

Mystery and Suspense Novels

for Young Adults

Listed below are mystery and suspense novels for young adults. These books vary in the difficulty of both the text and the content. Not all books are appropriate for all readers. (Annotations from Library of Congress).

Abrahams, Peter. ***Behind the Curtain: An Echo Halls Mystery***. An avid Sherlock Holmes fan, eighth grader Ingrid Levin-Hill is kidnapped while investigating mysterious happenings in her home town.

Abrahams, Peter. ***Down the Rabbit Hole: An Echo Halls Mystery***. Like her idol Sherlock Holmes, eighth-grader Ingrid Levin-Hill uses her intellect to solve a murder case in her home town of Echo Falls.

Almond, David. ***Kit's Wilderness***. Thirteen-year-old Kit goes to live with his grandfather in the decaying coal mining town of Stoneygate, England, and finds both the old man and the town haunted by ghosts of the past.

Almond, David. ***Skellig***. Unhappy about his baby sister's illness and the chaos of moving into a dilapidated old house, Michael retreats to the garage and finds a mysterious stranger who is something like a bird and something like an angel.

Alphin, Elaine Marie. ***The Perfect Shot***. Brian uses basketball to block out memories of his girlfriend and her family who were gunned down a year ago, but the upcoming murder trial and a high school history assignment force him to face the past and decide how far he should go to see justice served.

Anderson, M.T. ***Whales on Stilts***. Racing against the clock, shy middle-school student Lily and her best friends, Katie and Jasper, must foil the plot of her father's conniving boss to conquer the world using an army of whales.

Avi. ***The Book without Words: A Fable of Medieval Magic***. Having tried for years to unlock the secrets of the magical Book Without Words, old man Thorston dies in failure and the book is passed on to his servant, Sybil, and her magical raven who eagerly begin the process of breaking the code.

Avi. ***Crispin: The Cross of Lead***. Falsely accused of theft and murder, an orphaned peasant boy in fourteenth-century England flees his village and meets a larger-than-life juggler who holds a dangerous secret.

Avi. ***The Man who was Poe***. In Providence, R.I., in 1848, Edgar Allan Poe reluctantly investigates the problems of eleven-year-old Edmund, whose family has mysteriously disappeared and whose story suggests a new Poe tale with a ghastly final twist.

Balliett, Blue. ***Chasing Vermeer***. When strange and seemingly unrelated events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, eleven-year-olds Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal.

Bateman, Colin. ***Running with the Reservoir Pups***. When his parents divorce and his mother moves with him to Belfast, Northern Ireland, twelve-year-old Eddie contends with the Reservoir Pups, a gang of children who rule his neighborhood.

Black, Lisa. ***Takeover***. Arriving at the scene of a bank robbery where her fiancé and seven others have been taken hostage, forensic scientist Theresa MacLean fears that the high-profile hostage negotiator brought in by police may be too arrogant for the task and offers herself in exchange for her fiancé's safety.

Blackman, Malorie. ***Naughts and Crosses***. Despite the rules of the land, Callum, a second-class white citizen, and Sephy, a black Cross, love one another and want to be together, but when Callum rescues Sephy from an explosion and is caught on tape, Sephy's powerful father seeks to have Callum hanged for their relationship.

Blundell, Judy. ***What I Saw and How I Lied***. In 1947, teenage Evie, smitten by a handsome ex-GI who seems to have a secret hold on her stepfather, finds herself caught in a complicated web of lies whose devastating outcome changes her life and that of her family forever.

Bodeen, S.A. ***The Compound***. After spending six years with his parents and his two sisters in an underground compound built by his father to protect them from a nuclear holocaust, Eli discovers that his father has perpetrated a monstrous hoax on them all.

Boyce, Frank Cottrell. ***Millions***. After their mother dies, two brothers find a huge amount of money which they must spend quickly before England switches to the new European currency, but they disagree on what to do with it.

Bray, Libba. ***A Great and Terrible Beauty***. After the suspicious death of her mother in 1895, sixteen-year-old Gemma returns to England, after many years in India, to attend a finishing school where she becomes aware of her magical powers and ability to see into the spirit world.

Bray, Libba. ***Rebel Angels***. Gemma and her friends from the Spence Academy return to the realms to defeat her foe, Circe, and to bind the magic that has been released.

