

Middle School/Junior High

**CYRM RESOURCE GUIDE
MIDDLE SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH
NOMINEES
(GRADES 6-8)
2013-2014**

Faith, Hope and Ivy June

by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2009

One Crazy Summer

by Rita Williams Garcia
Amistad, 2010

Wonderstruck

by Brian Selznick
Scholastic, 2011

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<p>CALIFORNIA YOUNG READER MEDAL MIDDLE SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH BALLOT</p> <p><i>2013-2014</i></p> <p>_____ <i>One Crazy Summer</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Faith, Hope and Ivy</i> <i>June</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Wonderstruck</i></p>	<p>CALIFORNIA YOUNG READER MEDAL MIDDLE SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH BALLOT</p> <p><i>2013-2014</i></p> <p>_____ <i>One Crazy Summer</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Faith, Hope and Ivy</i> <i>June</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Wonderstruck</i></p>
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ONE CRAZY SUMMER **BY RITA WILLIAMS-GARCIA**

PLOT SYNOPSIS

It is the summer of 1968 and three sisters, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern, travel from Brooklyn, New York to Oakland, California to reunite with their mother, Cecile, who has not been a part of their lives since Fern was a baby. Cecile, now known as Inzilla, is less than welcoming. Dinner comes from Mean Lady Ming's, ordered from a pay phone, and paid for from funds intended for a trip to Disneyland. Big Ma was right, their mother was crazy and she didn't want them.

Breakfast is served at the People's Center. Cecile tells her girls, "Just keeping walking till you see kids and old people lined up." The People's Center is run by the Black Panthers, who also run the Summer Camp program the girls decide to attend. When Sister Mukumbu teaches the girls the meaning of revolution, Vonetta replies, "We didn't come for the revolution. We came for the breakfast."

The only thing Cecile seems to think about are the poems she writes, and peace and quiet, but the girls think about television and the shows they want to see. Taking their cues from the protest movement, they bring their protest to the Establishment. The compromise is a used radio.

Delphine learns about Huey Newton, Bobby Seale and Bobby Hutton from the Black Panther newspaper, and is fearful of attending a "Free Huey" rally, especially when she hears that they will be allowed to perform, displaying their talent.

When Cecile is arrested, along with 2 Black Panthers, the girls take control, cleaning up the house and distributing flyers about the upcoming rally. The girls read Cecile's Poem, *I Birthed a Black Nation*, at the rally. *One Crazy Summer* tells the tale of a volatile, political summer spent in Oakland and the humanizing influence of three children.

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HOOKS

- The novel begins with the three sisters travelling to meet their estranged mother. Is there a relative you have not seen in a long time? If you had the opportunity to spend time with them, what would you like to do?
- Because Delphine is the oldest, she takes on a lot of responsibility for her sisters, seeing that they are fed, cooking dinner for them, seeing that they get to bed on time, and planning a trip to San Francisco. What responsibilities do you have in your family? Write about your responsibilities and how you go about performing them.
- Think about an object, maybe a blanket, stuffed animal, or toy, that brings you a sense of comfort. How long have you had it? Where did you get it?
- Names and Naming is important throughout this novel. What is the meaning and/or background of your name? Conduct research using a variety of resources (this includes relatives!).

MEET THE AUTHOR

Born in Queens, New York, on April 13, 1957, Rita claims that her mother named her 'NoMo' immediately after her birth. She was always a storyteller, dreaming up stories about the real world events that were taking place around her.

Her father was in the military. She graduated from Hofstra University in 1980. She currently lives in Jamaica, New York and teaches at Vermont College of Fine Arts. She says, "Writing stories for young people is my passion and my mission."

For more information, see:

<http://www.ritawg.com/>

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She warns those who contact her – “Students of all ages, I don’t mind answering questions, but “doing homework” days are behind me. There are no wrong answers about my book. There are only your thoughts.”

The Coretta Scott King Award Committee, PEN Norma Klein, American Library Association and Parent’s Choice recognized *On Crazy Summer*. She was also a National Book Award Finalist.

