battle of the Books**

**Grades 6-8 Annotated Booklist**

**The Apothecary** by Maile Meloy

Adventure/historical fiction, AR 4.9, 740L, 353 pages (first in a series)

In 1952 London 14-year-old American Janie meets a mysterious apothecary and his son, Benjamin who dreams of becoming a spy. When Benjamin’s father is kidnapped, Janie and Benjamin must race to uncover the secrets of the apothecary’s book and keep it away from Russian spies with nuclear weapons.

**Centaur Rising** by Jane Yolen

Fantasy/historical fiction, AR 5.1, 790L, 272 pages

A year after Arianne thinks she sees a shooting star land in the fields near her family's horse farm, a baby centaur is born and the family, already under scrutiny because her six-year-old brother has birth defects, struggles to keep the pony a secret.

**Courage for Beginners** by Karen Harrington

Realistic fiction, AR 4.4, 690L, 289 pages

Twelve-year-old Mysti wishes she were a character in a book so she would know how to solve her problems at school, take care of her family when her dad has to spend time in the hospital, and deal with her mom's agoraphobia. With the help of a hot-hair balloon, and maybe even the heroes of the Texas Revolution, can Mysti find the courage to change?

**Dark Life** by Kat Falls

Science fiction, AR 4.8., 690L, 304 pages (part of a series)

In an apocalyptic future where rising oceans have swallowed up entire regions and people live packed like sardines on the dry land, this is the harrowing tale of Ty and underwater pioneers who have carved out a life for themselves in Dark Life -- the harsh sea. Ty fights to stop outlaws’ attacks and save his home only to discover that all is not as it seems.

**Death by Toilet Paper** by Donna Gephart

Fiction/humor, AR 4.7, 790L, 265 pages

Benjamin is about to lose a whole lot more than good toilet paper. But even with his flair for clever slogans, will he be able to win a cash prize large enough to keep a promise he made to his dad before he died?

**Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie** by Jordan Sonnenblick

Realistic fiction, AR 5.9, 940L, 273 pages

The life of eighth-grader Steven Alper, already complicated by his friendship with two girls and a prodigious talent for drumming, is turned upside down when his five-year-old brother Jeffrey is diagnosed with leukemia.

**The Great Greene Heist** by Varian Johnson

Realistic fiction, AR 4.6, 660L, 226 pages (part of a series)

When it looks like Keith Sinclair may steal the election for school president from Jackson Greene's former best friend Gabriela, he assembles a team to make sure Keith does not succeed.

**The Honest Truth** by Dan Gemeinhart

Realistic fiction, AR 4.0, 550L, 229 pages

Told in alternating chapters, 12-year-old, terminally ill Mark conceives a plan to climb Mt. Rainier and runs away from home with his dog while his best friend Jessie wonders if she should betray Mark's trust.

**The Journal of Curious Letters** by James Dashner

Fantasy/Science fiction, AR 6.0, 910L, 528 pages (first in a series)

Thirteen-year-old Atticus "Tick" Higginbottom begins receiving mysterious letters from around the world signed only M.G., and the clues in them lead him on a journey to the perilous Thirteenth Reality and a confrontation with evil Mistress Jane.

**Masterminds** by Gordon Korman

Science fiction, AR 5.2, 730L, 323 pages (first in a series)

In the too-perfect setting of Serenity, New Mexico, Eli Frieden and twenty-nine other kids discover they were cloned from the DNA of some of the greatest criminal masterminds in history for a sociological experiment.

**The Menagerie** by Tui T. and Kari Sutherland

Fantasy, AR 4.6, 710L, 288 pages (part of a series)

Logan, new in town and friendless, finds a griffin cub—and can hear its thoughts! Soon Logan is helping the kids who lost the creature and its five siblings.

**A Night Divided** by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Historical fiction, AR 5.4, 810L, 317 pages

When her family is abruptly divided by the rise of the Berlin Wall, twelve-year-old Gerta harbors forbidden thoughts about freedom and reuniting with her loved ones before a coded message from her father inspires a daring plan.

**Stella by Starlight** by Sharon M. Draper

Historical fiction, AR 4.8, 740L, 336 pages

When the Ku Klux Klan's unwelcome reappearance rattles Stella's segregated southern town, bravery battles prejudice.

**Unfriended** by Rachel Vail

Realistic fiction, AR 4.4, 670L, 282 pages

When thirteen-year-old Truly is invited to sit at the Popular Table, she finds herself caught in a web of lies and misunderstandings, made inescapable by the hyperconnected social media world.

**The Unwanteds** by Lisa McMann

Fantasy/dystopian science fiction/adventure, AR 5.7, 880L, 390 pages (first in a series)

In a society that purges thirteen-year-olds who are creative, identical twins Aaron and Alex are separated, one to attend University while the other, supposedly Eliminated, finds himself in a wondrous place where youths learn magic.

**Zombie Baseball Beatdown** by Paolo Bacigalupi

Thriller/sports, AR 4.7, 292 pages

While practicing for their next baseball game, 13-year-old friends Rabi, Miguel, and Joe discover that the nefarious activities of the Delbe, Iowa, meatpacking plant have caused cows to turn into zombies.