Brooks, Kevin. ***Kissing the Rain***. Fifteen-year-old Moo Nelson, shy, overweight, and bullied by his classmates, finds his life spinning out of control after he witnesses a car chase and a fight that results in a murder.

Brooks, Kevin. ***The Road of the Dead***. Two brothers, sons of an incarcerated gypsy, leave London traveling to an isolated and desolate village, in search of the brutal killer of their sister.

Brooks, Kevin. ***Lucas***. On an isolated English island, fifteen-year-old Caitlin McCann makes the painful journey from adolescence to adulthood through her experiences with a mysterious boy, whose presence has an unsettling effect on the island's inhabitants.

Brooks, Kevin. ***Martyn Pig***. Faced with the possibility of living with a dreadful aunt, fifteen-year-old Martyn Pig decides not to tell authorities when his alcoholic father dies accidentally, instead asking a friend for her help in disposing of the body.

Brown, Dan. ***The Da Vinci Code***.

Bruchac, Joseph. ***Whisper in the Dark***. An ancient and terrifying Narragansett native-American legend begins to come true for a teenage long-distance runner, whose recovery from the accident

that killed her parents has stunned everyone, including her guardian aunt in Providence, Rhode Island.

Brooks, Kevin. ***Being***.

Brooks, Kevin. ***Candy***. After falling in love with Candy, a drug addict, Joe becomes desperate as he tries to keep his dream of working as a musician alive while trying to save Candy from her self-destructive ways.

Brooks, Kevin. ***Kissing the Rain***. Fifteen-year-old Moo Nelson, shy, overweight, and bullied by his classmates, finds his life spinning out of control after he witnesses a car chase and a fight that results in a murder.

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Bunting, Eve. ***Blackwater***. When a boy and girl are drowned in the Blackwater River, thirteen-year-old Brodie must decide whether to confess that he may have caused the accident.

Cain, Chelsea. ***Heartsick***. Addicted to painkillers and still bound to Gretchen Lowell, the beautiful serial killer who had abducted and tortured him before turning herself in, Portland detective Archie Sheridan is caught in another deadly duel with a murderer targeting teenage girls.

Cain, Chelsea. ***Sweetheart***. Portland detective Archie Sheridan's investigation into the murder of a young woman is compromised by his continuing obsession with serial murderer Gretchen Lowell, the so-called Beauty Killer, who has escaped from prison.

Cameron, Ann. ***Colibrí***. Kidnapped when she was very young by an unscrupulous man who has forced her to lie and beg to get money, a twelve-year-old Mayan girl endures an abusive life, always wishing she could return to the parents she can hardly remember.

Cary, Kate. ***Bloodline***. In this story told primarily through journal entries, a British soldier in World War I makes the horrifying discovery that his regiment commander is descended from Count Dracula.

Cooney, Caroline. ***Code Orange***. While conducting research for a school paper on smallpox, Mitty finds an envelope containing 100-year-old smallpox scabs and fears that he has infected himself and all of New York City.

Cormier, Robert. ***The Rag and Bone Shop***. Trent, an ace interrogator from Vermont, works to procure a confession from an introverted twelve-year-old accused of murdering his seven-year-old friend in Monument, Massachusetts.

Creech, Sharon. ***Walk Two Moons***. After her mother leaves home suddenly, thirteen-year-old Sal and her grandparents take a car trip retracing her mother's route. Along the way, Sal recounts the story of her friend Phoebe, whose mother also left.

Curzon, Clare. ***The Edge***. Superintendent Mike Yeadings investigates the beating death of a woman found naked in a stable, a probe that leads to the discovery of the bodies of the woman's husband, little girl, and a neighbor child in the nearby farmhouse.

Delaney, Joseph. ***Revenge of the Witch***. Young Tom, the seventh son of a seventh son, starts work as an apprentice for the village spook, whose job is to protect ordinary folk from "ghouls, boggarts, and all manner of wicked beasties."

Deuker, Carl. ***Runner***. Living with his alcoholic father on a broken-down sailboat on Puget Sound has been hard on seventeen-year-old Chance Taylor, but when his love of running leads to a high-paying job, he quickly learns that the money is not worth the risk.