Other notable books by Rita Williams-Garcia include:
P.S. Be Eleven (Amistad, 2013)

Like Sisters on the Homefront (Puffin, 1995)

Blue Tights (Puffin, 1987)

CONNECTIONS

1960s America—The Civil Rights Movement, Black Panthers, and Motown
Magoon, Kekla. *The Rock and the River*. Aladdin, 2010.

Online Information and Resources:

<http://rockhall.com/education/resources/lesson-plans>

Offers a variety of lesson plans utilizing music. Some of these are geared toward older students, but can be easily adapted.

<http://www.nps.gov/malu/forteachers/lessonplansandteacherguides.htm>

Provides extension lesson plans. This would be great to include with a larger unit of study.

<http://ca.pbslearningmedia.org>

Offers a variety of resources for all grade levels and subjects. The “American Identity and Diversity” subcategory of Social Studies is particularly relevant to this novel.

Poetry

Online Information and Resources:

<http://www.poetryoutloud.org/>

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/children/>

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Family Life, Changes, and New Experiences

Birdsall, Jeanne. *The Penderwicks*. Yearling, 2007.

Boyce, Frank Cottrell. *Cosmic*. Walden Pond Press, 2011.

Holm, Jennifer L. *Turtle in Paradise*. Yearling, 2011.

WRITING PROMPTS

- Big Ma insists on calling people and things by their original names (Cassius Clay, Idlewild Airport, and Cecile). Why might this be? What does this tell you about her personality or character?
- When the girls arrive at the airport, Cecile “moved, then moved back” and Delphine thinks she is deciding whether to claim them. Why might Cecile be hesitant about spending the month with her daughters?
- Time and Delphine’s Timex watch are extremely important to her. What does her plain, brown, Timex tell you about Delphine? Why might she be so concerned with time and schedule?
- Both Sister Mukumbu and Crazy Kelvin are Black Panthers. Describe the ways in which they are different from one another.
- How are Sister Mukumbu and Hirohito important to Delphine’s stay in Oakland?
- Why does Delphine become so upset when she realizes the truth about her name?
- What is the significance of Cecile allowing Delphine into the kitchen?
- Which memory of Cecile is most important to Delphine? Explain.
- Why is it important for Delphine to ride Hirohito’s go-kart?
- How does Cecile’s explanation of her childhood change your impression of her? How might it change Delphine’s?

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- Write a letter to Cecile from the point of view of Delphine, Vonetta, or Fern. Explain how it feels to grow up without her and what it is like getting to know her. Specifically reference one event/experience from the novel in your response.
- The summer of 1968 was a volatile time in Oakland California. The Black Panther's clashed with the police. It was a time of protest and change. Supporters of the cause often carried signs or wore buttons. What cause do you believe in? Write about your cause, stating why you support its message.
- Cecile is a poet, writing poetry about the tumultuous times in which she lives. Write a poem about the times in which you live. What are the issues? What are the concerns? What are the worries?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- The Black Panther rally is the culmination of summer camp for the girls. Allow students an opportunity to demonstrate their own talents at the end of the reading.
- Have students create posters that suggest positive characteristics and/or behaviors. Display them.
- There are many references to historical figures throughout the novel. It might be helpful for students to know who these people are. Have students conduct and present information on some of the individuals mentioned.

Faith, Hope and Ivy June

By Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

SYNOPSIS

Growing up in Kentucky for Ivy June Mosley and Catherine Combs, offered two totally different experiences. Ivy June lives in Thunder Creek, which is in the back woods, in a rambling house with an outhouse. Catherine lives in Lexington, in a spacious, modern ranch house, with multiple bathrooms. Their homes are worlds apart.

Ivy June and Catherine June participate in a student-exchange of 7th grade students. Each one lives in the home of the other, attending school and learning what life is like in the two communities, for a period of two weeks. Told through narratives and journal entries, we first see Lexington through the eyes of Ivy June. Catherine's step-grandmother proves to be a challenge, asking rude questions and putting Ivy June down, but Ivy June is not intimidated. At the Buckner Academy for Girls, Ivy June finds that the other students are curious about her. She stands out in Music Class with her strong, natural voice. The girls are given an assignment to write about a person who influenced their life. Ivy June writes about her grandfather, Spencer Mosley, affectionately called Papaw and about his experiences as a coal miner. At a slumber party Ivy June reveals that Catherine has a boyfriend and this creates a rift between the two girls. During Spring Break Ivy June gets to ride a horse and go to the Lexington Opera House to see a production of *Oklahoma*. After a week apart, the girl's change places.

