

# SUMMER READING 2018

Entering  
7-8



Public Schools of Brookline, Massachusetts



The Public Schools of Brookline, Massachusetts

## Educational Technology and Library Department

Scott Moore, Director

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

Creating a school-wide culture of reading has always been a priority for the teachers, librarians, and literacy specialists in the Brookline Public Schools. In each school that culture is built and nurtured in myriad ways—through the study of literary elements, read-alouds, book talks, literature circles, genre studies, author visits, evening parent/child book events, independent reading projects, participation in Massachusetts Book Awards and summer reading.

Summer is a perfect time to find books to read for pleasure. This list is a starting point to help you select books that match your interests and includes a variety of titles across many genres, levels, and lengths. Students are encouraged to read at least 5 or 6 books. Our goal is to develop readers who not only *can* read, but who *choose* to read for enjoyment.

Summer reading is also a great opportunity to hone your reading skills and maintain your fluency. According to a recent report from John Hopkins University's Center for Summer Learning children who do not read over the summer actually lose ground in reading proficiency. The report concludes that the effect of reading four or five books during the summer is large enough to prevent a decline in reading scores from spring to fall.

In addition to this list, Brookline's public libraries and bookstores offer a wealth of titles and suggestions to help you find just the right book for your enjoyment.

Explore. Read. Enjoy,

Brookline K-8 School Librarians

Deb Abner, Lincoln School  
Colleen Carney, Heath School  
Paula Ewenstein, Baker School  
Teresa Gallo-Toth, Runkle School  
Amanda Kretschmar, Pierce School  
Jennifer Lauchlan, Upper Devotion School  
Kathy Moriarty, Lawrence School  
Anne Reid, Driscoll School  
Julie Seifert, Devotion School

Scott Moore, Director of Educational Technology and Libraries

## Hot Off the Presses: New and Noteworthy

Barton, Chris. ***Dazzle Ships: World War 1 and the Art of Confusion*** \*\*

Toward the end of World War I, Britain began painting some of its ships in bright colors and wild patterns in an attempt to protect them from German torpedoes. No one knew if it would work, but they hoped the patterns would be confusing when viewed through a submarine periscope, leading the Germans to waste torpedoes because they couldn't target accurately. If you had been on the ocean then, you might have seen a ship with pink and purple zigzag stripes or multicolored geometric shapes! Be sure to read the author's note to learn more about this little-known blending of art and war.

Chanani, Nidhi. ***Pashmina*** \*

You've heard of a magic wand, but what about a magic scarf? It doesn't seem possible, but when Priyanka Das wraps herself in a scarf she finds in an old suitcase, she is transported from her home in the United States to her mother's homeland in India. Her mother never talks about India, and Priyanka, or Pri, doesn't know why, but through this magical journey, she might find the answer to that question and more, learning more about herself and her family's history along the way.

Chin, Jason. ***Grand Canyon*** \*

See the Grand Canyon this summer, without ever leaving your house. This book shows this famous National Park in a whole new way. Colorful, informative illustrations show the plant and animal life in the Canyon, as well as fossils found there, with cutaways showing what those creatures might look like. The book also details how the Canyon was formed and the story its rocks tell.

Chmakova, Svetlana. ***Brave*** \*

Fans of *Awkward* will be delighted to return to the halls of Berrybrook Middle School. This time we get to know Jensen. Remember him? Sun Spot Boy? He may not say much but there's a lot going on in his head. In fact, Jensen prefers to be in his head -- in his daydreams -- to being in the real world, where everyone and everything seem to be out to get him. If you haven't read *Awkward*, that's ok. Get to know Jensen and Berrybrook with this book.

Gratz, Alan. ***Refugee*** \*\*\*

Josef is a Jewish boy who escapes Nazi Germany with his family in the 1930s. Isabel is a Cuban girl who travels to the United States in 1994 on a raft with her family. Mahmoud is a Syrian boy who flees for Europe in 2015. In this compelling novel, Alan Gratz weaves together these three journeys to create a timeless, moving story about the search for safety and a new home.

Heiligman, Deborah. ***Vincent and Theo: The Van Gogh Brothers*** \*\*\*

Van Gogh is famous for his *Starry Night* and his missing ear, but fewer people know about his family, and particularly his close relationship with his brother. This new book tells the story of the two brothers, beginning with their early years in the Netherlands and through their struggles to establish their

careers and their own identities. Vincent's brother, Theo, also worked in the art world, and his support was crucial in helping Vincent to become an artist. Find out more about the two brothers, and their lives and loves, in this fantastic book.

Johnson, Maureen. ***Truly Devious*** \*\*

This novel tells the story of Stevie Bell, who enrolls at a prestigious, mysterious private school, Ellingham Academy. Ellingham Academy is famous for an unsolved mystery, and Stevie, a true-crime aficionado, is determined to finally solve it. But when she shows up to Ellingham's eerie, mountain-top campus, she might get more than she bargained for. This book, the first in a series, is perfect for fans of thrillers and mysteries.

Mahin, Michael. ***Muddy: The Story of Blues Legend Muddy Waters*** \*

Colorful, abstract illustrations and lyrical text combine to tell the life story of blues singer Muddy Waters. Muddy Waters left his home in Mississippi and went to Chicago, creating music that captured the beauty and suffering he saw all around him. Readers will be inspired by his story of determination and hard work, and by this book's beautiful artwork.