Donnelly, Jennifer. ***A Northern Light***. In 1906, sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and fiance, takes a job at a summer inn where she discovers the truth about the death of a guest. Based on a true story.

Dowd, Siobhan. ***The London Eye Mystery***. When Ted and Kat's cousin Salim disappears from the London Eye ferris wheel, the two siblings must work together--Ted with his brain that is "wired differently" and impatient Kat--to try to discover what happened to Salim.

DuPrau, Jeanne. ***The City of Ember***. In the year 241, twelve-year-old Lina trades jobs on Assignment Day to be a Messenger to run to new places in her decaying but beloved city, perhaps even to glimpse Unknown Regions.

Farmer, Nancy. ***House of the Scorpion***. In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patrón, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

Ferguson, Alane. ***The Christopher Killer***. On the payroll as an assistant to her coroner father, seventeen-year-old Cameryn Mahoney uses her knowledge of forensic medicine to catch the killer of a friend while putting herself in terrible danger.

Frank, E.R. ***Friction***. When a new girl at the private school Alex attends starts rumors about Alex's favorite teacher, Alex and her eighth-grade classmates are not sure how to act around him or with each other.

Funke, Cornelia. ***The Thief Lord***. Escaping the aunt who wants to adopt only one of them, two orphaned brothers run away from Hamburg to Venice, finding shelter with a gang of street children and their leader, the thirteen-year-old "Thief Lord," while also eluding the detective hired to return them to Germany.

Galloway, Gregory. ***As Simple as Snow***. In awe of high school girl Anna Cayne and her penchant for affectionate magic tricks and riddles, a man is baffled by her mysterious disappearance just before Valentine's Day and retraces the time they spent together for clues to her fate.

Gaiman, Neil. ***Coraline***. Looking for excitement, Coraline ventures through a mysterious door into a world that is similar, yet disturbingly different from her own, where she must challenge a gruesome entity in order to save herself, her parents, and the souls of three others.

Gaiman, Neil. ***The Graveyard Book***. Nobody Owens is a normal boy, except that he has been raised by ghosts and other denizens of the graveyard.

Giles, Gail. ***Dead Girls Don't Write Letters***. Fourteen-year-old Sunny is stunned when a total stranger shows up at her house posing as her older sister Jazz, who supposedly died out of town in a fire months earlier.

Giles, Gail. ***What Happened to Cass McBride?*** After his younger brother commits suicide, Kyle Kirby decides to exact revenge on the person he holds responsible.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. ***Double Identity***. When Bethany's parents suddenly drop out of sight with no explanation, leaving her with an aunt, Bethany uncovers shocking secrets that make her question everything she thought she knew about herself and her family.

Haddon, Mark. ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time***. Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.

Hahn, Mary Downing. ***The Old Willis Place: A Ghost Story***. Tired of the rules that have bound them ever since "the bad thing happened," twelve-year-old Diana ignores her brother's warnings and befriends the daughter of the new caretaker, setting in motion events that lead to the release of the spirit of an evil, crazy woman who once ruled the old Willis place.

Hartnett, Sonya. ***Surrender***. As he is dying, a twenty-year-old man known as Gabriel recounts his troubled childhood and his strange relationship with a dangerous counterpart named Finnigan.

Hautman, Pete and Mary Logue. ***Snatched***. Too curious for her own good, Roni, crime reporter for her high school newspaper, teams up with Brian, freshman science geek, to investigate the beating and kidnapping of a classmate.

Hiaasen, Carl. ***Flush***. With their father jailed for sinking a river boat, Noah Underwood and his younger sister, Abbey, must gather evidence that the owner of this casino is emptying his bilge tanks into the waters around their Florida Keys home.

Hobbs, Will. ***The Maze***. Rick, a fourteen-year-old foster child, escapes from a juvenile detention facility near Las Vegas and travels to Canyonlands National Park in Utah where he meets a bird biologist working on a project to reintroduce condors to the wild.

Hoffman, Mary. ***The Falconer's Knot***. Silvano and Chiara, teens sent to live in a friary and a nunnery in Renaissance Italy, are drawn to one another and dream of a future together, but when murders are committed in the friary, they must discover who is behind the crimes before they can realize their love.

Klass, David. ***Dark Angel***. When his older brother is released from prison, seventeen-year-old Jeff's family secret is revealed, causing upheaval in his home, school, and love life.

