

Rocky Hill Middle School
Summer Reading List 2019

Our intention for summer reading in the Middle School is to develop and promote an enjoyment for reading. During the summer, we encourage each Middle School student to read at least four books. New this year, we also request that all students read a specific book, which was selected in June by the entire middle-school faculty and student body. Upon returning to school in the fall, students will participate in discussion and follow-up activities on this book. The discussion/activity will involve setting, character development, plot, and theme.

A. Whole Middle-School Reading Book: *The Stars Beneath our Feet* (David Barclay Moore)

You may want to read this book later in the summer and take notes, so it's fresh in your mind for the discussion group in the fall.

B. Further Recommendations

To find more great books to read this summer, you may use the lists below. ***Any other title that has a parent's approval is also acceptable.*** Read the book summaries on this list and make sure the books you choose sound interesting. Audio books are available at your local library and through Audible.com or iTunes for many of these titles. Reading levels are approximate, so feel free to choose books that appeal to you.

We encourage you to read as many books as you can this summer. Reading widely has many benefits, including stimulating your imagination, teaching you about other places, people and times, and making you a better reader and writer!

***These books contain mature content, so parental approval is recommended.**

Detailed book descriptions are located on the following pages. They are divided into 3 sections- Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Classics.

FICTION

STUDENT-SUGGESTED BOOKS

Johnson, Harriet McBryde. *Accidents of Nature* (student-suggested book). Grades 7 & up

It's the summer of 1970. Seventeen-year-old Jean has cerebral palsy, but she's always believed she's just the same as everyone else. She's never really known another disabled person before she arrives at Camp Courage. As Jean joins a community unlike any she has ever imagined, she comes to question her old beliefs and look at the world in a new light. The camp session is only ten days long, but that may be all it takes to change a life forever.

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Checked* (student-suggested book). Grades 5 & up

Hockey is Conor's life. It's his dad's whole life too—and Conor is sure that's why his stepmom, Jenny, left. There are very few things Conor and his dad love more than the game, and one of those things is their Doberman, Sinbad. When Sinbad is diagnosed with cancer, Conor chooses to put his hockey lessons and practices on hold so they can pay for Sinbad's chemotherapy. But without hockey, the one thing that makes Conor feel special, is he really special at all?

Braden, Ann. *The Benefits of Being an Octopus* (student-suggested book). Grades 4 & up
Seventh-grader Zoey has her hands full as she takes care of her much younger siblings after school every day while her mom works her shift at the pizza parlor. At school, Zoey tries to stay under the radar. Her only friend Fuchsia has her own issues, and since they're in an entirely different world than the rich kids, it's best if no one notices them. Unfortunately, she's not totally invisible, and one of her teachers forces her to join the debate club. Even though Zoey resists participating, debate ultimately leads her to see things in a new way - but can she find the courage to speak up?

***Thomas, Angie.** *The Hate U Give* (student-suggested book). Grades 8 & up
Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter is a black girl and an expert at navigating the two worlds she exists in: one at Garden Heights, her black neighborhood, and the other at Williamson Prep, her suburban, mostly white high school. But walking the line between the two becomes immensely harder when Starr is present at the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend, Khalil, by a white police officer.

Matharu, Taran. *The Novice* (student-suggested book). Grades 6 & up
Fletcher is working as a blacksmith's apprentice when he discovers he has the rare ability to summon demons from another world. Chased from his village for a crime he did not commit, Fletcher must travel with his demon, Ignatius, to an academy for adepts, where the gifted are taught the art of summoning.

Lu, Marie. *Warcross* (student-suggested book). Grades
For the millions who log in every day, Warcross isn't just a game—it's a way of life. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down Warcross players who bet on the game illegally. When Emika hacks into the opening game of the international Warcross Championships, she accidentally glitches herself into the action and becomes an overnight sensation. Recruited by the game creator to uncover a security problem, Emika is thrust in an investigation that takes her in dangerous territory.