Meyer, Melissa. ***Renegades*** \*\*\*

What do you get when you cross a classic superhero story with a dystopian society where everyday people struggle to survive in a broken world where power and comfort are reserved for the privileged few? Throw in a hint of romance, and you've got *Renegades*! Nova hates the ruling Renegades for destroying everything she ever loved, and wants vengeance. Unfortunately, to get it, she will have to BECOME one. Will she stay true to her cause -- or be won over by power, luxury, and a Renegade boy with secrets of his own?

Moon, Sarah. ***Sparrow*** \*\*\*

The story opens as Sparrow, an African-American 8th grader from Brooklyn, awakes in a mental hospital. She isn't suicidal, but everyone thinks she is since she was found on the edge of the school roof. But they wouldn't understand if she tried to explain, and maybe they would think she was REALLY crazy. Sparrow is lonely and in pain, and it's only when she flies with the birds that she feels safe and free.

Moore, David Barclay. ***The Stars Beneath Our Feet*** \*\*

In this novel, Lolly Rochpaul uses Legos not only to build a massive brick city, but also to rebuild his life. Lolly is devastated after his older brother's death, and he feels pressured to join a crew, just like his brother did, especially after Lolly and his friends are beat up. But when he begins building a massive Lego city at a community center, without any instructions, he slowly begins to take back his life, with the help of an unexpected friend.

Perez, Celia. ***The First Rule of Punk*** \*

Twelve year old Maria Luisa (call her Malú, PLEASE!) is not happy about the changes in her life. Her mom has made her move halfway across the country, far away from her dad and his dog, and she's not happy with her new school, the students there, or the dress code. Will she find a way to set things right with punk rock and handmade 'zines? Join Malú as she

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explores her biracial identity and tries to find a way to be true to herself in her new environment.

Perkins, Mitali. ***You Bring the Distant Near*** \*\*

Author Mitali Perkins moved to the United States as a young girl in the 1970s. Her experience informs this novel telling the story of three generations of Indian-American women and girls while exploring issues of race, culture, and growing up. Each character struggles to find balance between her family's Indian culture and expectations at home and the culture and customs outside their home in America. Like the intertwined branches of a tree, the book spreads in many directions, presenting a family story, a love story, and five different stories of learning to be true to yourself.

Reynolds, Jason. ***Miles Morales: Spider Man*** \*\*

From award-winning author Jason Reynolds comes a new Spider Man story. Miles Morales is just a regular teenager. He goes to the Brooklyn Visions Academy, hangs out with best friend, Ganke, spends time with his family, and has a crush a girl, Alicia. Except he's also Spider Man. When a mysterious force threatens his family and his neighborhood, Miles knows that it's time for him to don his red suit and take action.

Slater, Dashka. ***The 57 Bus*** \*\*

In 2013, a horrible crime caught the nation's attention. A transgender student was riding a public bus home from school when their skirt was set on fire by another teenager. Sasha was badly burned. Richard, who lit the fire, eventually went to jail, and Sasha's burns healed. But both of their lives were forever changed. Author Dashka Slater interviewed both teens, their friends, families, teachers, and others who knew them and provides background information that reveals much more than sensational news stories ever told us, leaving readers with a new understanding, as well as some unanswerable questions about fairness and justice.

### Take a Look: Graphic Books for Older Readers

Stevenson, Noelle. ***Nimona*** \*

This is the print version of the popular web comic. Nimona is an impulsive shape shifter with a knack for villainy. She joins forces with Lord Blackheart to unearth the truth about Sir Ambrosius Goldenloin, but Lord Blackheart soon discovers that Nimona may not be who she seems. A rollicking adventure.

Stevenson, Noelle and Brooke Allen. ***Lumberjanes (series)*** \*

This summer camp is like no other, and the five best friends at "Miss Quinzella Thiskwin Penniquiquil Thistle Crumpet's Camp for Hardcore Lady-types" (a.k.a. Lumberjanes) love every minute of it. Foxes, screaming eagles, talking statues and demonic scouting lads are no match for the Lumberjanes, who fight as hard as they laugh. Readers will laugh even harder.

Broskol, Vera. ***Anya's Ghost*** \*

Anya, embarrassed by her Russian immigrant family and self-conscious about her body, has given up on fitting in at school

but falling down a well and making friends with the ghost there just may be worse.

Hinds, Gareth. ***Romeo & Juliet*** \*\*\*

Gareth Hinds presents another excellent graphic novel adaptation of a classic (also look for his version of *The Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, and others). Shakespeare's tragic romance is made accessible and modern with a diverse cast while still using the original lines from the text. Beautiful illustrations bring the story to life and captivate the reader.

Lewis, John and Andrew Aydin. ***March: Book Three*** \*\*\*

National Book Award for Young People's Literature Winner. Last installment in the trilogy. John Lewis shares his experiences of the Civil Rights era in a powerful graphic form. This book details the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, the Freedom Summer murders and the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

Tennapel, Doug. ***Bad Island*** \*

Two stories are woven together and race to an exciting climax. Teenager Reese thinks he's too old for a family vacation, but gets dragged on the boat trip anyway. An unnamed space alien rebels against his father's wishes. Packed with monsters, skeletons, chases, and fight scenes (plus a funny -- and dead - - pet snake), this sci-fi family adventure leaps off the page.

Wicks, Maris. ***Human Body Theater*** \*

Non-fiction graphic depiction of the human body and how it works. Informative and entertaining.

### Too Good To Miss: Classics

Doyle, Arthur Conan. ***The Hound of the Baskervilles*** \*\*

Is it true that a ghostly hound is haunting the lonely moors, hunting down the hapless Baskervilles through the generations? If anyone can put this chilling legend to rest, it's Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.

