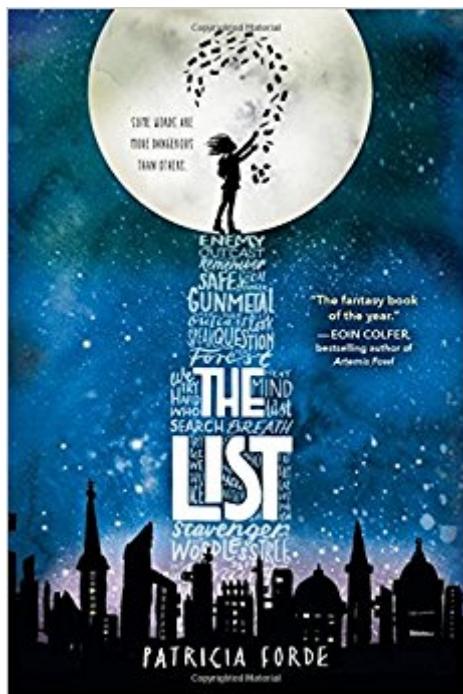


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The List



Synopsis

"The fantasy book of the year." —Eoin Colfer, bestselling author of Artemis Fowl

Fahrenheit 451 meets The Giver for middle grade readers! You are The Wordsmith now. Are you ready for the challenge? The city of Ark is the last safe place on Earth. To make sure humans are able to survive, everyone in Ark must speak List, a language of only 500 words. Everyone that is, except Letta. As apprentice to the Wordsmith, Letta can read all the words that have ever existed. Forbidden words like freedom, music, and even pineapple tell her about a world she's never known. One day her master disappears and the leaders of Ark tell Letta she is the new Wordsmith and must shorten List to fewer and fewer words. Then Letta meets a teenage boy who somehow knows all the words that have been banned. Letta's faced with a dangerous choice: sit idly by and watch language slowly slip away or follow a stranger on a path to freedom . . . or banishment.

Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #26,688 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Dystopian #89 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Chapter Books & Readers > Intermediate Readers #207 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Girls & Women

Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 8

Customer Reviews

"An electric sci-fi novel with a strong ecological and moral stance." - The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books "[A] gripping postapocalyptic thriller... it is a well-crafted page-turner, as well as a compelling commentary on censorship and the role of language, while also inviting discussion about what distinguishes humans from animals. For dystopian fiction aficionados, this well-paced entry

offers plenty of food for thought." - *School Library Journal*"Forde's pacing and characterization are compelling... An intriguing speculation about authoritarian futures with a terrific cover." - *Kirkus*"Patricia Forde crafts a richly imagined future society, the development of which feels all too plausible in today's climate... This is a story with a message and a purpose, one full of relevance and originality. With this novel, Forde reminds us that words do hold power, both to heal and to destroy, and that because of this we should be mindful of how we employ them. This is a love letter to the ways love and art can lift our spirits and replenish our souls in a world that often seems dark." - *BookPage*"compelling to readers of all ages, *The List* is a spellbinding book about language, the environment, and humanity's role in protecting them both...A beautiful and absorbing read you won't soon forget." - *Bustle.com*"Forde's exploration of language as both weapon and savior is a noble one, and environmental undertones bolster its power. Pair with Patrick Ness' *The Knife of Never Letting Go*." - *Booklist*"This novel could be compared Jeanne DuPrau's *The City of Ember* (Random House, 2003) where the corrupt government controls the necessities of life." - *School Library Connection*

Patricia Forde lives in the Galway, Ireland. She has published three picture books, lots of easy readers, two plays, and her first novel, *The List*. She has also written for several television series, including dramas for children and teenagers and English- and Irish-language soap operas. In another life, she was a primary school teacher and the artistic director of the Galway Arts Festival. She now lives with her husband, two teenagers, and a dog called Ben. Imogen Wilde is a stage, film, and voice actor who graduated from Drama Studio London. She has toured in the UK and Ireland playing Lulu in *The Birthday Party*, has filmed two Rosamunde Pilcher adaptations for the German television channel ZDF, has performed at the Arcola and the Bunker Theatre, and has performed Shakespeare for children. As a voice artist, she narrates audiobooks for both children and adults.

--This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

My 11yo 6th grader is an avid reader. Here is her review:--- "Letta is the word-smith's apprentice, one of the few people in Ark who can speak freely. One day while her master is away, a mysterious boy comes into the shop, and her adventure begins! This is a wonderful novel, with adventure and mystery on every page. I love that answers are gradually revealed throughout the book. My favorite character was Letta, who is a great role model and strong heroine: she's smart, kind and determined. She faces many challenges and makes interesting discoveries. She kept me reading. The book does remind me a lot of The Giver (Giver Quartet). There is one bad word (starts

with a d) said by the villain towards the end, and there is some violence in the plot. For that reason, I'd recommend it for 6th graders and up. I loved the book and how thought-provoking it was!"