MORE SUGGESTED BOOKS

Alexander, Kwame. *The Crossover* Grades 6 & up
"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family. (2017 RI Teen Book Award Nominee and Newbury Award Winner)

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains* Grades 5 & up
As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister become the property of a malicious New York City couple. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. (National Book Award Finalist)

Angleberger, Tom. *Fuzzy* Grades 5 & up

Max never expected to befriend a robot, but that's before she meets Fuzzy. Fuzzy is a robot who is being trained to think for himself, which helps when the school is threatened by their vice principal BARBARA, a computer program gone rogue. (*Rhode Island Middle School Book Award 2019 Nominees*)

Applegate, Katherine. *The One and Only Ivan*☐

Grades 4 & up

Inspired by the true story of a gorilla who spent 30 years alone in a cage at an indoor zoo in a mall, this beautifully written book is told from the point of view of Ivan, the Gorilla. Follow his struggle to free himself and a baby elephant from his down and out “domain.” (*RI Children’s Book Award Nominee 2014 and Newbery Award Winner 2013*)

Barnhill, Kelly. *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*

Grades 5 & up

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon. Xan rescues the children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own. As Luna’s thirteenth birthday approaches, her magic begins to emerge--with dangerous consequences. Meanwhile, a young man from the Protectorate is determined to free his people by killing the witch. (*Newbury Award Winner 2016*)

Baskin, Nora Raleigh. *Anything But Typical*

Grades 5 & up

Jason has autism. A sixth grader, he relates how he does not fit in, even though he tries to follow the instructions of his therapists and helpers. Kids at school think he is “weird” and usually avoid him. Jason finally finds friendship with a girl in his online writing group. Will a face-to-face meeting change their friendship? (*2012 RI Children’s Book Award Nominee*)

***Boyne, John.** *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*

Grades 7 & up

Bruno returns home from school one day to discover that his father, a Nazi officer, has received a promotion and the family must move to a new house in Out-With (Auschwitz). While exploring his new environment, he meets a boy “on the other side of the fence”, whose life is very different to his own. Their meeting results in a friendship that has devastating consequences.

Bradley, Kimberly. *The War that Saved my Life*

Grades 4-7

Nine-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada’s twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn’t waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him.☐ So begins a new adventure of Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan—and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother? (*Newbery honor book and Odyssey Audio book winner*)

Buyea, Rob. *Because of Mr. Terupt*

Grades 4-6

It’s the start of fifth grade for seven kids at Snow Hill School. There’s . . . **Jessica**, the new girl, smart and perceptive, who’s having a hard time fitting in; **Alexia**, a bully, your friend one second, your enemy the next; **Peter**, class prankster and troublemaker; **Luke**, the brain; **Danielle**, who never stands up for herself; shy **Anna**,

whose home situation makes her an outcast; and **Jeffrey**, who hates school. Only Mr. Terupt, their new and energetic teacher, seems to know how to deal with them all. He makes the classroom a fun place, even if he doesn't let them get away with much . . . until the snowy winter day when an accident changes everything—and everyone. (*2013 RI Children's Book Award Nominee*) (Fiction)

Choldenko, Jennifer. *Al Capone Does My Shirts*

Grades 5 & up

In this appealing novel set in 1935, 12-year-old Moose Flanagan and his family move from Santa Monica to Alcatraz Island, where his father gets a job as an electrician at the prison. Family dilemmas are at the center of the story, but history and setting – including plenty of references to the prison's most infamous inmate, mob boss Al Capone – play an important part, too. (*Newbery Honor book*)

Creech, Sharon. *Walk Two Moons*

Grades 6 & up

Thirteen-year-old Salamanca Tree Hiddle's mother has disappeared. While tracing her steps on a car trip from Ohio to Idaho with her grandparents, Salamanca tells a story to pass the time about a friend named Phoebe Winterbottom whose mother vanished and who received secret messages after her disappearance. One of them read, "Don't judge a man until you have walked two moons in his moccasins." (*1995 Newbery Medal winner*)

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Bud Not Buddy*

Grades 3 & up

Guided only by a flier for one of Calloway's shows--a small, blue poster that had mysteriously upset his mother shortly before she died--Bud sets off to track down his supposed dad, a man he's never laid eyes on. And, being 10, Bud-not-Buddy gets into all sorts of trouble along the way, barely escaping a monster-infested woodshed, stealing a vampire's car, and even getting tricked into "busting slob with a real live girl." (*Newbery Award and Coretta Scott King Award winner*)

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner* (Series)