Austen, Jane. ***Emma*** \*\*\*

Emma has recently lost her sister/mother-figure to marriage and appears doomed to a lifetime of seclusion with her kindly but odd and hermitic father. To avoid such a result, at least for a time, Emma sets to matchmaking. "Emma" is the most lightweight and openly comedic of all Jane Austen's novels, with a likable (if clueless) heroine and a multilayered plot full of half-hidden feelings.

Herbert, Frank. ***Dune*** \*\*\*

Set on the desert planet Arrakis, *Dune* is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, who would become the mysterious man known as Maud'dib. He would avenge the traitorous plot against his noble family, and would bring to fruition humankind's most ancient and unattainable dream.

Hinton, S.E. ***That Was Then, This Is Now*** \*\*

This book is about two best friends Bryon and Mark and is similar to the classic book *The Outsiders*. Mark notices

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dangerous changes in his best friend and has to make a choice.

### Get Real: Nonfiction

Davis, Kenneth C. ***In the Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and the Five Black Lives*** \*\*

Five of the first seven Presidents of the United States owned slaves or grew up in families that owned slaves. Yet it is rarely discussed when we study the Presidents, and most Americans don't know anything about the people who were enslaved by our country's first leaders. Kenneth Davis presents the stories of five of the many people who were denied their freedom by the leaders who worked to build a nation on principles of liberty and justice. This is an incredibly important book that is well written and includes reproductions of many primary sources used to learn these stories.

Fleming, Candace. ***The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion, and the Fall of Imperial Russia*** \*\*\*

A fascinating account of the Romanov family who was Russia's last royal family. Photos and first person accounts make this a fast-paced non-fiction book that reads like a novel.

Freedman, Russell. ***The War to End All Wars: World War I*** \*\*

An introduction to World War I that explains its relevance as a conflict that involved many nations and casualties while introducing modern weaponry and military strategies that have shaped all subsequent wars.

Hillebrand, Laura. ***Unbroken (Young Adult Adaptation): An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive*** \*\*\*

Louis Zamperini was a troublemaker turned Olympian track star and WWII pilot. He survived 47 days at sea after his army plane was shot down and a brutal experience as a POW in Japan. He returns home to his family after they had lost all hope of his survival. His is an unbelievable life story of an individual who survives because of grit, determination and the support of family. Violent themes and photographs.

Paulsen, Gary. ***Guts*** \*

In *Guts*, Gary tells about the adventures that inspired him to write Brian Robeson's story, working as an emergency volunteer, the death that inspired the pilot's death in *Hatchet*, plane crashes he has seen and near-misses of his own. There's even a handy chapter on "Eating Eyeballs and Guts or Starving: The Fine Art of Wilderness Nutrition." Recipes included.

Rubin, Susan Goldman. ***Brown v. Board of Education: A Fight for Simple Justice*** \*

Engaging non-fiction narrative which traces the passage of the 1954 Supreme Court decision mandating school desegregation. Five individuals attempted and failed in their court attempts at the district level so the 5 plaintiffs joined together in a federal case. Personal stories and primary documents make this book a compelling read.

Stone, Tanya Lee. ***Courage Has No Color, The True Story of the Triple Nickles: America's First Black Paratroopers*** \*\*

Examines the role of African-Americans in the military through the history of the Triple Nickles, America's first black paratroopers, who fought against attacks perpetrated on the American West by the Japanese during World War II.

### It Could Happen: Realistic Fiction

Anderson, John David. ***Ms. Bixby's Last Day*** \*

What happens when the best teacher you've ever had gets sick? Really sick? Topher, Steve, and Brand have enough problems of their own. Then their favorite teacher suddenly announces she's leaving school for the rest of the year because she has cancer. Brainy Steve, dreamer Topher and tough-guy Brand decide they have to do something about it, and concoct a crazy scheme that is alternately heartbreaking and hilarious.

Bauer, Joan. ***Close to Famous*** \*

Foster has a big secret, she can't read. With the help of a retired movie star, she overcomes her struggles and wins over hearts with her exceptional baked goods.

Benjamin, Ali. ***The Thing About Jellyfish*** \*

7th grader Suzy doesn't talk. After her best friend drowns, Suzy doesn't see the point in conversation. Instead, she retreats into her own thoughts. On a trip to the New England Aquarium she becomes convinced that the true cause of Franny's death must have been a rare jellyfish sting, and begins intense research to prove her theory. Along the way, Suzy explores life, death, friendship, and the amazing wonder of the universe.

Gephart, Donna. ***Lily and Dunkin*** \*\*

Touching realistic fiction title features Lily and Dunkin who are likeable, engaging characters. Themes of gender identity, family acceptance and bipolar disorder are interwoven in a masterful manner. Readers will like these two characters and their story of bravery.

Mass, Wendy. ***Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life*** \*\*

Jeremy's summer takes an unexpected turn when a mysterious wooden box arrives in the mail. He is supposed to open it in one month on his thirteenth birthday. The problem is the keys are missing and his quest to find them and much more begins.

Reynolds, Jason. ***As Brave As You*** \*

Genie Harris and his brother, born and bred New Yorkers, are sent off to live with their grandparents in the rural south for the summer in order to give their parents time to work on their troubled marriage. Genie is the nerd who has to live without the internet in VA but luckily he develops a friendship with a local girl. They work together to uncover the secret behind the poor relationship between his blind grandfather and father. Readers will appreciate the humor and the well-developed characters.

