

African American Book Challenge Official Rules

After having read the Challenge rules and guidelines, sign and return this sheet to your nearest AACPL branch when you check out your book. For any questions or concerns contact Curator of Education, Trenda Byrd, via email at trenda.byrd@maryland.gov or phone at 410-216-6189.

1. Open to Anne Arundel County students, grades 3rd - 12th.
2. Registration is counted once an essay is emailed to Curator of Education, Trenda Byrd at trenda.byrd@maryland.gov with African American Book Challenge in the Subject line. Along with the essay please include the following criteria:
 - Name
 - Male or Female
 - School
 - Grade
 - Address
 - Phone number
 - Closest library branch
3. Essays must be submitted by May 31, 2015 by 5pm to be considered for the prize.
4. Essays must be no longer than 500 words.
5. ALL required information must be included when essays are sent in order to qualify for the prize.
6. Prize distribution — prize winners will be contacted when to pick up prize. If prizes are not picked up within a week, unless BDM Curator of Education, Trenda Byrd, is notified. Prizes not picked up will be given to the runner up.
7. There will be a \$10 I-Tunes gift card given out as a prize for each group category: 3rd - 5th, 6th - 8th, and 9th - 12th
8. Disputes concerning judging of essays will be taken up with the BDM Curator of Education, who will have the final say (disputes in writing only).
9. Participants can only read the books specified on the flyer.
10. Participants are encouraged — but not required — to visit their local AACPL branch to check out books selected for the contest.
11. Participants cannot read Sparknotes, Cliffnotes, Enotes, or any other form of book summaries.
12. General communication conducted by email/phone only.
13. Family and close friends of the Banneker-Douglass Museum staff and Anne Arundel County Public Library staff are not allowed to participate in the contest.

By entering the African American Book Challenge (hereafter, referred to as the “Challenge”) each contestant releases the Banneker- Douglass Museum, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives, the State of Maryland, and the Anne Arundel County Public Library as well as promotional sponsors, and each of their respective affiliated companies, directors, officers, employees, representatives and agents from any liability whatsoever for any claims, costs, injuries, losses, or damages of any kind arising out of or in connection with the Challenge or with the acceptance, possession, or use of any prize (including, without limitation, claims, costs, injuries, losses and damages related to personal injuries, death, damage to, loss or destruction of property, rights of publicity or privacy, defamation, or portrayal in a false light).

****I have read and agree to the official rules****

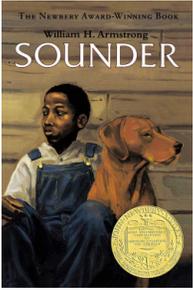
Name of child (Print): _____ Signature: _____

Parent Signature (if child is under 18): _____

Book Summaries

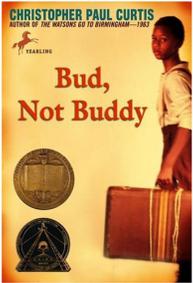
3rd - 5th Grade Books

***Souder* by William H. Armstrong**



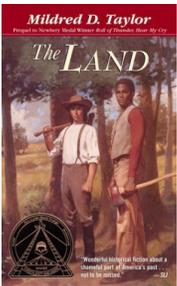
Set in the Deep South, this Newbery Medal winning novel tells the story of the great coon dog, Souder, and the poor sharecroppers who own him. During the difficult years of the nineteenth century South, an African American boy and his poor family rarely have enough to eat. When food suddenly appears on the table one morning, it seems like a blessing. But the sheriff and his deputies are not far behind. The ever-loyal Souder remains determined to help the family he loves as hard times bear down on them. This classic novel shows the courage, love, and faith that bind an African-American family together despite the racism and inhumanity they face.

***Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis**



Bud, Not Buddy is a tender story about an orphaned African American living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression. The main character, Bud, decides to try and find his father. The only clue his mother left him was several flyers about a band in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

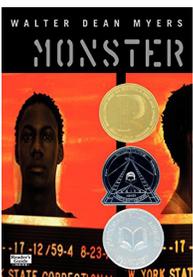
***The Land* by Mildred Taylor**



The son of a prosperous landowner and a former slave, Paul-Edward Logan is unlike any other boy he knows. His white father has acknowledged him and raised him openly—something unusual in post-Civil War Georgia. But as he grows into a man he learns that life for someone like him is not easy. At the age of fourteen, he sets out toward the only dream he has ever had: to find land every bit as good as his father's, and make it his own. Once again inspired by her own history, Ms. Taylor brings truth and power to the newest addition to the award-winning Logan family stories.

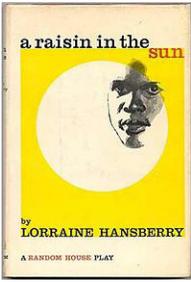
6th - 8th Grade Books

***Monster* by Walter Dean Myers**



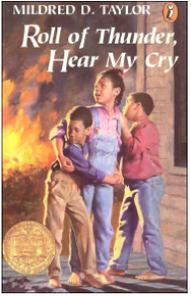
A sixteen year old boy named Steve Harmon finds himself on trial for murder after he is accused as acting as a lookout for the young men who actually commit a robbery at a Harlem drugstore and kill the store owner. The story is presented predominantly from his own viewpoint in the form of a screenplay and journal entries that he writes, as he faces the trial and possibility of spending the rest of his life in prison.

