

# Ground Zero (Feb 2021)

By:

Gratz, Alan, 1972-

Ages 9-12

Fiction

Award Winner

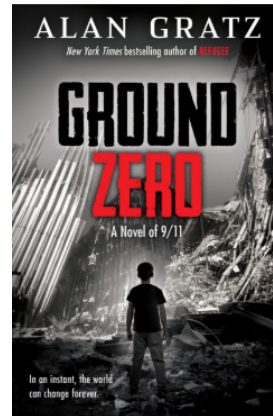
Goodreads rating:

2955 reviews

Min/max grade level:4 - 7

Lexile score:690

Accelerated reader:IL: MG, BL: 4.8, AR Pts: 9



## DESCRIPTION

Brandon is visiting his dad on the 107th floor of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 when the attack comes; Reshmina is a girl in Afghanistan who has grown up in the aftermath of that attack but dreams of peace, becoming a teacher and escaping her village and the narrow role that the Taliban believes is appropriate for women--both are struggling to survive, both changed forever by the events of 9/11.

## About this Book

Mix and match elements from this book to find others you might enjoy. The more you choose, the narrower your search.

### Appeal factors

Emotionally intense

Fast-paced

Multiple perspectives

Parallel narratives

Strong sense of place

Well-developed characters

### Genres and themes

Historical fiction

Life during wartime

### Subjects

Afghan War, 2001-2021  
Asian history  
New York City history  
September 11 Terrorist Attacks, 2001  
Survival  
Survival (after disaster)  
Teenage boys  
Teenage girls  
Terrorism

#### Times and places

2000s (Decade)  
2010s  
21st century  
Afghanistan

#### AWARD WINNER

Beehive Awards (Utah): Young Adult Books  
Buckeye Children's Book Award (Ohio): Grades 6-8  
Colorado Children's Book Award: Junior Book (1992-present)  
Golden Archer Awards (Wisconsin): Middle/Jr. High School  
Great Lakes Great Books Award (Michigan): Grades 6-8  
Great Stone Face Children's Book Award (New Hampshire)  
Iowa Association of School Librarians Book Awards: Iowa Teen Award  
Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Awards: Grades 6-8  
Sequoyah Book Awards (Oklahoma): Intermediate Books  
South Carolina Book Awards: Junior Books  
Truman Readers Award (Missouri)  
William Allen White Children's Book Award (Kansas): Sixth-Eighth Grade Winners

#### Meet the author -

*Gratz, Alan, 1972-*

Gratz, Alan, 1972- Gender:

Male;

Gratz, Alan, 1972- Country:

United States, North America

American author Alan Gratz writes in several genres, including historical fiction, science fiction, steampunk, and mysteries. He places young characters into compelling, detailed settings, using lots of sensory language. He is currently best known for writing intense historical fiction, starring teenage boys who face tumultuous times. Start with: Refugee.

Genre:Historical fiction;Science fiction;Steampunk

Tone:Action-packed;Suspenseful;Moving

Writing style:Fast-paced;Plot-driven;Well-researched

## REVIEWS

Booklist:

Grades 4-7 /\* Starred Review \*/ With his signature accessibility and insight, Gratz tackles events on both U.S. soil and abroad in *Ground Zero*. Juxtaposed narratives alternate between September 11, 2001, New York City and September 11, 2019, Afghanistan, linked by destruction, death—and hope. Brandon, out of school due to a fight, finds himself in the North Tower when it's hit. Separated from his dad, he alternately helps and is helped by those trying to escape the terror they don't yet understand. Miles and years away, Reshmina's life has been disrupted by the terror of warring forces for as long as she can remember, but on this day she brings it closer than ever by aiding a wounded American soldier. Subtexts and well-developed secondary characters give readers fuller perspectives surrounding the politic...

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School Library Journal:

/\* Starred Review \*/ Gr 4-7—Gratz (Refugee) writes a searing indictment of America's involvement in Afghanistan, told through two gripping parallel narratives. On September 11, 2001, nine-year-old Brandon accompanies his father to his job at New York City's World Trade Center. The two are separated during the ensuing terrorist attack, and, with help from others, Brandon survives. Eighteen years later, 11-year-old Reshmina, living in a remote Afghan village, sees her country and family devastated by the Taliban and the U.S. military, despite both armies' claims of protection. Brandon's and Reshmina's lives intertwine in a fateful encounter that challenges America's policies

as well as its presence in Afghanistan, and puts a human face on the resulting suffering. Vivid details immerse readers in the tw...

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Publishers Weekly:

Publishing in time for the 20th anniversary of 9/11, this tautly paced novel by Gratz (*Resist*) explores the events of that tragedy and the subsequent American response through two parallel story lines. In September of 2019, devoted student Reshmina, 11, lives in a mountainside village in Afghanistan, dreaming of a future other than marriage. When she rescues an American soldier who is wounded by the Taliban, her village becomes a Taliban target. On Sept. 11, 2001, after being suspended for standing up to a bully with his fists, nine-year-old Brooklynite Brandon Chavez accompanies his kitchen manager father to the Windows of the World restaurant in the World Trade Center's North Tower. In alternating perspectives, the narrative tackles grim realities of both scenarios, including ongoing violence i...

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Kirkus:

Parallel storylines take readers through the lives of two young people on Sept. 11 in 2001 and 2019. In the contemporary timeline, Reshmina is an Afghan girl living in foothills near the Pakistan border that are a battleground between the Taliban and U.S. armed forces. She is keen to improve her English while her twin brother, Pason, is inspired by the Taliban and wants to avenge their older sister, killed by an American bomb on her wedding day. Reshmina helps a wounded American soldier, making her village a Taliban target. In 2001, Brandon Chavez is spending the day with his father, who works at the World Trade Center's Windows on the World restaurant. Brandon is heading to the underground mall when a plane piloted by al-Qaida hits the tower, and his father is among those killed. The two story...

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