Grades 6 & up

When Thomas wakes up in the lift, the only thing he can remember is his first name. His memory is blank. But he's not alone. When the lift's doors open, Thomas finds himself surrounded by kids who welcome him to the Glade—a large, open expanse surrounded by stone walls. (*New York Times Bestseller*)

Di Camillo, Kate. *Tiger Rising*

Grades 5 & up

Walking through the misty Florida woods one morning, twelve-year-old Rob Horton is stunned to encounter a tiger - a real-life, very large tiger - pacing back and forth in a cage. What's more, on the same extraordinary day, he meets Sistine Bailey, a girl who shows her feelings as readily as Rob hides his. As they learn to trust each other, and ultimately, to be friends, Rob and Sistine prove that some things - like memories, and heartaches, and tigers - can't be locked up forever. (*National Book Award Finalist*)

***Feinstein, John.** *Foul Trouble*

Grades 8 & up [Show More](#)

Terrell Jamerson is the #1 high school basketball player in the country. His team is poised to win State, top colleges are lining up to give him scholarships, and everyone says he could play in the NBA tomorrow. But it only takes one false step to lose everything. Danny Wilcox is Terrell's best friend and teammate, and a top prospect himself, but these days it seems like *everyone* wants to get close to Terrell: the sneaker guys, the money managers, the college boosters. They show up offering fast cars and cold, hard cash. They say they just want to help, but their kind of help could get Terrell disqualified. Danny and Terrell better keep their eyes on the ball if they hope to last the season. [Show Less](#)

Gaiman, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*

Grades 4 & up

Although the book opens with a scary scene – “a man named Jack” stabs a family to death – the story quickly moves into more child-friendly storytelling. The sole survivor of the attack, an 18-month-old baby, toddles to a nearby graveyard. The graveyard's ghostly residents adopt him, name him Nobody (“Bod”), and allow him to live in their tomb. (2009 Newbery Medal)

Geimeinhart, Dan. *The Honest Truth*

Grades 5 & Up

In all the ways that matter, Mark is a normal kid. He's got a dog named Beau and a best friend, Jessie. He likes to take photos and write haiku poems in his notebook. He dreams of climbing a mountain one day. But in one important way, Mark is not like other kids at all. Mark is sick. The kind of sick that means hospitals. And treatments. The kind of sick some people never get better from. So Mark runs away. He leaves home with his camera, his notebook, his dog, and a plan. A plan to reach the top of Mount Rainier. Even if it's the last thing he ever does. (2017 RI Children's Book Award Nominee)

Gratz, Alan. *Refugee*

Grades 6 & up

Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, but each is leaving home and family, escaping great danger in search of safety, opportunity and a future. (Rhode Island Middle School Book Award 2019 Nominee)

***Green, John.** *The Fault in our Stars*

Grades 8 & up

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten. (New York Times Bestseller & 2014 RI Teen Book Award Winner)

Hahn, Mary. *Took- A Ghost Story*

Grades 5-7

Thirteen-year-old Daniel Anderson doesn't believe Brody Mason's crazy stories about the ghost witch who lives up on Brewster's Hill with Bloody Bones, her man-eating razorback hog. But Daniel's seven-year-old sister Erica has become more and more withdrawn, talking to her lookalike doll. When she disappears into the woods one day, he knows something is terribly wrong. Did the witch strike? Has Erica been “took”? (2017 RI Children's Book Award Nominee)

Hautzig, Esther. *The Endless Steppe*

Grades 5 & up

In June 1942, the Rudomin family is arrested by the Russians. They are "capitalists -- enemies of the people." Forced from their home and friends in Vilna, Poland, they are herded into crowded cattle cars. Their destination: the endless steppe of Siberia. For five years, Ester and her family live in exile, weeding potato fields and working in the mines, struggling for enough food and clothing to stay alive. Only the strength of family sustains them and gives them hope for the future.

