

SUGGESTED SUMMER READING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

FICTION

The Georges and the Jewels, Jane Smiley

Jane Smiley's first book for younger readers is all about the love of horses – old, young, cantankerous, and wonderful. It's the minute details of working with horses that make this book sing, and horse-mad readers will snap it up.

When You Reach Me, Rebecca Stead

This unusual, though-provoking mystery will appeal to several types of readers.

The Graveyard Book, Neil Gaiman

Nobody Owen, know as "Bod," is a normal boy living in a graveyard. Wistful, witty, wise – and creepy. This needs to be ready anyone who is, or has ever been, a child.

Rascal, Sterling North

Skunks, woodchuck, a crow named Poe, and an 18-foot half-finished canoe in the living room. Welcome to North home! Rascal is only a baby when Sterling brings him home, but soon the raccoon and boy are best friends.

War Horse, Michael Morpurgo

In 1914, Joey, a beautiful bay-red foal with a distinctive cross on his nose, is sold to the army and thrust into the midst of the war on the Western Front. With his officer, he charges toward the enemy, witnessing the horror of the battles in France. But even in the desolation of the trenches, Joey's courage touches the soldiers around him and he is able to find warmth and hope. But his heart aches for Albert, the farmer's son he left behind. Will he ever see his true master again?

Theodore Boone – Kid Lawyer, John Grisham

Grisham delivers a high intensity legal drama for a new generation of readers. A perfect murder, a faceless witness, and a lone court room champion, only thirteen-years-old, are the ingredients for a thrilling story!

A Whole Nother Story, Cuthbert Soup

Mr. Cheeseman and his unusual menagerie are on the run. Why? Because Mr. Cheeseman invented a time machine, of course. Now they're being chased by several evildoers who want it. And what an adventure follows!

Williams and the Great Escape, Zilpha Keatley Snyder

William S. Baggett is a good kid trapped in a really awful family. William has his running-away money ready to go, he's just been waiting until he's older than twelve to leave. When his big brothers flush his sister's pet guinea pig down the toilet, she insists they leave now! But all does not go according to plans in this lively story.

Rules of the Road, Joan Bauer

When Jenn Boller has a wonderful job, but sometimes you just need a break. Her boss hires her to be her chauffeur for the summer and they begin a cross country adventure. Jubilant, strong and funny, this is a road trip to remember.

Wednesday Wars, Gary Schmidt

Seventh grade Holling receives unexpected guidance and companionship from his teacher and learns to stretch beyond the limitations of his family, the threatening times of the Vietnam War, and his fear, as he leaps into his future with his eyes and his heart wide open.

My Louisiana Sky, Kimberly Holt

Tiger Ann Parker is smart in school and good at baseball, but she's forever teased about her family by the girls in class. Her folks are different from others in their small town of Saitter, Louisiana. but her Granny manages to keep things going. When Granny dies suddenly and Aunt Dorie Kay arrives, offering Tiger Ann a way out, she must make the most important decision of her life.

Quarry, Robert Holland

Big Bang, Robert Holland

Robert Holland writes books that appeal especially to boys. In his two latest, he offers mystery and sports in an unbeatable combination. Whether Lacrosse (**Quarry**) or baseball (**Big Bang**), his stories are certain to engage fans.

Mockingbird, Kathryn Erskine

Caitlin has Asperger's. The world according to her is black and white; anything in between is confusing. She used to depend on her brother Devon to sort things out, but he has died and she feels adrift. Then she comes across the word closure- and she realizes this is what she needs. And in her search for it, Caitlin discovers that the world may not be black and white after all.

Al Capone Shines My Shoes, Gennifer Choldenko

Moose is back in this sequel to *Al Capone Does My Shirts* and he owes Al Capone a favor. Perfectly paced...a solid golf sequel!

Ida B., Katharine Hannigan

There's plenty of laugh-out-loud humor in Ida B.'s observations and actions. Her ability to articulate her feelings will interest children, as they will understand just what she's talking about.

If a Tree Falls at Lunch Period, Gennifer Choldenko

Walker and Kristen have each other, but just when a tough 7th grade looks brighter, Kristen stumbles across a secret – one that could disrupt not only her friendship with Walker, but their whole lives.

Every Soul A Star, Wendy Mass

Four strangers have been brought together to view a rare solar eclipse. What they don't know is that their lives are about to be changed forever.

Shooting the Moon, Frances O'Roark Dowell

When her brother, TJ, was enlisted and sent to Vietnam, it sounded exciting to 12-year-old Jamie. After Jamie develops some film he sent back, however, she learns what sorrows he has seen and understands that war is not what she thought it would be like.