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Sloan, Holly Goldberg. ***Counting by 7's*** \*\*

Twelve-year-old genius and outsider Willow Chance must figure out how to connect with other people and find a surrogate family for herself after a tragic accident.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. ***Falling Over Sideways*** \*

Claire is frustrated because she is not moving up to the next level of dance class with her friends. She is left with the "babies" and struggles to deal with the mean girls and the even more difficult Ryder at school. Then her father suffers from a debilitating injury which he may or may not recover from. Her family struggles to adjust to the impact of his illness while maintaining secrecy. Will Claire make a decision to help her family?

Stead, Rebecca. ***Goodbye Stranger*** \*

7th grade is a pivotal year and readers witness Bridge Barsamian's struggles with puberty, family dynamics and friendships. Poignant and well written.

Yoon, Nicola. ***The Sun Is Also a Star*** \*\*

Natasha and Daniel cross paths one fateful day in New York city. Natasha's family is about to be deported. The last thing she needs is to fall in love. Daniel always does what he is supposed to do as the dutiful son. But a dutiful son doesn't drop everything he's doing to follow a girl he just met all over the city, does he? Romantics will fall hard for this book.

### Life Stories: Biography

Engle, Margarita. ***The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano*** \*\*

Juan Francisco Manzano was born in 1797 into the household of wealthy slave-owners in Cuba. He spent his early years at the side of his owner's wife, entertaining her friends. His poetry was his outlet, reflecting the beauty and cruelty of his world.

Fritz, Jean. ***Alexander Hamilton: the Outsider*** \*\*\*

You've probably heard of Alexander Hamilton. If you're not sure why he's famous, this book is for you. It presents the life, achievements, and failings of one of the individuals who helped create our country. If you're a Hamilton fan because of the musical, this biography will fill in some of the details Lin Manuel Miranda had to leave out!

Lowery, Lynda Blackmon. ***Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the Selma Voting Rights March*** \*\*

This is the inspiring story of the youngest person to complete the historic walk to Selma to Montgomery. This includes primary documents and her reflections on her civil rights action.

Scheinkin, Steve. ***Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War*** \*\*\*

Steve Scheinkin once again creates a gripping nonfiction narrative about Daniel Ellsberg who "leaked" the Pentagon Papers. Primary source documents and photographs add additional information to this important book about the Vietnam Era.

Shetterly, Margot Lee. ***Hidden Figures Young Readers' Edition*** \*\*

John Glenn and Neil Armstrong are well known space pioneers. However very few people knew about the African American mathematicians (human computers) who did the calculations which enabled rockets to launch into space. Readers will learn about Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson and Christine Darden and their contributions against a backdrop of the Civil Rights Era, the Cold War and the Space Race.

Stelson, Caren. ***Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story*** \*\*

Sachiko Yasui was 6 years old when the atomic bomb fell on the city of Nagasaki. Thousands and thousands of people died in the explosion, and the survivors were left to deal with terrible losses, incomprehensible destruction, and illness from the bomb's radiation. Author Caren Stelson interviewed Sachiko many times and tells her story of survival with grace and honesty.

Woodson, Jacqueline. ***Brown Girl Dreaming*** \*\*

Jacqueline's award winning memoir of her life composed in lyrical poetry. She grew up in the Jim Crow era and traveled between Ohio, the South and NYC and her work captures the changing climate of the time against the backdrop of familial struggles. Most importantly she shares the discovery of her voice as a writer.

Yousafzai, Malala and C. Lamb. ***I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*** \*\*\*

Memoir by the courageous advocate of education. Readers will be inspired by this young leader's leadership and ability to meet challenges bravely.

### Out of This World: Fantasy & Science Fiction

Adams, Douglas. ***The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (series)*** \*\*

Seconds before Earth is demolished to make room for a galactic freeway, an earthman is saved by his friend. Together they journey through the galaxy.

Carriger, Gail. ***Etiquette & Espionage (series)*** \*\*

In an alternate England of 1851, spirited fourteen-year-old Sophronia is enrolled in a finishing school where, she is surprised to learn, lessons include not only the fine arts of dance, dress, and etiquette, but also diversion, deceit, and espionage.

Cashore, Kristin. ***Graceling (series)*** \*\*

In a world where some people are born with extreme and often-feared skills called Graces, Katsa struggles for redemption from her own horrifying Grace of killing and teams up with another young fighter to save their land from a corrupt king.

Clayton, Emma. ***The Roar (series)*** \*\*

In an overpopulated world where all signs of nature have been obliterated and a wall has been erected to keep out plague-ridden animals, twelve-year-old Mika refuses to believe that his twin sister was killed after being abducted, and continues to search for her in spite of the dangers he faces in doing so.

Dashner, James. ***The Maze Runner (series)*** \*\*

Sixteen-year-old Thomas wakes up with no memory in the middle of a maze and realizes he must work with the community in which he finds himself if he is to escape.

Falls, Kat. ***Dark Life (series)*** \*\*

Ty has spent his whole life living deep undersea. When outlaws attack his homestead, he finds himself in a fight to save the only home he has ever known. Joined by Gemma, a girl from Topsy, Ty ventures into the frontier's rough underworld and discovers some dark secrets to Dark Life. Secrets that threaten to destroy everything.

Farmer, Nancy. ***Sea of Trolls (series)*** \*\*

This exciting fantasy takes place during the Viking raids of the Anglo-Saxons in the late 700s. Jack thought he was just an ordinary farm boy until he became an apprentice to the local bard, who is teaching him music, but also the magic of the Life Force. When his village is attacked by Viking berserkers, and he and his little sister are taken as thralls, he doesn't know the perils in store for him. In order to survive and maybe get home, he will have to learn to deal with the Northmen, face down dragons, brave the perils of troll country, and learn more about magic than he ever thought possible.