Up at Thunder Creek, Catherine finds life very different from home. Catherine brought more clothes with her than Ivy June had in her whole closet. The first difference is noted when 100 year old Grandmommy has an infection in her toe and Papaw prepares to drive down the hill to get the doctor, who is 80 years old, and thirty miles away. Catherine has a shock when Ivy June lets her know that she only washes her hair once a week, when water is heated for bathing on the weekends. Ivy June lives with Papaw and Mammaw, because her own home is too small, what

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with her mother and out-of-work father, and three brothers living in a small, ramshackle house.

When Catherine's mother goes in for emergency heart surgery and Ivy June's Papaw is trapped in the coalmine, they both realize how important family is to them, and the difference between them fall away.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Born in Anderson, Indiana, Phyllis grew up with her parents reading to her, her older sister and younger brother. Her favorite book as a child was *Huckleberry Finn*. Having been born on January 4, 1933, she grew up during the depression, but began writing at an early age. She frequently wrote stories in elementary school, but when she was 16 years old, she wrote the first piece for which she was paid. Titled, *Mike's Hero* it was published in a church magazine, and Phyllis received \$4.67 for her efforts.

She married young, and when she was 18, she and her first husband moved to Chicago. She worked as a clinical secretary in a university hospital, as an elementary school teacher and as an editorial assistant for a magazine.

In 1960, Phyllis, married her second husband and attended American University, graduating in 1963. She intended to work towards a master's degree, but wrote her first children's book instead. *The Galloping Goat and Other Stories* was published in 1965. She is probably best known for her Shiloh Series: *Shiloh* (Newberry winner 1992), *Shiloh Season*, *Saving Shiloh*.

Naylor is the founder of the PEN/Phyllis Naylor Working Writer Fellowship, which annually rewards an author of children's or young adult fiction. She also hosts a Blog for fans of her *Alice* series. Called the Alice Blog, you can ask her questions by going to friendsofalice@mail.com.

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Writing Prompts

- Thunder Creek and Lexington are both cities within the state of Kentucky. Compare and contrast life in Thunder Creek and Lexington. How are they the same and how are they different?
- Ivy June has a friend named Shirl and Catherine has a friend named Mackenzie. Both friends treat Ivy June and Catherine terribly. Why do you think this is so?
- Grandma Rosemary and great-grandmother “Grandmommy” are outspoken, saying what ever comes into their minds. Do you know someone who is similarly outspoken? If so, how do you deal with them?
- Which school would you rather attend? The Buckner Academy or Ivy June’s school in the mountains. Why?

WONDERSTRUCK

BY BRIAN SELZNICK

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Wonderstruck is a story told in two parts. The first part is the narrative about Ben. Set in 1977 in Gunflint Lake, Minnesota, we find out that Ben was born deaf in one ear. Ben is raised by his aunt and uncle after his librarian mother is killed in a car accident. Because he never knew his father, he is determined to find out something about him. Finding a bookmark of his mother's inscribed "Love, Danny" he calls the phone number written on it, believing it is his father's number. While calling, a lightning bolt hits his house causing him to lose the hearing in his other ear. After waking up in a hospital, he decides to run away to New York City, eventually hiding out in the American Museum of Natural History. At the museum he meets Jamie, whose father works there. Ben leaves the museum to find the bookstore listed on the bookmark. He then meets Rose and they try to piece together how they might be connected.

Rose's story, told in illustrations, begins in Hoboken, New Jersey in October 1927. She is kept at home because she is deaf. She runs away to see her idol, actress Lillian Mayhew. Sneaking into the theater where Miss Mayhew is playing, Rose finds out that Lillian is her mother. Threatening to send Rose back to her father, Rose runs away and ends up at the American Museum of Natural History. There she meets her brother Walter who takes her home with him. Here the story skips forward 50 years and we see Rose as the older woman in the bookstore.

