



***Scythe* by Neal Shusterman**

ISBN: 9781442472433 (Trade Paperback)

Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2016

\*Age Range: 12+ (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: 8+ (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

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Two teens must learn the “art of killing” in this Printz Honor–winning book, the first in the chilling, *New York Times* bestselling *Arc of a Scythe* series from National Book Award–winning author Neal Shusterman.

A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: humanity has conquered them all...even death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life, and they are commanded to do so in order to keep the size of the population under control.

Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the “art” of taking life, knowing that failure could mean losing their own. The more they train, the more Citra and Rowan learn that a perfect world comes with a heavy price.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

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★ “This first volume in an anticipated trilogy offers forbidden love, mass murders, cool philosophical musings, and a well-developed futuristic society – plenty to guarantee interest in the planned two followups.” — [BCCB](#), starred review

★ “Shusterman is no stranger to pushing boundaries. *Scythe* owes an obvious debt to [Unwind](#) (2007) and its sequels, and this succeeds as a sort of shadow companion to Patrick Ness’ Chaos Walking trilogy: instead of exploring the ways in which men are monsters, this deals in what happens to men when there *are* no monsters. When our reach does not exceed our grasp, when comfort is more easily obtained than struggle, when our essential humanity doesn’t burn out but becomes slowly irrelevant, what becomes of us? Readers will find many things in these pages. Answers to such unsettling questions will not be among them.”—[Booklist](#), starred review

★ “Elegant and elegiac, brooding but imbued with gallows humor, Shusterman's dark tale thrusts realistic, likeable teens into a surreal situation and raises deep philosophic questions. A thoughtful and thrilling story of life, death, and meaning.”—[Kirkus](#), starred review

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★ “Calling to mind Le Guin’s “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas,” Shusterman’s story forces readers to confront difficult ethical questions. Is the gleanings of a few acceptable if it maximizes the happiness of all? Is it possible to live a moral life within such a system? This powerful tale is guaranteed to make readers think deeply.” —[Publishers Weekly](#), starred review

★ “Shusterman starts off this series in dramatic fashion as he creates an engrossing world that pulls readers in and refuses to let them go. **VERDICT** A truly astounding, unputdownable read and a fast-paced beginning to an excellent sci-fi series. A must-have.” —[School Library Journal](#), starred review

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- ALA Michael L. Printz Award Honor Book
- CCBC Choices (Cooperative Children's Book Council)
- Lincoln Award: Illinois Teen Readers' Choice Master List
- ALA Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers
- Grand Canyon Reader Award Nominee (AZ)
- Beehive Award Master List (UT)
- Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award Master List
- Florida Teens Read Master List
- Texas Lone Star Reading List
- Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award Master List (IL)
- PEN USA Literary Award Finalist
- Nevada Young Readers' Award Nominee
- Colorado Blue Spruce Book Award
- Georgia Peach Book Award for Teen Readers Honor Book
- Volunteer State Book Award (TN)
- Golden Sower Award (NE)
- TAYSHAS Reading List (TX)
- Nutmeg Book Award (CT)
- Blue Hen Book Award (DE)
- ALA/YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults - Top Ten
- California Book Award Finalist
- ALA/YALSA Teens' Top Ten List
- Wisconsin State Reading Association's Reading List
- Gateway Readers Award (MO)
- Green Mountain Book Award (VT)
- Florida Teens Read Award
- Bangkok Book Award Finalist
- Oregon Book Award
- Young Hoosier Book Award (IN)
- Louisiana Teen Readers' Choice Award
- Land of Enchantment Black Bear Book Award
- YARP Book Award Runner Up
- California Young Reader Medal
- University of Notre Dame Alexandria Award

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Reading Group Guide](#)
- [Book Trailer](#)
- [Author Website](#)

## **RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES**

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[AUTHOR NEAL SHUSTERMAN VISITS DELAWARE CITY SCHOOLS DESPITE BOOK BANNING CONTROVERSY](#)  
[WINDSOR SCHOOL BOARD FACES BACKLASH AFTER REJECTING 'SCYTHE' FROM CURRICULUM](#)  
['SCYTHE' BACK IN CLASS IN CALIFORNIA DISTRICT; UTAH REMOVES 23<sup>RD</sup> BOOK FROM ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS](#)

## **AUTHOR STATEMENT**

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“Censorship hurts everyone.”—[Neal Shusterman](#)

## **\*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

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