Hesse, Karen. *Out of the Dust*

Grades 3 & up

This gripping story, written in sparse first-person, free-verse poems, is the compelling tale of Billie Jo's struggle to survive during the dust bowl years of the Depression. With stoic courage, she learns to cope with the loss of her mother and her grieving father's slow deterioration. There is hope at the end when Billie Jo's badly burned hands are healed, and she is able to play her beloved piano again. (1998 Newbery Medal winner)

Hicks, Faith Erin. *The Nameless City*

Grades 5 & up

For longtime residents the city has no name; it changes each time that it's conquered. Kaidu is Dao, the cities' current occupiers; Rat is a city dweller, and distrustful of the Dao, including Kaidu. This graphic novel touches upon prejudices and class division. (Graphic novel) (*Rhode Island Middle School Book Award 2019 Nominee*)

Hobbs, Will. *Take Me to the River*

Grade 5 & up

Dylan is excited to join his cousin Rio on a white water rafting trip along the Mexican border, unaware of the danger that awaits them. (*2013 RI Teen Book Award Nominee*)

Holczer, Tracy. *The Secret Hum of a Daisy*

Grades 6 & up

Twelve-year-old Grace and her mother have always been their own family, traveling from place to place like gypsies. But Grace wants to finally have a home all their own. Just when she thinks she's found it her mother says it's time to move again. Grace summons the courage to tell her mother how she really feels and will always regret that her last words to her were angry ones. After her mother's sudden death, Grace is forced to live with a grandmother she's never met. She can't imagine her mother would want her to stay with this stranger. Then Grace finds clues in a mysterious treasure hunt, just like the ones her mother used to send her on. Maybe it is her mother, showing her the way to her true home. (*2016 Teen Book Award nominee*)

Iturbe, Antonio. *Librarian of Auschwitz*

Grades 6 & up

Based on the experience of real-life Auschwitz prisoner Dita Kraus, this is the incredible story of a girl who risked her life to keep the magic of books alive during the Holocaust. Fourteen-year-old Dita is one of the many imprisoned by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Taken, along with her mother and father, from the Terezin ghetto in Prague, Dita is adjusting to the constant terror that is life in the camp. When Jewish leader Freddy Hirsch asks Dita to take charge of the eight precious volumes the prisoners have managed to sneak past the guards, she agrees. And so Dita becomes the librarian of Auschwitz. Out of one of the darkest chapters of human history comes this extraordinary story of courage and hope.

***Kaufman, Arnie.** *Illuminae*

Grades 7 & up

The planet Kerenza is attacked, and Kady and Ezra find themselves on a space fleet fleeing the enemy, while their ship's artificial intelligence system and a deadly plague may be the end of them all. (*2017 RI Teen Book Award Nominee*)

Lupica, Mike. *The Underdogs*

Grades 5 & up

Will Tyler can fly on a football field. When Will has a football in hand, he may as well be flying for real because life can't touch him - his dad isn't so defeated, his town isn't so poor, and everyone has something to cheer for. All of which does him no good if the football season is canceled. With no funding for things like uniforms, and with seemingly every other family moving to find jobs, there simply isn't enough money or players for a season. Unless one kid can rally an entire town and give everyone a reason to believe .

Lai, Thanhha. *Inside Out and Back Again*

Grades 4-6

Based on the author's own life, a ten-year-old girl experiences the culture shock of moving to America from Vietnam. This story expresses both the humor and heartbreak of this time in her life. (*RI Children's Book Award Nominee 2013 & Newbery Honor Winner 2012*)

Lu, Marie. *Legend*

Grades 7 & up

In a futuristic LA, June has joined the elite military of the Republic. Her first priority is to capture Day, the enigmatic rebel accused of her brother's senseless murder. (*RI Teen Book Award Nominee 2013*)

Mikaelsen, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*

Grades 7 & up

Cole is a violent teen offender convicted of beating a classmate. He participates in Circle Justice, an alternative sentencing program based on traditional Native American practices that results in his being banished to a remote Alaskan Island where he is left to survive for a year.

Nielsen, Jennifer. *The False Prince*

Grades 5 & up

When Sage is taken from his orphanage by a nobleman, his life completely changes. He soon discovers that he is part of a plot to impersonate the long lost prince of the kingdom. Since only one boy will be chosen, defiant Sage has to be the one ... or it could mean his death. (*RI Children's and Teen Book Award Nominee 2014*)

Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*

Grades 5 & up

This novel chronicles in gritty detail 13-year-old Brian's mistakes, setbacks, and small triumphs as, with the help of only a hatchet, he manages to survive 54 days alone in the Canadian wilderness after his plane crashes. (*1988 Newbery Honor Winner*)