Fisher, Catherine. ***Incarceron (series)*** \*\*\*

Incarceron is a futuristic prison, sealed from view, where the descendants of the original prisoners live in a dark world torn by rivalry and savagery. A young prisoner, Finn, has haunting visions and memories of another world. In the outer world, Claudia, daughter of the Warden of Incarceron, is trapped in her own form of prison. She knows nothing of Incarceron, except that it exists. Finn and Claudia simultaneously both discover the crystal key and plan Finn's escape.

Hardinge, Frances. ***Cuckoo Song*** \*\*\*

A must read for horror readers. An 11 year old girl wakes up after nearly drowning in a pond. Triss discovers that she has no memory and has an insatiable appetite which means she begins to eat EVERYTHING. An unsettling chain of events begins.

Hartley, A.J. ***Steeplejack*** \*\*\*

Anglet, usually called Ang is the best steeplejack in the city. She's also the only girl willing to do the dangerous, grimy job of climbing chimneys sometimes hundreds of feet tall. Her difficult life takes a turn for the worse when her new apprentice is murdered minutes before he starts working with her -- and just as the most expensive gem in the city is stolen from the tallest tower on the continent. This gritty, exciting steampunk mystery is set in a city loosely based on 19th century South Africa.

Peña, Matt de la. ***The Living (series)*** \*\*\*

This story interweaves a weather related disaster on a cruise ship, a global event against a backdrop of young adolescents working out friendship and loyalty issues in a fast paced page-turner.

Pfeffer, Susan Beth. ***Life As We Knew It (series)*** \*\*\*

Through journal entries, sixteen-year-old Miranda describes her family's struggle to survive after a meteor hits the moon, causing worldwide tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.

Riordan, Rick. ***Magnus Chase*** \*

Move over, Percy Jackson; there's a new demigod in town. Rick Riordan is back with another wild adventure, this time careening between the streets of Boston and the nine worlds of the Norse Tree of Life, Yggdrasil. On his 16th birthday, Magnus Chase discovers the future of the worlds, all nine of them, rest on his shoulders. Then, he dies. That's only the beginning of the mayhem and madness.

Stiefvater, Maggie. ***Scorpio Races*** \*\*

Nineteen-year-old returning champion Sean Kendrick competes against Puck Connolly, the first girl ever to ride in the annual Scorpio Races, both trying to keep hold of their dangerous water horses long enough to make it to the finish line.

Torday, Piers. ***The Last Wild (series)*** \*\*

A plague has killed most of the animals on Earth, and the government has moved all people to walled cities for their safety. Kester was taken away from his parents and locked up at the Spectrum Hall Academy for Challenging Children, where after many years, his sad and lonely life is interrupted by a talking cockroach. The surviving animals need his help, and they break him out of the school for an epic, dangerous and sometimes humorous adventure.

Walden, Mark. ***H.I.V.E. (Higher Institute of Villainous Education)*** \*

When they are swept away to a hidden academy for training evil geniuses, Otto, a brilliant orphan, Wing, a sensitive warrior, Laura, a shy computer specialist, and Shelby, an infamous jewel thief, plot to beat the odds and escape.

Westerfeld, Scott. ***Uglies (series)*** \*\*

Just before their sixteenth birthdays in a futuristic society, when they will be transformed into beauties whose only job is to have a great time, Tally's best friend runs away and Tally must find her and turn her in, or never become pretty at all.

### Page-turners: Mystery & Adventure

Bradley, Alan. ***The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*** \*\*

At the once-grand mansion of Buckshaw, young Flavia de Luce, an aspiring chemist with a passion for poison, is intrigued when a dead bird is found on the doorstep, a postage stamp pinned to its beak. Hours later, Flavia finds a man lying in the cucumber patch dying. For Flavia, who is both appalled

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and delighted, life begins in earnest when murder comes to Buckshaw.

Child, Lauren. **Ruby Redfort: Look Into My Eyes (series)** \*  
Ruby is a 13 year old code breaker who with the observational skills of Sherlock Holmes. Her sidekick Clancy Crew and Ruby discover a dangerous world and use amazing gadgets to solve the crimes. Check out the website [www.rubyredfort.com](http://www.rubyredfort.com) for codebreaker challenges.

Cooper, Susan. **Ghost Hawk** \*  
A Wampanoag boy named Little Hawk survives the loss of his village to a plague contracted from the Pilgrims, who have recently founded Plymouth. Later he befriends a white boy, John Wakeley, only to have a shocking act of violence irrevocably alter their lives.

Cummings, Priscilla. **Red Kayak** \*  
Tragedy strikes when a kayak turns over in the Chesapeake Bay. Thirteen year old Brady who is on the rescue team, investigates the cause of the accident, and he doesn't like what he finds out.

Gibbs, Stuart. **Spy School (series)** \*\*  
Ben's life suddenly becomes a lot more exciting when the CIA recruits him to join a secret spy school. Too exciting, in fact, as his life is constantly in danger and he still has to deal with everything he thought he would escape: bullies, homework, boring teachers, and being totally ignored by girls. When he discovers a plot against the school and no one believes him, the stakes get even higher. This series is action-packed and full of fun.

Hiassen, Carl. **Skink: No Surrender** \*\*  
When his cousin Malley runs away, 14-year-old Richard is sure she's in danger and sets off in secret to find her. Skink, a former governor turned outlaw eco-terrorist, comes to the rescue by teaming up with Richard for an unpredictable and event-filled search through the wilds of Florida.