Patricia Forde's THE LIST is a dystopian novel for tweens set in a place called The Ark. Letta, about twelve years old, is an apprentice to Benjamin, the wordsmith. In this time and place, people are under the supervision of Noa, the leader of the people of the Ark. Noa, who supposedly saved these people during an event called the Melting, believes that words and language are the root of many problems and wants the number of permitted words \rightarrow The List -- steadily decreased until there is no language at all; he even demands banning of courtesy words such as "please" and "thank you." Benjamin and Letta must do Noa's bidding or face consequences \rightarrow exile, torture, or worse. Benjamin disappears, and Letta becomes the wordsmith, not just a student. She discovers Noa's plot to do away with all language, and she rebels. Along the way she makes new friends and must be very careful about to whom, when, and where she speaks words that are not on The List. I immediately saw parallels between this novel and Orwell's 1984. The dictatorial Noa quickly compares to Big Brother; Letta compares to a young female Winston Smith. The friends she makes along the way could compare to the Proles. THE LIST is, however, geared toward a tween audience, not the older-teen or adult audience of 1984. Readers still see peril and harshness, which may be too much for more sensitive tweens, but the peril and harshness do suit the circumstances and are at a level for tweens. Highly recommended!

A pretty decent entry in the "Hunger Games meets..." genre of dystopian novels. In this case those "games" meet "Fahrenheit 451" as we examine the power of, not stories *per se*, but the very words that make up language. I think its target audience, middle schoolers, who may be less familiar with the numerous other books that touch on the same area will be even more enthralled by Letta, Finn, Amelia, and the rest as they strive to preserve nothing less than the very heart of what makes us human. An adventure well worth the reading.

The List is a dystopian story that takes place on Earth after some tragic \rightarrow Melting \rightarrow that wipes out much of humanity and animals and technology and words. The only island these survivors know of is their own, with their kindly city called Ark, run by John Noa. Noa is convinced that it was the meaningless wordplay that kept humanity from dealing with the problems that led to the Melting, and thus has instigated The List, a

required set of vernacular that at the beginning of the book he cuts to 500 words. Letta is the apprentice Wordsmith, someone who hones The List, and writes out List vocabulary cards for everybody (by hand), and collects other words for a time when humanity may need them. Letta thinks everything is dandy until a series of events—starting with her harboring an injured dissenter—make her question everything John Noa has told her. As far as the story of Letta and the List is concerned, this was a fun book. Most of the characters were a bit flat, but that was ok; Letta wasn't bad. The Wordsmith idea was fun, I liked when it talked about her work; she was a horrible rebel because she couldn't keep a straight face and the government enforcers were on to her from the first moment, I'm not sure why they left her loose for as long as they did, but it was kind of funny how inept she was at that. Speaking of the rebels though—they played music and painted art pieces, trying to influence the populace with this forbidden material. Not a bad idea to raise awareness that Noa was keeping more than words from them, but really, that's ALL they seemed to do. Not impressive. And I guess they didn't have any scientists in their group, or didn't employ them, just artists. Meh. Weak, but I let it slide. I'm also not sure that people who knew music (anyone older than 50? I think) would allow it to be banned. Honestly. What annoyed me most though was the not-at-all-hidden preachiness of global warming. Noa tried to warn people but the politicians continued to say everything was ok, and that's why the warming happened, and although it was gradual I guess humanity never adapted, and it rained for 3 weeks (everywhere? or just here?) and that flooded everything. Kind of hard to believe. And last time I heard, most politicians aren't saying anything of the sort. Also it annoyed me that the book (Noa) mentions it was also the scientists' fault, that they were Edeniers. What was Noa, then? A preacher? And he was surprised people didn't listen to him? For a work of fiction, it was awfully intent on current events, even though the point of the book was the WORDS. The author would have been better to leave the Melting as an unexplained and un-dwelled-upon phenomenon, and concentrated on her actual story. However, it was a fun concept, and a good YA read. There is definitely violence but it's not discussed in much detail (someone gets fingernails pulled off, a pregnant woman is tortured, etc.). There is a slight (maybe forced) romance where nothing happens. The scariest thing that happens is I'm not sure the people (humanity, Letta) really end up in a better spot than where they started, and they don't seem to have a plan to do so. How far humanity falls. I read this as an ARC in exchange for a fair review. I

love the book cover and the quality of the printing.(Review originally posted on myrareadthis.wordpress.com.)

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