Paulsen, Gary. *Woods Runner*

Grades 6 & up

In 1776, Samuel sets out from Pennsylvania to rescue his parents from the British soldiers and Indians who kidnapped them after slaughtering most of their community. Samuel tracks his captured parents through the countryside to British-held New York, encountering scalping bands of Iroquois, pillaging squads of mercenary Hessians, and a few hardy, helpful rebels along the way. (*2012 RI Teen Book Award Nominee*)

Park, Linda Sue. *A Single Shard*

Grades 4 & up

Tree-ear is fascinated by the celadon ware created in the village of Ch'ulp'o. He is determined to prove himself to the master potter, Min—even if it means making a solitary journey to present Min's work in the hope of a royal commission . . . or arriving at the royal court with nothing but a single celadon shard. (*Newbery Honor winner*)

Perez, Celia. *The First Rule of Punk*

Grades 4 & up

There are no shortcuts to surviving your first day at a new school—you can't fix it with duct tape like you would your Chuck Taylors. On Day One, twelve-year-old Malu (Maria Luisa, if you want to annoy her) inadvertently upsets Posada Middle School's queen bee, violates the school's dress code with her punk rock look, and disappoints her college-professor mom in the process. Her dad, who now lives a thousand miles away, says things will get better as long as she remembers the first rule of punk: be yourself. The real Malu loves rock music,

skateboarding, zines, and Soyrizo (hold the cilantro, please). And when she assembles a group of like-minded misfits at school and starts a band, Malu finally begins to feel at home. She'll do anything to preserve this, which includes standing up to an anti-punk school administration to fight for her right to express herself! (2018 Pura Belpre Award Honor Book, 2018 Kids Reading Across RI book)

Pfeffer, Susan. *Life As We Knew It*

Grades 6-8

Miranda's disbelief turns to fear in a split second when a meteor knocks the moon closer to the earth. How should her family prepare for the future when worldwide tsunamis wipe out the coasts, earthquakes rock the continents, and volcanic ash blocks out the sun? As summer turns to Arctic winter, Miranda, her two brothers, and their mother retreat to the unexpected safe haven of their sunroom, where they subsist on stockpiled food and limited water in the warmth of a wood-burning stove.

Philbrick, Rodman. *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*

Grades 4 & up

Twelve-year-old orphan Homer runs away from Pine Swamp, Maine, to find his older brother, who has been sold into the Union Army. With laugh-aloud humor, Homer outwits and outruns a colorful assortment of civil War-era thieves, scallywags, and spies as he makes his way south, following clues that finally lead him to Gettysburg. Homer never loses heart – but will he find his brother? Or will it be too late? (Newbery Honor Book)

***Reynolds, Jason & Brendan Kiely.** *All American Boys*

Grades 8 & up

When Rashad is mistakenly accused of stealing, classmate Quinn witnesses his brutal beating at the hands of a police officer who happens to be the man that has raised him since his dad died in Afghanistan. (2017 RI Teen Book Award nominee- Loretta Scott King Award Honor Book)

***Rhodes, Jewell Parker.** *Towers Falling*

Grades 5 & up

When her fifth-grade teacher hints that a series of lessons about home and community will culminate with one big answer about two tall towers once visible outside their classroom window, Deja can't help but feel confused. She sets off on a journey of discovery, with new friends Ben and Sabeen by her side. But just as she gets closer to answering big questions about who she is, what America means, and how communities can grow (and heal), she uncovers new questions, too. Like, why does Pop get so angry when she brings up anything about the towers?

Riggs, Ransom. *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*

Grades 7 & up

A mysterious island, an abandoned orphanage, and a strange collection of very curious photographs. An unforgettable novel that mixes fiction and photography in a thrilling reading experience.