Lane, Andrew. **Death Cloud: Sherlock Holmes-The Legend Begins** \*\*  
It is the summer of 1868, and Sherlock Holmes is fourteen. On break from boarding school, he is staying with eccentric strangers, his uncle and aunt, in their vast house in Hampshire. When two local people die from symptoms that resemble the plague, Holmes begins to investigate what really killed them, helped by his new tutor, an American named Amyus Crowe. So begins Sherlock's true education in detection, as he discovers the dastardly crimes of a brilliantly sinister villain of exquisitely malign intent.

Morton-Shaw, Christine. **The Hunt for the Seventh** \*\*  
"Find the Seventh." That whispered phrase haunts Jim in this eerie mystery of death, ghosts, family secrets, and ancient rites and prophecy.

Sedgwick, Marcus. **She Is Not Invisible** \*\*\*  
Laureth's family is falling apart, and she's the only one who can put it back together. Her father has disappeared and she has to decipher the clues to find him -- fast. Unfortunately, the

clues point to New York, and Laureth is in London. She's also blind. So she does the only thing she can think of: kidnaps her 7 year old brother and sets off across the ocean. Sedgwick's complex puzzle of a novel investigates family, coincidence, bravery, trust, and more.

Silvey, Craig. **Jasper Jones** \*\*\*  
Charlie Bucktin, a bookish thirteen year old, is startled one summer night when Jasper Jones, an outcast in their small Australian mining town, comes to ask for Charlie's help. Charlie follows him into the night where Charlie witnesses Jasper's horrible discovery. With the secret like a brick in his belly, Charlie is pushed and pulled by a town closing in on itself in fear and suspicion. In the simmering summer where everything changes, Charlie learns why the truth of things is so hard to know, and even harder to hold in his heart.

Stroud, Jonathan. **The Whispering Skull** \*  
Ghost-hunter agency Lockwood & Co. takes on its second big-ticket case, this one involving sinister artifacts with possible links to the genesis of Britain's ghost "Problem." A smart and creepy book full of action and deadpan humor.

Werlin, Nancy. **Black Mirror** \*\*  
Convinced her brother's death was murder rather than suicide, sixteen-year-old Frances begins her own investigation into suspicious student activities at her boarding school.

## Play Ball!: Sports Books

Alexander, Kwame. **The Crossover** \*\*  
Newbery winner novel in verse. Twin brothers are competitors on and off the court. Their conflict explodes on the court during the championship. Their parents provide positive guidance and help the boys work through problems. A tragedy unfolds. Readers will delight in the wordplay found in the poems.

Bauer, Joan. **Soar** \*  
Jeremiah loves baseball and he knows just about everything there is to know about his favorite sport. So when he's told he can't play baseball following an operation on his heart, Jeremiah decides he'll do the next best thing and become a coach.

Bruchac, Joseph. **Warriors** \*  
Jake has left the reservation for Weltime Academy and entered a different world. Others at the school loved lacrosse, too, but not like Jake. Coach Scott trained them hard, offering violent stories about Indians that Jake knew were untrue. How could he make them understand the real game?

Carlin, John. **Invictus: Nelson Mandela and the Game that Made a Nation** \*\*\*  
After being released from prison and winning South Africa's first free election, Nelson Mandela presided over a country still deeply divided by fifty years of apartheid. His plan was ambitious if not far-fetched: use the national rugby team, the Springboks, long an embodiment of white-supremacist rule, to embody and engage a new South Africa as they prepared to

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host the 1995 World Cup. The string of wins that followed not only defied the odds, but capped Mandela's miraculous effort to bring South Africans together again in a hard-won, enduring bond.

D'Orso, Michael. ***Eagle Blue: A Team, a Tribe, and a High School Basketball Season in Arctic Alaska*** \*\*\*

Author Michel D'Orso shadows the Fort Yukon Eagles through an Arctic winter of fifty-below-zero temperatures and near-round-the-clock darkness as the Eagles criss-cross Alaska in pursuit of their, and their village's dream, to win the basketball championship.

Deuker, Carl. ***Payback Time*** \*\*\*

Student sports reporter Mitch investigates his football coach on suspicion of corruption in order to determine why the best athlete at his high school, Angel, does nothing but stand on the sidelines.

Green, Tim. ***Kid Owner*** \*\*

Ryan Zinna lives and breathes football. But he's the smallest kid in seventh grade, so even though he's on the team he never gets to play. Then he receives news that turns his world upside down: the father he never knew died... and he inherited his dad's NFL football team. Owning the team doesn't magically improve his life, though, and it turns out that his ownership is at risk unless he can get on the field and defeat the rival middle school football team, whose star quarterback just happens to be his half brother.

Kephart, Beth. ***Undercover*** \*\*

High school sophomore Elisa is used to observing while going unnoticed except when classmates ask her to write love notes for them, but when she falls for one of those classmates, her life takes an unexpected turn.

Lee, Marie. ***Necessary Roughness*** \*\*

Sixteen-year-old Korean American Chan moves from Los Angeles to a small town in Minnesota, where he must cope not only with racism on the football team but also with the tensions in his relationship with his strict father.

Lupica, Mike. ***Fantasy League*** \*

When a sports radio host notices Charlie's podcast, his fantasy football picks get played for all of Los Angeles to hear. National fame follows when an NFL team owner starts following Charlie's advice. Although fun at first, it's not long before all the press conferences and media attention get to be a bit much for a kid just trying to stay on top of his grades and hang on to his friends.

