



MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST* FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 7

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO FIND THE TRUTH?

***Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott**

Based on the author's life, this classic novel tells the story of the four March sisters – Meg, Joe, Beth, and Amy – who are growing up during the Civil War. The sisters face great challenges but never lose their determination. *Fiction; Lexile: 790L*

***Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett**

When seemingly unrelated and strange events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, classmates Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal. *Fiction; Lexile: 770L*

***Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems* by Lucille Clifton**

In this collection, celebrated poet Lucille Clifton describes both ordinary life and extraordinary experiences. Her poems use few words to achieve great beauty and power. *Fiction*

***Powerless* by Matthew Cody**

Soon after moving to Noble's Green, PA, Daniel learns that his new friends have super powers that they will lose when they turn thirteen, unless he can use his brain power to protect them. *Fiction; Lexile: 800L*

***Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech**

After her mother leaves home suddenly, Sal and her grandparents take a car trip retracing her mother's route. Along the way, Sal recounts the story of her friend Phoebe, whose mother also left. *Fiction; Lexile: 770L*

***Letters from Rifka* by Karen Hesse**

This work of fiction is set in Russia after World War II, an era in which Jews were treated brutally. Many, like 12-year-old Rifka and her family, fled the country. Rifka's story unfolds in a series of letters that describe her separation from her family and her ultimate reunion with them in America. *Fiction; Lexile: 660L*

***A Night to Remember* by Walter Lord**

This work of historical nonfiction, based on true accounts by survivors of the *Titanic*, details the sinking of the famous ship. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 950L*

***The Emperor's Silent Army* by Jane O'Connor**

In 1974, farmers digging in China uncovered an army of life-sized clay soldiers buried for over 2,000 years. This work of historical nonfiction tells that story. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 980L*

***Primates: The Fearless Science of Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Birute Galdikas* by Jim Ottaviani & Maris Wicks**

Primates is an accessible, entertaining, and informative look at the field of primatology and at the lives of three of the most remarkable women scientists of the twentieth century. Thanks to the charming and inviting illustrations by Maris Wicks, this is a nonfiction graphic novel with broad appeal. *Nonfiction*

***Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made* by Stephan Pastis**

Meet Timmy Failure, the founder, president, and CEO of the best detective agency in town, probably the nation; he also has a lazy sidekick, Total, a polar bear. *Fiction; Lexile: 520L*

***Amanda/Miranda* by Richard Peck**

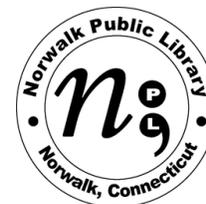
In this lengthy, fictional story, or novel, a servant girl trades identities with her look-alike mistress during the real-life sinking of the *Titanic*. *Fiction; Lexile: 790L*

***A Fire in My Hands* by Gary Soto**

This collection of free-verse poems, including "Oranges" and "That Girl," reflects on Soto's experiences as a young Mexican American. The book also includes essays by Soto about his writing process. *Nonfiction*

Please see the Summer Reading cover letter for instructions on the writing assignment.

****This is a suggested book list only. Students may choose their own books, providing their selections address the essential question.***



MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST* FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 8

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: IS TRUTH THE SAME FOR EVERYONE?

***Two Suns in the Sky* by Miriam Bat-Ami**

In this novel set in Oswego, New York, during World War II, 15-year-old Chris Cook falls in love with Adam Bornstein, a Jewish refugee living behind barbed wire in a nearby camp. Will their love survive their differences and the opposition of Cook's father? *Fiction; Lexile: 550L*

***The Maze Runner* by James Dashner**

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. *Fiction; Lexile: HL770L*

***The Accidental Genius of Weasel High* by Rick Detorie**

Larkin Pace, a film-obsessed high school freshman, chronicles his experiences as he tries to raise money for a new camcorder and get a date with the girl who has been his best friend since third grade. *Fiction; Lexile: 850L*

***Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science* by John Fleischman**

Fleischman uses a clipped, engaging expository style to tell the incredible story of the railroad worker who, in 1848, survived the piercing blast of a 13-pound iron rod as it entered below his cheekbone and exited the front of his skull. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1030L*

***Breathing Underwater* by Alex Flinn**

Sent to counseling for hitting his girlfriend and ordered to keep a journal, Nick recounts his relationship with Caitlin, examines his controlling behavior and anger, and describes living with his abusive father. *Fiction; Lexile: 510L*

***Years of Dust: The Story of the Dust Bowl* by Albert Marrin**

In the 1930's, great rolling walls of dust swept across the Great Plains. The storms buried crops, blinded animals, and suffocated children. It was a catastrophe that would change the course of American history as people struggled to survive in this hostile environment, or took to the roads as Dust Bowl refugees. Marrin explains the causes behind the disaster and investigates the Dust Bowl's impact on the land and the people. Both a tale of natural destruction and a tribute to those who refused to give up, this is a beautiful exploration of an important time in our country's past. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1040L*

***The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution* by Linda R. Monk**

This nonfiction book explains the history and meaning of the U.S. Constitution and its amendments in language that is approachable and which provides a balanced perspective on current Constitutional controversies. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1340L*

***The Boy Who Reversed Himself* by William Sleator**

Laura makes an interesting discovery about her strange neighbor, Omar. He has direct access to the fourth dimension. However, events turn serious when Laura and her boyfriend Pete travel to "four-space" on their own and realize they cannot return through time and space without Omar's help. *Fiction; Lexile: 710L*

***Travels with Charley: In Search of America* by John Steinbeck**

In this nonfiction book, writer John Steinbeck chronicles his journey around the United States with his poodle Charley. This book offers readers a look at 1960s America from the perspective of a curious and perceptive writer. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1010L*

***Viola in Reel Life* by Adriana Trigiani**

When Viola is sent from her beloved Brooklyn to boarding school, she overcomes her initial reservations as she makes friends with her roommates, goes on a real date, and uses the unsettling ghost she keeps seeing as the subject of her first short film. *Fiction; Lexile: 820L*

***The Thief* by Megan Whalen Turner**

If Gen, a gifted young thief imprisoned for life, can steal for the king's magus a legendary stone hidden in a mysterious temple, the magus will set him free. *Fiction; Lexile: 920L*

***Now Is the Time for Running* by Michael Williams**

When soldiers attack a small village in Zimbabwe, Deo goes on the run with Innocent, his older, mentally disabled brother, carrying little but a leather soccer ball filled with money, and after facing prejudice, poverty, and tragedy, it is in soccer that Deo finds renewed hope. *Fiction; Lexile: 650L*

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