Rocco, J. & Jay Primiano. *Swim That Rock*

Grades 7 & up

When his dad goes missing in a fishing-boat accident, fourteen-year-old Jake refuses to think he may have lost his father forever. But suddenly, nothing seems certain in Jake's future, and now his family's RI diner may be repossessed by loan sharks. In Narragansett Bay, scrabbling out a living as a quahogger isn't easy, but with the help of some local clammers, Jake is determined to work hard and earn enough money to ensure his family's security and save the diner in time. (2016 RI Teen Book Award nominee)

***Roth, Veronica.** *Divergent*

Grades 8 & up

Beatrice lives in a future where she must choose between five factions to define her identity for the rest of her life, a decision made more difficult when she learns she doesn't belong in any one faction in a society that is far from perfect. (RI Teen Book Award Winner 2013)

Rundell, Katherine. *The Explorer*

Grades 5 & up

Fred, Con, Lila, and Max are on their way back to England from Manaus when the plane they're on crashes in the Amazon and the pilot dies upon landing. For days they survive alone, until Fred finds a map that leads them to a ruined city, and to a secret.

Sachar, Louis. *Holes*

Grades 4 & up

"If you take a bad boy and make him dig a hole every day in the hot sun, it will turn him into a good boy." Such is the reigning philosophy at Camp Green Lake. Stanley Yelnats has landed at Camp Green Lake because it seemed a better option than jail. (1999 Newbery Medal winner) (Fiction)

Schlitz, Laura A. *The Hired Girl*

Grades 8 & up

Fourteen-year-old Joan Skraggs, just like the heroines in her beloved novels, yearns for real life and true love. But what hope is there for adventure, beauty, or art on a hardscrabble farm in Pennsylvania where the work never ends? Over the summer of 1911, Joan pours her heart out into her diary as she seeks a new, better life for herself—because maybe, just maybe, a hired girl cleaning and cooking for six dollars a week can become what a farm girl could only dream of—a woman with a future. Newbery Medalist Laura Amy Schlitz relates Joan's journey from the muck of the chicken coop to the comforts of a society household in Baltimore (Electricity! Carpet sweepers! Sending out the laundry!), taking readers on an exploration of feminism and housework; religion and literature; love and loyalty; cats, hats, and bunions. (Scott O'Dell Award)

***Schmidt, Gary.** *Orbiting Jupiter*

Grades 8 & up

The shattering story of Joseph, a father at thirteen, who has never seen his daughter, Jupiter. After spending time in a juvenile facility, he's placed with a foster family on a farm in rural Maine. Here Joseph, damaged and withdrawn, meets twelve-year-old Jack, who narrates the account of the troubled, passionate teen who wants to find his baby at any cost. In this riveting novel, two boys discover the true meaning of family and the sacrifices it requires.

***Schreffer, Eliot.** *Endangered*

Grades 7 & up

The compelling tale of a girl who must save a group of bonobos — and herself — from a violent coup. The Congo is a dangerous place, even for people who are trying to do good. When one girl has to follow her mother to her sanctuary for bonobos, she's not thrilled to be there. It's her mother's passion, and she'd rather have nothing to do with it. But when revolution breaks out and their sanctuary is attacked, she must rescue the bonobos and hide in the jungle. Together, they will fight to keep safe, to eat, and to survive. (RI Teen Book Award 2014 nominee)

Sherman, Delia. *The Evil Wizard Smallbone*

Grades 5 & up

Twelve-year-old runaway Nick finds shelter from a blizzard in Evil Wizard Books, run by Wizard Smallbone, who decides Nick is his new apprentice. Nick tries to outwit the wizard to gain his freedom and stay one step ahead of the motorcycle-riding werewolves that want him for their own. (Rhode Island Middle School Book Award 2019 Nominee)

Sheth, Kashmira. *Keeping Corner*

Grades 7 & up

Twelve-year-old Leela had been spoiled all her life. She doesn't care for school and barely marks the growing unrest between the British colonists and her own countrymen. Why should she? Her future has been planned since her engagement at two and marriage at nine. Leela's whole life changes, though, when her husband dies. She's now expected to behave like a proper widow: shaving her head and trading her jewel-toned saris for rough, earth-colored ones. Leela is considered unlucky now, and will have to stay confined to her house for a year-keep corner-in preparation for a life of mourning for a boy she barely knew. When her schoolteacher hears of her fate, she offers Leela lessons at home. For the first time, despite her confinement, Leela opens her eyes to the changing world around her. India is suffering from a severe drought, and farmers are unable to pay taxes to the British. She learns about a new leader of the people, a man named Gandhi, who starts a political movement and practices satyagraha- non-violent protest against the colonists as well as the caste system. The quiet strength of satyagraha may liberate her country. Could she use the same path to liberate herself?

