*Tree Girl* by Ben Mikaelsen (author of *Touching Spirit Bear)*

**About This Book:**

They call Gabriela “Tree Girl” or Laj Ali Re Jayub in her native language of Quiche. Gabi climbs trees to be within reach of the eagles and watch the sun rise into an empty sky. She is at home among the outstretched branches of the Guatemalan forests. Then one day from the safety of a tree, Gabi witnesses the sights and sounds of an unspeakable massacre. She sees rape and murder and vows to be Tree Girl no more.

Earthbound, she joins the hordes of refugees struggling to reach the Mexican border. She has lost her whole family; her entire village has been wiped out. Yet she clings to the hope that she will be reunited with her youngest sister, Alicia. Over dangerous miles and months of hunger, thirst, and the threat of more violence from soldiers, Gabriel’s search for Alicia and for a safe haven becomes a search for self. Having turned back on her own identity, can she hope to claim a new life?

Interest Level: Grades 7-11

Grade Level Equivalent: 5.8

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| Key Vocabulary Terms | Definition |
| Apathy |  |
| Empathy |  |
| Bigotry |  |
| Discrimination |  |
| Prejudice |  |
| Racism |  |
| Stereotyping |  |
| Scapegoating |  |