Roberts, Kristi. ***My Thirteenth Season*** \*

Already downhearted due to the loss of her mother and her father's overwhelming grief, thirteen-year-old Fran decides to give up her dream of becoming the first female in professional baseball after a coach attacks her just for being a girl.

Scieszka, Jon and Gordon Korman. ***Guys Read: The Sports Pages*** \*

Ten short stories written by notable writers on all things sports! Authors include Tim Green, Dan Gutman, Gordon Korman,

Anne Ursu and Jacqueline Woodson and the illustrations are by Dan Santat.

Sheinkin, Steve. ***Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team*** \*\*

Who's the best athlete on Earth? How many sports does she or he excel at? One? Two? Three? How about FIVE? Jim Thorpe was an Olympic gold medalist in track and field, and a professional athlete in three major sports: football, basketball and baseball. He was also a Native American, and dealt with racism and cruel treatment due to his heritage throughout his whole life. Steve Sheinkin's biography of him is thoroughly researched and compellingly written.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. ***The Running Dream*** \*\*

Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run?

Volponi, Paul. ***Final Four*** \*\*

Four players with one thing in common: the will to win. Malcolm wants to get to the NBA ASAP. Roko wants to be the pride of his native Croatia. Crispin wants the girl of his dreams. M.J. just wants a chance. March Madness is in full swing, and there are only four teams left in the NCAA basketball championship. As the last moments tick down on the game clock, you'll learn how each player went from being a kid who loved to shoot hoops to a powerful force in one of the most important games of the year. Which team will leave the Superdome victorious? In the end it will come down to which players have the most skill, the most drive, and the most heart.

Yelchin, Eugene. ***Arcady's Goal*** \*

Soccer is Arcady's only hope of surviving and perhaps even getting out of the orphanage in Stalinist Russia, but even with his impressive skills it won't be easy. Author Yelchin based his story on his father's experiences in the Red Army Soccer Club in the 1940s. Exciting sports action is combined with historical fact and an emotional storyline to create a powerful, taut narrative.

## Way Back When: Historical Fiction

Anderson, Laurie Halse. ***Ashes (series)*** \*\*

Conclusion to the American Revolution trilogy. Curzon and Isabel locate Ruth (Isabel's beloved younger sister) in SC and begin the journey to freedom in Rhode Island. Curzon re-enlists in the Continental Army and the characters grapple with the themes of freedom and liberty despite their own history of slavery. Compelling historical fiction.

Burg, Ann E. ***All the Broken Pieces*** \*\*

Two years after being airlifted out of Vietnam in 1975, Matt Pin is haunted by the terrible secret he left behind and, now, in a loving adoptive home in the United States, a series of profound events forces him to confront his past.

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Cushman, Karen. ***Catherine, Called Birdy*** \*\*

The thirteen-year-old daughter of an English country knight keeps a journal in which she records the events of her life, particularly her longing for adventures beyond the usual role of women and her efforts to avoid being married off.

Fleischman, Paul. ***Bull Run*** \*\*

Northerners, Southerners, generals, couriers, dreaming boys, and worried sisters describe the glory, the horror, the thrill, and the disillusionment of the first battle of the Civil War.

Gonzalez, Christina Diaz. ***The Red Umbrella*** \*

In 1961 after Castro has come to power in Cuba, fourteen-year-old Lucia and her seven-year-old brother are sent to the United States when her parents fear that the children will be taken away from them as others have been.

Hopkinson, Deborah. ***The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy Called Eel*** \*\*

This story of the 1854 cholera outbreak in London is told through the eyes of Eel, a 13-year-old orphan who works as an errand boy at the Lion Brewery, cares for Dr. Snow's animals and moonlights as a "mudlark," scavenging the Thames for scraps of coal until he is unjustly accused of stealing.

Hughes, Dean. ***Soldier Boys*** \*\*

Two boys, one German and one American, are eager to join their respective armies during World War II, and their paths cross at the Battle of the Bulge.

Levine, Kristin. ***The Lions of Little Rock*** \*\*

In 1958 Little Rock, Arkansas, painfully shy twelve-year-old Marlee sees her city and family divided over school integration, but her friendship with Liz, a new student, helps her find her voice and fight against racism.

Lynch, Chris. ***I Pledge Allegiance (Vietnam Series)*** \*

Morris, Rudi, Ivan, and Beck are best friends for life. So when one of them is drafted into the Vietnam War, the others sign up, too, each with a different branch of the US military. Morris joins the US Navy, and he makes it his personal mission to watch over his friends from the USS Boston. But the Boston itself isn't safe from attack. And although Morris means to keep his friends safe, he may have his hands full just watching out for himself.

Magoon, Kekla. ***Fire in the Streets*** \*

In the aftermath of Dr. King's assassination in 1968, Chicago fourteen-year-old Maxie longs to join the Black Panthers, whether or not her brother Raheem, ex-boyfriend Sam, or her friends like it, and is soon caught up in the violence of anti-war and civil rights demonstrations.

McCormick, Patricia. ***Purple Heart*** \*\*

When Private Matt Duffy wakes up in an army hospital in Iraq, he's honored with a Purple Heart. Matt doesn't feel like a hero because of a war memory that haunts him and a head injury that makes it hard for him to put his experiences together.

Myers, Walter Dean. ***Fallen Angels*** \*\*

Seventeen-year-old Richie Perry, just out of his Harlem high school, enlists in the Army in the summer of 1967 and spends a devastating year on active duty in Vietnam.