Selznick, Brian. *Wonderstruck*

Grades 4-6

The lives of Rose and Ben, two deaf children growing up 50 years apart, intersect at the American Museum of Natural History. Why is Rose running away? Who is Ben's father? Are their lives connected? Explore the words and the pictures to discover the truth. *(2013 RI Children's & Teen Book Award Nominee)*

Shulman, Polly. *The Grimm Legacy*

Grades 4 & up

Elizabeth gets a job as a page at a special library. After gaining coveted access to the Grimm Collection, she and the other pages are drawn into a series of frightening adventures. *(RI Teen Book Award Nominee 2013)*

Spradin, Michael. *Into the Killing Seas*

Grades 5 & up

Stranded in the war torn Pacific, Patrick and his younger brother Teddy are finally homeward-bound. They've stowed away on one of the US Navy's finest ships, and now they just need to stay hidden. But Japanese torpedoes rip their dream apart. And the sinking ship isn't the worst of it. Patrick and Teddy can handle hunger and dehydration as they float in the water and wait to be rescued. If they're smart, they can even deal with the madness that seems to plague their fellow survivors. No, the real danger circles beneath the surface. And it has teeth.... Based on the true events of the 1945 sinking of the USS Indianapolis, author Michael P. Spradlin tells a harrowing story of World War II. *(2017 RI Children's Book Award nominee)*

Stead, Rebecca. *When You Reach Me*

Grades 5 & up

As her mother prepares to be a contestant on the 1980s television game show, "The \$20,000 Pyramid," a twelve-year-old New York City girl tries to make sense of a series of mysterious notes received from an anonymous source that seems to defy the laws of time and space. *(2010 Newbery Award winner)*

Stewart, Trenton Lee. *The Mysterious Benedict Society*

Grades 4 & up

When a peculiar ad appears in the newspaper, dozens of children enroll to take a series of mysterious, mind-bending tests. (And you, dear reader, can test your wits right alongside them.) But in the end just four very special children will succeed. Their challenge: to go on a secret mission that only the most intelligent and resourceful children could complete. To accomplish it they will have to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. *(New York Times Bestseller)*

Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Short*

Grades 6 & up

Julia is very short for her age, but by the end of the summer run of The Wizard of Oz, she'll realize how big she is inside, where it counts. She hasn't ever thought of herself as a performer, but when the wonderful director of Oz

casts her as a Munchkin, she begins to see herself in a new way. As Julia becomes friendly with the poised and wise Olive—one of the adults with dwarfism who've joined the production's motley crew of Munchkins—and with her deeply artistic neighbor, Mrs. Chang, Julia's own sense of self as an artist grows. Soon, she doesn't want to fade into the background—and it's a good thing, because her director has more big plans for Julia!

Vanderpool, Clare. *Moon over Manifest*

Grades 5 & up

Abilene Tucker feels abandoned. Her father has put her on a train, sending her off to live with an old friend for the summer while he works a railroad job. Armed only with a few possessions and her list of universals, Abilene jumps off the train in Manifest, Kansas, aiming to learn about the boy her father once was. (2011 Newbery Medal winner)

Venkatraman, Padma. *A Time to Dance*

Grades 7 & up

Veda, a classical dance prodigy in India, lives and breathes dance—so when an accident leaves her a below-knee amputee, her dreams are shattered. For a girl who's grown used to receiving applause for her dance prowess and flexibility, adjusting to a prosthetic leg is painful and humbling. But Veda refuses to let her disability rob her of her dreams, and she starts all over again, taking beginner classes with the youngest dancers. Then Veda meets Govinda, a young man who approaches dance as a spiritual pursuit. As their friendship deepens, Veda reconnects with the world around her, and begins to discover who she is and what dance truly means to her.

Voigt, Cynthia. *Dacey's Song*

Grade 6 & up

Keeping her family together is what thirteen-year-old Dacey does best. But now that all four Tillerman children have found a new home with their grandmother, Dacey has to learn the hard lesson of letting go. Dacey's got other problems than finding her new role in the family: she's bored with everyone and everything at school and doesn't think anyone can tell her anything she wants to know. But slowly, Dacey discovers that everyone has something to teach, and life is a lesson that doesn't get easier. (1983 Newbery Medal winner)

Volponi, Paul. *The Final Four*

Grades 7 & up

The final game of college basketball's March Madness is told in deft play-by-play analysis while flashbacks give insight into why the stakes are so high for the players. As the last moments tick down on the game clock, you'll learn how each player went from being a kid who loves 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 who has the most skill, the most drive, and the most heart.

