2020 Sasquatch Nominees Booktalks

Tumble & Blue by Cassie Beasley
What would you do to get rid of a curse placed on your family? Would you even want to get rid of a curse that makes you win every competition you enter? I mean, curses that make your life bad are easy to plan to get rid of, but what about the ones that make your life good? Tumble and Blue don’t have to worry about the good curses, because they are only experiencing bad curses. Do they have any chance of being chosen to enter the Okefenokee swamp, brave poisonous snakes, and alligators as they search for just the right alligator… the one that has the power to remove the family curses?

Bailey’s Story by W. Bruce Cameron
Bailey escapes from a possible puppy mill as a very young pup. The first person to pick him up, stops and leaves Bailey alone inside a shut truck on a hot day. Bailey is in distress, when Ethan’s mom rescues him from the truck and take him home. He immediately bonds with Ethan and becomes Ethan’s dog. He considers it the job he was born to do. Life is wonderful when Ethan is home, but then school starts and the young pup must try to figure out how to survive the long days. It is a sharp learning curve. The summers are spent on Grandma and Grandpa’s farm where he encounters the black cat with a white stripe down its back. It doesn’t understand that he just wants to be friendly. The years go by with life being mostly blissful. He is always on the watch to ensure that Ethan’s life is never in danger. But he doesn’t know how to make his family understand the danger posed by Todd, the boy down the street.

Forever or a Long, Long Time by Caela Carter
Flora and Julian can’t even remember their birth mom, and have trouble recalling all the foster homes they stayed in. Some of their foster families were ok, and others they’d probably rather forget. But now that they’ve been adopted and live in a loving forever family they are struggling to understand what family really means. This book about love and trust and mending things that feel broken skillfully takes the reader inside the heart and mind of each character. You’ll feel their pain and worry and hope and joy and finish this book with a deeper understanding of family relationships.

Many Reflections of Miss Jane Deming by J. Anderson Coats
Sunshine. Sand. Palm trees. That’s what Jane expects to see when she, her stepmother, and her little brother arrive in Washington Territory in the 1860s. To Jane’s surprise, Seattle is rainy, muddy, and wild - not the paradise Mr. Mercer promised was waiting for them at the end of their four-month journey. Life on the frontier is a challenge, and Jane must face her disappointment and learn new skills like canoeing and skinning animals if she wants to make Washington Territory feel like home.
**The Only Road** by Alexandra Diaz
Jaime and Angela are teenaged cousins living in a small village in Guatemala. When a gang murders Angela’s brother, they know they must flee to escape the same fate. With the help of their extended family, they head north to find an older brother in New Mexico. Along the way, they encounter friends and foes as they hitchhike, ride buses, hop trains, and walk two thousand miles in search of a new, safer life. This is a timely tale of hardship that puts a human face on the very real challenges faced by young people around the world.

**Refugee** by Alan Gratz
Josef is growing up in dangerous times for European Jews. It is the ever of WWII. His family has already experienced the wrath of the Nazi regime. A miracle has occurred and they have been granted permission to leave on board a ship for South/Central America. Now the ship is nearing the Cuban shoreline. Will they be allowed to disembark? It is the mid-90's, when Isabella's family has decided that they must trust the rumor is correct and Castro's soldiers will allow them to set off in a boat to attempt to make the Florida coastline. Just to place one foot on shore will grant them refugee status. Mahmoud's story begins about 20 years later. His family is fleeing the war in Syria. Upon reaching the coastline, they are on the merces of those who charge high prices to place them on dangerously overloaded boats to attempt to reach the shore of the next country. Will they survive and how do these three stories intertwine?

**Real Friends** by Shannon Hale
What happens when your best friend ever since you were little starts hanging out with the most popular girl in class and is the leader of “The Group”? Everyone wants to be Jen’s best friend and Shannon just wants to have her best friend Adrienne back. Can she stand up for herself between all of the bullying the girls are willing to take part of to be Jen’s #1? A real account told through graphic novel of author Shannon Hale’s experience working through the roller coaster of friendship.

**The Song From Somewhere Else** by A. F Harrold
When I first got Song from Somewhere else, I thought I was in for a poor, abandoned child story, who finds the courage to face down bullies. Boy was I wrong. What’s with that cat? They’re always host of some sinister magic, aren’t they? When you first see that shadow image of that cat on the first blank page, with those eyes, take a long look. You’re in for a surprise. And Frank, or what they call the main character, Francesca was wrong, too, about lots of things. Is Nick Underbridge related to Mrs. Umbridge? I quickly came to love Frank’s voice, and that of her stomach, which talks to her and gives her some wise advice. The story and the illustrations are perfect matches of this surprising story.

**The Mighty Odds** by Amy Ignatow
Told from different perspectives with cartoons sprinkled in – Nick, Farshad, Cookie, and Martina find themselves stuck on a bus together while the rest of the class is on the other bus. A mysterious bus crash leaves them with some interesting... mighty odd
superpowers. These superpowers include changing eye color, teleporting precisely four inches to the left, super strength only in the thumbs, and mind reading but only when people are thinking about directions. These four unlikely to be friends must work together to help stop their substitute teacher from destroying the world with his new mighty odd superpower.

**Mrs. Smith's Spy School for Girls by Beth McMullan**
Abby surrounds herself with trouble and lands herself at a boarding school. She of course is not happy about her new situation, but quickly makes new friends and has great adventures in trying to escape – like flying from a window using a bed sheet. But she gets caught and learns that Mrs. Smith’s boarding school is more than meets the eye. It houses an elite spy school and Abby finds out that her mother is one of the greatest spies to come from this exact school. Now she races against time to find her mother who has gone missing with some valuable information that the good and the bad guys want. Filled with espionage, laughs, fun gadgets, and more that will keep the pages turning.

**Spirit Hunters by Ellen Oh**
In Ellen Oh’s chilling mystery thriller *Spirit Hunters*, 12-year-old Harper Raine and her family have just moved to Washington D.C., for a fresh start. Harper is recovering from a tragic incident at her old school involving a fire that left Harper with several broken bones and missing memories. Instantly, Harper has a bad feeling about the house and soon hears rumors that it is haunted. Unsettling dreams and visions about previous occupants of the house lead Harper to the conclusion that bad things happen to those who live there. And when Harper’s little brother begins to act oddly evil, Harper realizes she must uncover the history of the house to save her brother from possession. Will Harper uncover the house’s secrets and remember the past in time to save her brother’s future?

**The Goldfish Boy by Lisa Thompson**
Matthew has obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). He hasn’t been to school in weeks, because he refuses to leave his bedroom. He’s afraid of all the germs outside of his room and his hands are bleeding from his constant hand washing and cleaning. Since he’s stuck at home, he likes to keep records of what people in his neighborhood are doing. He knows all of his neighbors’ usual routines. But when his neighbor Mr. Charles has his two grandchildren come to stay with him, the little boy who is not even 2 yet goes missing. Matthew becomes suspicious of every one of his neighbors and tries to unravel the mystery while also unraveling his own secrets and the forbidden truth behind his OCD.