***A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry**



A Raisin in the Sun examines the effects of racial prejudice on the fulfillment of an African-American family's dreams. The play centers on the Youngers, a working-class family that lives in Chicago's South Side during the mid-twentieth century. Shortly before the play begins, the head of the Younger family, Big Walter, dies, leaving the family to inherit a \$10,000 life insurance payment. The family eagerly awaits the arrival of the insurance check, which has the potential to make the family's long deferred dreams into reality. However, the members of the Younger family have conflicting ideas — conflicting dreams — regarding the best use for the money, which causes tension.

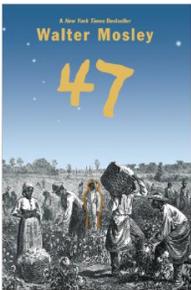
***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor**



This is a book about an African American family in Mississippi in the 1930's, told from the point of view of the only daughter, Cassie Logan, a fourth-grader. It shows the harsh realities of segregation, racism, and the oppression of blacks in the South during this time period. The book is mainly about the Logan children becoming more acquainted with the social issues of their world, feeling the injustice, and being powerless to change the status quo.

9th - 12th Grade Books

47 by Walter Mosley



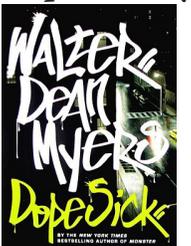
47 is about fourteen-year-old slave boy growing up under the watchful eye of a brutal master in 1832, meets the mysterious Tall John, who introduces him to a magical science and also teaches him the meaning of freedom.

***Flygirl* by Sherri Smith**



Ida Mae Jones dreams of flight. Ida Mae's father was a pilot and being black didn't stop him from fulfilling his dreams. When America enters the war with Germany and Japan, the Army creates WASP, the Women Air Force Service Pilots — and Ida suddenly sees a way to fly as well as do something significant to help her brother stationed in the Pacific. But even the WASP won't accept her as a black woman, forcing Ida Mae to make a difficult choice of pretending to be white to be accepted into the program.

***Dope Sick* by Walter Dean Myers**



Seeing no way out of his difficult life in Harlem, seventeen-year-old Jeremy "Lil J" Dance flees into a house after a drug deal goes awry and meets a weird man, who shows different turning points in Lil J's life when he could have made better choices.

Essay Questions

Directions: After you have finished reading your book, choose ONE of the essay questions that corresponds with your book to answer. You cannot answer both questions. Essays cannot exceed 500 words. For any questions, please contact BDM Curator of Education, Trenda Byrd at trenda.byrd@maryland.gov.

3rd - 5th Grade Books

***Souder* by William H. Armstrong**

1. Loneliness is a recurring theme throughout *Souder*. How does the boy try to combat the loneliness and isolation of his life? Does his loneliness offer him any inspiration to better his circumstances? Explain your answer.
2. Using descriptions and details in the book compare the life of the boy's family with the life of the landowner's family.

***Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis**

1. During the depression, many children were forced to travel by themselves. Think about Bud's experiences in the library, the bread line, and the Hooverville. Do you think he was luckier than most children on their own? Why or why not?
2. Bud's story takes place during the 1930s, when orphanages are still common and lots of children and families have lost everything due to the Great Depression. How do you think life would be different for Bud if he was growing up today?

***The Land* by Mildred Taylor**

1. Why is owning land so important to Paul? What did owning land mean to blacks during that time?
2. Why did Taylor entitle the novel *The Land*? Write one or two other possible titles and explain why they are appropriate.

6th - 8th Grade Books

***Monster* by Walter Dean Myers**

1. Even though the ending of the book is ambiguous about Steve Harmon's guilt or innocence, how does the author show Steve to be more human than monster?
2. Life in prison is a big adjustment for Steve Harmon and has a major impact on the way he feels about himself. Describe the details of prison life that most affect Steve, including specific examples from the text. You should include information on how prison changes Steve and/or does not change him? Explain in detail.

***A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry**

1. Discuss the title of the play. How does it relate to the dreams of each of the characters?
2. Think about the role of money in the play. How does it affect different characters?

***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor**

1. Discuss the role of nature in this novel. Does it work in opposition to human interests?
2. Analyze the non-corrupt white characters like Jeremy Simms. Can you identify any others? What seems to motivate them? Are they better or worse off than the black characters?

9th - 12th Grade Books

***47* by Walter Mosley**

1. Compare Eloise, 84, and Nola. How do they as characters debunk stereotypes of teenage girls today?
2. Compare this book with another that you have read that is set during the period of slavery.

***Flygirl* by Sherri Smith**

1. After returning home, Thomas uses a derogatory term for the Japanese, “Nips” (pg 196). Why isn’t Ida Mae or anyone else offended? Are there any circumstances in which derogatory terms like this one are acceptable? Explain your answer.
2. In *Flygirl*, Sherri L. Smith uses the terms “Negro” and “colored,” which were commonly used in the 1940s but aren’t used now. What do you think of her choice to use these terms? How would using contemporary terms have changed her novel?

***Dope Sick* by Walter Dean Myers**

1. Compare and contrast Lauryn and Sabrina. How are their relationships with Lil J similar and how are they different?
2. Lil J doesn’t get a good look at Kelly’s face until the final chapter. Why do you think the author conceals Kelly’s identity? Are there any clues in the book that give you information about Kelly? Explain your answer.