Koja, Kathe. ***The Blue Mirror***. Seventeen-year-old loner Maggy Klass, who frequently seeks refuge from her alcoholic mother's apartment by sitting and drawing in a local cafe, becomes involved in a destructive relationship with a charismatic homeless youth named Cole.

Koontz, Dean. ***The Husband***. When Mitchell Rafferty receives a phone call that his wife has been kidnapped and there is a two million dollar ransom, his extraordinary commitment to his wife will take him on a seventy-two-hour journey of sacrifice and redemption.

Koontz, Dean. ***Velocity***. A series of communications from a deranged killer in which he is offered a number of devastating choices and deadlines draws Bill Wile into a confrontation with pure evil.

Lowry, Lois. **The Messenger**. In this novel that unites characters from "The Giver" and "Gathering Blue," Matty, a young member of a utopian community that values honesty, conceals an emerging healing power that he cannot explain or understand.

McNamee, Graham. **Acceleration**. Stuck working in the Lost and Found of the Toronto Transit Authority for the summer, seventeen-year-old Duncan finds the diary of a serial killer and sets out to stop him.

McNamee, Graham. **Bonechiller**. Four high school students face off against a soul-stealing beast that has been making young people disappear in their small Ontario town for centuries.

Meyer, Stephenie. **Twilight**. When seventeen-year-old Bella leaves Phoenix to live with her father in Forks, Washington, she meets an exquisitely handsome boy at school for whom she feels an overwhelming attraction and who she comes to realize is not wholly human.

Moody, David. **Hater**. When ordinary people throughout the world suddenly transform into violent killers, one man struggles to retain normalcy and recognize who is trustworthy in a society escalating out of control.

Morgenroth, Kate. **Jude**. Still reeling from his drug-dealing father's murder, moving in with the wealthy mother he never knew, and transferring to a private school, fifteen-year-old Jude is tricked into pleading guilty to a crime he did not commit.

Myers, Walter Dean. **Monster**. While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken.

Napoli, Donna Jo. **Three Days**. When her father suddenly dies while on a business trip leaving her alone on an Italian highway, eleven-year-old Jackie worries what will happen when she is picked up by two men with unknown motives.

Oates, Joyce Carol. **Freaky Green Eyes**. Fifteen-year-old Frankie relates the events of the year leading up to her mother's mysterious disappearance and her own struggle to discover and accept the truth about her parents' relationship.

Oppel, Kenneth. **Airborn**. Matt, a young cabin boy aboard an airship, and Kate, a wealthy young girl traveling with her chaperone, team up to search for the existence of mysterious winged creatures reportedly living hundreds of feet above the Earth's surface.

Pattou, Edith. **East**. A young woman journeys to a distant castle on the back of a great white bear who is the victim of a cruel enchantment.

Peck, Richard. **The River Between Us**. During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled New Orleans to come north to Illinois.

Plum-Ucci, Carol. **The Body of Christopher Creed**. Torey Adams, a high school junior with a seemingly perfect life, struggles with doubts and questions surrounding the mysterious disappearance of the class outcast.

Plum-Ucci, Carol. **The Night My Sister Went Missing**. When his sister goes missing under mysterious circumstances, seventeen-year-old Kurt spends a night at the local police station

overhearing statements from a variety of witnesses that reveal the deep prejudices and shocking secrets of his small beach community.

Plum-Ucci, Carol. ***What Happened to Lani Garver?*** Sixteen-year-old Claire is unable to face her fears about a recurrence of her leukemia, her eating disorder, her need to fit in with the popular crowd on Hackett Island, and her mother's alcoholism until the enigmatic Lani Garver helps her get control of her life at the risk of his own.

Prose, Francine. ***After***. In the aftermath of a nearby school shooting, a grief and crisis counselor takes over Central High School and enacts increasingly harsh measures to control students, while those who do not comply disappear.

Rosoff, Meg. ***How I Live Now***. To get away from her pregnant stepmother in New York City, fifteen-year-old Daisy goes to England to stay with her aunt and cousins, with whom she instantly bonds, but soon war breaks out and rips apart the family while devastating the land.

Sebold, Alice. ***Lovely Bones***.