HARD COVER FICTION

***Emerald Atlas*, John Stephens**

Three young children are whisked away from their home by a mysterious countess and her army of soulless screechers. The secret to their escape lies in an enchanted atlas. Join the kids in their adventurous search for the three books. Filled with action, humor, and emotion, this book is hard to put down!

***Across the Universe (Book#1 of a trilogy)*, Beth Revis**

Revis' stunning debut explores what a society isolated deep in space is willing to sacrifice in order to survive. The answer is both chilling and thought-provoking. Entirely original, deeply compelling, and utterly absorbing.

***Between Shades of Gray*, Ruta Sepetys**

Stalin deported and murdered millions, but he could not destroy the seeds of memory, compassion, and art that they left behind. From those seeds, Sepetys has crafted a brilliant story of love, family, and survival that will keep their memory alive for generations to come. A must read!

***Sparrow Road*, Sheila O'Connor**

O'Connor's new book about the importance of love, loyalty, and dreams is both charming and touching. We accompany Raine through a summer of secrets and discoveries, friendship and forgiveness, and growing up and growing older. *Sparrow Road* is quite wonderful and we recommend it highly.

HISTORY/NON-FICTION

***World War II*, R.G. Grant**

An accessible yet thorough look World War II - the decisions made, battles fought, lives affected, and subsequent results of the war that defined the twentieth century. It includes firsthand testimony of young soldiers who remember the front lines, as well as the wives, parents, and children left at home. A DVD brings the history to life.

***Ghosts of War*, Ryan Smithson**

Ryan Smithson joined the Army Reserve when he was just out of high school. At age nineteen he was deployed to Iraq. His year in combat changed his life. This memoir is a remarkable, deeply penetrating read that will compel teens to reflect on their own thoughts about duty, patriotism and sacrifice. (Memoir. YA) (Kirkus Reviews (starred review))

***Unsinkable*, Abby Sunderland**

The stirring narrative of sixteen-year-old Abby Sunderland's remarkable true story of attempting to become the youngest person ever to sail solo around the world. Abby's ambition and tenacity is a real-life parable of what can happen when we choose to exceed our own limits, embrace faith, and strive after what all the naysayers say is impossible.

***Mayflower*, Nathaniel Philbrick**

The story of the pilgrims' perilous voyage to America to find a home where they could worship freely and the many obstacles the encounter in their quest.

Three Cups of Tea, Greg Mortenson

Hiking in the mountains of Pakistan in 1993, Mortenson got lost. He found his way to a small village where the locals helped him and, in return, he promised to help them build a school for the children.

Tory Hole, Natalie Bannitt

Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream, Tanya Lee Stone

When America created NASA in 1958, there was an unspoken rule: you had to be a man. Here is the tale of thirteen women who proved that they were not only as tough as the toughest man, but also brave enough to challenge the government. But even though the Mercury 13 women did not make it into space, they did not lose, for their example empowered young women to take their place in the sky, piloting jets and commanding space capsules.

Candy Bomber, Michael O. Tunnell

This is a true story of chocolate, bubble gum and hope. World War II was over and Berlin was in ruins, when US Air Force pilot Gail Tunnell had the idea to run a "candy drop" for the children and bring some happiness to the war-torn city.

HISTORICAL FICTION

Fever 1793, Laurie Anderson

Based on the actual epidemic of yellow fever in Philadelphia that wiped out 5,000 in three months, this is the story of sixteen-year-old Mattie Cook, whose life is transformed when her mother and she is forced cope on her own changing her from a willful child to a strong, capable able to manage her family's business on her own.

Weedflower, Cynthia Kadohata

After Pearl Harbor, twelve-year-old Sunnuko and her Japanese-American family are relocated from their flower farm in California to an internment camp in Arizona. where they discover the rewards and challenges of forging friendship across a racial divide.

Homeless Bird, Gloria Whelan

Koly's parents have arranged a marriage for their only daughter and now, like many girls her age in India, she will leave home forever. She yearns to flee, but tradition dictates that it's too late to turn back. On her wedding day, Koly's fate is sealed. But sometimes, courage and hope can be more powerful than tradition, and fate can be taken into one's own hands.

Lyddie, Katherine Patterson

After ten-year-old Lyddie and her younger brother are hired out as servants to help pay off their family farm's debts, Lyddie is determined to find a way to reunite her family. She had heard she could make a lot of money in the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. She makes her way there only to find that her dreams of returning home may never come true.

Tamar, Mal Peet

In 1944, two allied spies parachute into Nazi-occupied Holland to support the Dutch resistance fighters. An exciting and gripping read!