It is revealed that Rose is Ben's grandmother, that Danny was both Rose's son and Ben's father. The book ends with the 1977 New York City blackout.

HOOKS

- Both Ben and Rose have lost their hearing. Hearing is one of our senses. Sight, taste and touch being three others. Which sense do you think is the most important? Why?

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- Both Ben and Rose hide in the American Museum of Natural History. Describe a trip you might have taken to a museum. What did you see? Would it be a good place to hide? Why or why not?
- Wolves play an important role in the novel. What do you know about wolves? What is your feeling towards them?
- The story of *Wonderstruck* is told using text and illustrations. If you were writing a story, would you use text or would you use illustrations? Explain why you would use one or the other.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Born July 14, 1966, Brian Selznick is a Caldecott-winning author and illustrator. He grew up in East Brunswick Township, New Jersey, the eldest of three children. His wall mural of a dinosaur was a big hit in his fifth grade class and he had a one-man show when he was in middle school. He cannot remember a time when he wasn't drawing. He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design and then worked for three years at Eeyore's Books for Children in Manhattan.

He received the 2008 Caldecott Medal for *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, the story of a young orphan in Paris in the 1930's, as he tries to piece together a broken automaton. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* was made into a movie, directed by Martin Scorsese, released in November 2011. Like *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, *Wonderstruck* is told in two parts, the narration and the illustrated story.

Selznick also received a Caldecott Honor for *The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins* in 2002.

He currently divides his time between living in Brooklyn, New York and San Diego, California.

For more information, see:

<http://www.wonderstruckthebook.com/home.htm>

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CONNECTIONS

American Sign Language/Deaf Culture

Duke, Irene. *The Everything Sign Language Book*. Adams Media, 2009.

Matlin, Marlee. *Deaf Child Crossing*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2004.

Sullivan, George. *Helen Keller: Her Life in Pictures*. Scholastic Nonfiction, 2007.

Online Information and Resources:

http://www.wonderstruckthebook.com/essay_deaf-culture.htm

<http://www.signingsavvy.com/>

Family History

Levy, Debbie. *A Year of Goodbyes: A true story of friendship, family, and farewells*. Hyperion Book CH, 2010.

McKissack, Patricia C. *Never Forgotten*. Illustrated by Diane and Leon Dillon. Schwartz & Wade, 2011.

Stead, Rebecca. *When You Reach Me*. Yearling, 2010.

Natural History

George, Jean Craighead. *My Side of the Mountain*. Puffin Books, 2004.

Online Information and Resources:

http://www.wonderstruckthebook.com/essay_history_museums.htm

http://www.wonderstruckthebook.com/essay_history-diorama.htm

<http://www.amnh.org/>

WRITING PROMPTS

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- Several times in the novel, Ben remembers his mom's quote that "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars". What do you think this means? How does it apply to Ben? How might it apply to you?
- Upon waking up in the hospital, how might Ben have felt as he came to the realization that he could no longer hear out of either ear?
- Why would Ben be willing to run away from home? Take into consideration his lack of knowledge of the city as well as his hearing.
- What are your first impressions of Jamie? Do they change throughout the novel? Explain.
- There are moments when Ben thinks about his family back home. How do you think they feel about him running away? Is Ben's decision to run away selfish? Explain.
- Why does Jamie decide to not tell his dad about Ben? Do you think Jamie forgets to call Ben's family? How do you feel about Jamie's decisions?
- What are your first impressions of Rose and Walter? Describe all of the possible ways that Rose and Walter may impact Ben's life.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

This novel offers numerous opportunities to incorporate art, specifically drawing. You could also use this as an opportunity for cross-collaboration with art and social science teachers (if available). Here are some possible activities:

- Choose an image from the novel to try to replicate.
- Select and draw any wildlife image.
- Ben's wooden box holds items that are important to him. Create your own box of personal treasures.
- The dioramas in the museum captivate Ben. Create a diorama using a shoe box as the display case.