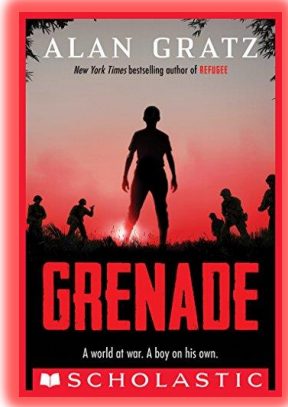


Booklist Review



Books For Youth - Fiction - Historical Fiction



Grenade.

Gratz, Alan (author).

Oct. 2018. 288p. Scholastic, \$16.99
([9781338245714](#)). Grades 4-7.

[REVIEW](#). First published
September 15, 2018 (*Booklist*).

Okinawa native Hideki is 13 when American forces storm his Pacific island during WWII, and he and his classmates are pressed into service by the Japanese army. They are given two grenades and told one is

to kill the American “monsters” and the other is to kill oneself afterward. Ray, 18, is a Marine enlistee fresh from a farm in Nebraska and about to enter his first battle. Both boys share the fear of the unknown, the primal need to survive, and a wish that the unnecessary death and destruction were done with. Hideki and Ray see battle up and down the island, using their wits and adrenaline to stay alive, but when they meet, the war changes for both. Told by both young men, the story is gripping from start to finish as each encounters ambushes, engages in battle and experiences its devastating aftermath, and mourns the plight of innocent civilians caught in the middle. Impossible to put down, the story unapologetically demonstrates how war affects people emotionally and physically. Some terminology used for accuracy (per the author’s notes) and graphic descriptions may upset some readers. However, it is not without heartwarming and hopeful moments, especially as Hideki realizes that he possesses untapped stores of courage. Action fans will have this flying off the shelves. — *Jeanne Fredriksen*

Booklist Editors Recommend

Titles similar to *Grenade*

- *Soldier Boy*
- *No Surrender Soldier*