Sedgwick, Marcus. ***The Dark Horse***. Having risen to power as chief of his people, the Storn, sixteen-year-old Sigurd leads them as they try to resist the bloodthirsty invaders known as the Dark Horse and makes a shocking discovery about his foster sister Mouse.

Setterfield, Diane. ***The Thirteenth Tale***. When her health begins failing, the mysterious author Vida Winter decides to let Margaret Lea, a biographer, write the truth about her life, but Margaret needs to verify the facts since Vida has a history of telling outlandish tales.

Shepard, Jim. ***Project X***. Hanratty and his only friend, Flake, struggle to deal with the nightmare of junior high school--bullying, girls who taunt them, jocks who beat them up, a creepy old man who stalks them, and a disaffected sixth grader who adores them.

Snyder, Zelpha Keatley. ***The Egypt Game***. A group of children, entranced with the study of Egypt, play their own Egypt game, are visited by a secret oracle, become involved in a murder, and befriend the Professor before they move on to new interests, such as Gypsies.

Springer, Nancy. ***The Case of the Missing Marquess: An Enola Holmes Mystery***. Enola Holmes, much younger sister of detective Sherlock Holmes, must travel to London in disguise to unravel the disappearance of her missing mother.

Stead, Rebecca. ***When You Reach Me***. As her mother prepares to be a contestant on the 1980s television game show, "The \$20,000 Pyramid," a twelve-year-old New York City girl tries to make sense of a series of mysterious notes received from an anonymous source that seems to defy the laws of time and space.

Trueman, Terry. ***Inside Out***. A sixteen-year-old with schizophrenia is caught up in the events surrounding an attempted robbery by two other teens who eventually hold him hostage.

Updale, Eleanor. ***Montmorency: Thief, Liar, Gentleman?*** In Victorian London, after his life is saved by a young physician, a thief utilizes the knowledge he gains in prison and from the scientific lectures he attends as the physician's case study exhibit to create a new, highly successful, double life for himself.

Vance, Susanna. **Deep**. Somewhere in the Caribbean, seventeen-year-old Morgan and thirteen-year-old Birdie, two girls whose lives are worlds apart, are brought together by the maniacal Nicholas.

Velde, Vivian Vande. **Heir Apparent**. While playing a total immersion virtual reality game of kings and intrigue, fourteen-year-old Giannine learns that demonstrators have damaged the equipment to which she is connected, and she must win the game quickly or be damaged herself.

Ward, Rachel. **Numbers**. Jem knows when she looks at someone the exact date they will die, so she avoids relationships and tries to keep out of the way, but when she meets a boy named Spider, they become more involved than either of them had planned.

Weeks, Sarah. **So B. It**. After spending her life with her mentally retarded mother and agoraphobic neighbor, twelve-year-old Heidi sets out from Reno, Nevada, to New York to find out who she is.

Werlin, Nancy. **Double Helix**. Eighteen-year-old Eli discovers a shocking secret about his life and his family while working for a Nobel Prize-winning scientist whose specialty is genetic engineering.

Westerfeld, Scott. **Peeps**. Cal Thompson is a carrier of a parasite that causes vampirism, and must hunt down all of the girlfriends he has unknowingly infected.

Winspear, Jacqueline. **Maisie Dobbs**. Private detective Maisie Dobbs must investigate the reappearance of a dead man who turns up at a cooperative farm called the Retreat that caters to men who are recovering their health after World War I.

Wooding, Chris. **The Haunting of Alazabel Cray**. As Thaniel, a wych-hunter, and Cathaline, his friend and mentor, try to rid the alleys of London's Old Quarter of the terrible creatures that infest them, their lives become entwined with that of a woman who may be either mad or possessed.

Yancy, Rick. **The Monstrumologist**. In 1888, twelve-year-old Will Henry chronicles his apprenticeship with Dr. Warthrop, a scientist who hunts and studies real-life monsters, as they discover and attempt to destroy a pod of Anthropophagi.

Yates, Bart. **Leave Myself Behind**.

Zusak, Marcus. **I am the Messenger**. After capturing a bank robber, nineteen-year-old cab driver Ed Kennedy begins receiving mysterious messages that direct him to addresses where people need help, and he begins getting over his lifelong feeling of worthlessness.

List compiled by Diane Linenbroker
Updated: 10/4/2010