Paulsen, Gary. ***Woods Runner*** \*

Paulsen provides a stark glimpse of just how awful the American Revolutionary war really was for those who suffered through it. Soon after the uprising in Concord and Lexington, 16-year-old Samuel, returns home to find his home burned down, the neighbors slaughtered, and his parents missing. Samuel tracks his captured parents through the countryside to British-held New York, encountering grave dangers along the way.

Preus, Margi. ***Heart of a Samurai*** \*

Manjiro and his friends are washed out to sea during a fishing expedition in 1841. They land on an island far from their native Japan. They are rescued by an American whaling boat. The Japanese and Americans distrust each other but he forms a relationship with the childless Captain Whitfield. He decides to go to America for an adventure and realizes the views of America he had were not valid and Americans in turn learn about Japan. Based on the a real event and character.

Schlitz, Laura Amy. ***The Hired Girl*** \*\*

This historical fiction book provides a window into turn of the century Pennsylvania. A young girl becomes the servant to a wealthy Jewish family and her journal chronicles her foibles, impressions and relationships.

Stuber Barbara. ***Crossing the Tracks*** \*\*

In Missouri in 1926, fifteen-year-old Iris Baldwin discovers what family truly means when her father hires her out for the summer as a companion to a country doctor's invalid mother.

Whelan, Gloria. ***Small Acts of Amazing Courage*** \*\*

In 1919, independent-minded fifteen-year-old Rosalind lives in India with her English parents, and when they fear she has fallen in with some rebellious types who believe in Indian self-government, she is sent "home" to London, where she has never been before and where her older brother died, to stay with her two aunts.

Zusak, Markus. ***The Book Thief*** \*\*\*

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel, a young German girl whose book-stealing and storytelling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

## Just For Fun: Humor

Gantos, Jack. ***Jack's Black Book: What Happens When You Flunk an IQ Test? (series)*** \*\*

In just a few months, Jack is humiliated by a gorgeous synchronized swimmer, gets a tattoo the size of an ant on his big toe, flubs an IQ test and nearly fails woodshop, and has to dig up his dead dog not once but twice. It's all here in Jack's black book.

Korman, Gordon. ***Ungifted*** \*

Due to an administrative mix-up, troublemaker Donovan Curtis is sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction, a special program for gifted and talented students, after pulling a major prank at middle school.

Mack, W.C. ***Athlete vs. Mathlete (series)*** \*

Two twins are opposites in every way. Owen is the sports superstar while brother Russell is the scholastic genius. What happens when the new coach recruits Russell for the basketball team? Funny read with realistic portrayal of the ins and outs of brotherly relationships.

Patterson, James. ***Superhero: Public School*** \*

Kenny dreams about assuming his secret identity: Stainlezz Steel, defender of the weak and bullied. In reality, he is known as "Grandma's Boy" and a chess player. Ultimately Kenny faces a choice. Will he do the right thing? Funny and touching. Comic book panels add to the appeal.

Perkins, Lynne Rae. ***As Easy as Falling Off the Face of the Earth*** \*

A teenaged boy encounters one comedic calamity after another when his train strands him in the middle of nowhere, and everything comes down to luck.

Rex, Adam. ***Cold Cereal (series)*** \*

Mythology and magic collide with breakfast cereal in this dry-humored adventure when a boy who may be part changeling, twins involved in a bizarre secret experiment, and a clurichaun in a red tracksuit try to save the world from an evil cereal company whose ultimate goal is world domination. Book one of a trilogy.

Koertge, Ron. ***Shakespeare Bats Cleanup (series)*** \*\*

Fourteen-year-old Kevin Boland is an MVP first baseman whose whole life revolves around baseball. Diagnosed with mono, he is forced to stay at home for months while he recuperates. Bored, Kevin borrows his father's book of poetry and starts writing his own. At first, he just has fun imitating haiku and sonnets, but he soon begins writing insightful verse, both funny and serious, in which he records his candid observations about life in junior high, romance, his dreams of baseball stardom, and his grief over the recent death of his mother.

Myers, Walter Dean. ***Street Love*** \*\*

This story, told in free verse, is set against a background of street gangs and poverty in Harlem in which seventeen-year-old African-American Damien takes a bold step to ensure that he and his new love will not be separated.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. ***What Have You Lost?*** \*\*

What have you lost? A friend? A brother? A wallet? A memory? A meaning? A year? Each Night Images, dream news, fragments, flash then fade. These darkened walls. Here, I say. Climb into this story. Be remembered.

Orgill, Roxane and Francis Vallejo. ***Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph*** \*

Poetry collection celebrating the famous 1954 photograph of American Jazz greats on a brownstone stoop in Harlem. This book describes how this photographer Art Kane took the photograph over the course of the day. Short biographies on jazz artists are included with an informative author's note.

### A Way with Words: Poetry

Brown, Skila. ***To Stay Alive: Mary Ann Graves and the Tragic Journey of the Donner Party*** \*

In the 1840s, many people moved west across America on wagon trains. The grueling and grim trip through the Sierra Nevada mountains is retold here in free verse by Mary Ann Graves, a 19 year old who made the trip with her family. The poems lend beauty to a story full of misery, drawing the reader in deeply. The author's note at the end provides context and helps the reader divide fact from fiction.

Greenberg, Jan. ***Heart to Heart*** \*

A compilation of poems by Americans writing about American art in the twentieth century, including such writers as Nancy Willard, Jane Yolen, and X. J. Kennedy.

Holt, Kimberly. ***House Arrest*** \*

This is a sensitive realistic fiction novel in verse about a boy who ends up in legal trouble when he tries to do the right thing for his severely ill brother. Would you make the same choice in order to save your brother's life?

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