William-Garcia, Rita. *One Crazy Summer*

Grades 4 & up

Eleven-year-old Delphine has only a few fragmented memories of her poet-mother, Cecile, who abandoned the family in Brooklyn after giving birth to her third daughter. In the summer of 1968, Delphine's father decides that seeing Cecile is "something whose time had come," and Delphine boards a plane to visit Cecile at her home in Oakland. (2011 Newbery Honor book)

Wolk, Lauren. *Wolf Hollow*

Grades 6 & up

Growing up in the shadows cast by two world wars, Annabelle has lived a mostly quiet, steady life in her small Pennsylvania town. Until the day new student Betty Glengarry walks into her class. Betty quickly reveals herself to be cruel and manipulative, and while her bullying seems isolated at first, things quickly escalate, and reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks. While others have always seen Toby's strangeness,

Annabelle knows only kindness. She will soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice as tensions mount. *(2016 Newbery Honor Book)*

NON-FICTION

Alexander, Caroline. *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition* Grades 7 & up
A riveting account of Shackleton's expedition – one of history's greatest epics of survival. Together, text and image re-create the terrible beauty of Antarctica, the awful destruction of the ship, and the crew's heroic daily struggle to stay alive, a miracle achieved largely through Shackleton's inspiring leadership.

Alifirenka, Caitlin & Martin Ganda. *I Will Always Write Back: How one letter changed two lives* Grades 6 & up
It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. Martin was lucky to even receive a pen-pal letter. There were only ten letters, and fifty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one. That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives. In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends --and better people--through their long-distance exchange. Their story will inspire you to look beyond your own life and wonder about the world at large and your place in it. *(NY Times Bestseller)*

Aronson, Marc. *The Skull in the Rock: How a Scientist, a Boy, and Google Earth Opened a New Window on Human Origins* Grades 6 & up
In August 2008, in an area near Johannesburg, South Africa, called the Cradle of Humankind, nine-year-old Matthew Berger summoned his father, paleoanthropologist Lee Berger, with the words Dad, I've found a fossil. Thus begins the fascinating tale of the discovery of a nearly complete skeleton of an entirely new species of early man. Aronson narrates the story of the gregarious Indiana Jones-like Berger, who grew up in rural Georgia with a penchant for exploring nature and went on to build a career around that passion.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow* Grades 5 & up
Hitler's plans for the future of Germany relied significantly on its young people, and this excellent history shows how he attempted to carry out his mission with the establishment of the Hitler Youth, or *Hitlerjugend*, in 1926. *(2006 Newbery Honor Book) (Nonfiction/History)*

***Bissinger, H.G.** *Friday Night Lights* Grades 8 & up
Odessa is not a town big on dreams, but the Panthers help keep the hopes and dreams of this small, dusty town going. Every Friday night from September to December, when the Permian High School Panthers play football, this West Texas town becomes a place where dreams can come true.

***Brown, Don.** *Drowned City* Grades 7 & up
Ten years later, this graphic novel reflects on the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans. *(Kirkus, ALA, Pub Weekly, Booklist, Hornbook best of year)*

Frank, Anne. *Diary of a Young Girl* Grades 5 & up
The Diary of a Young Girl is the record of two years in the life of a remarkable Jewish girl whose triumphant humanity in the face of unfathomable deprivation and fear has made the book one of the most enduring documents of our time.

Hoose, Phillip. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*

Grades 6 & up

Nine months before Rosa Parks's history-making protest on a city bus, Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old Montgomery, Alabama, high-school student, was arrested and jailed for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Titanic: Voices from the Disaster*

Grades 6 & up

Pieces together the story of the Titanic and that fateful April night, drawing on the voices of survivors and archival photographs. weaves together the voices and stories of real Titanic survivors and witnesses to the disaster — from the stewardess Violet Jessop to Captain Arthur Rostron of the Carpathia, who came to the rescue of the sinking ship. Packed with heart-stopping action, devastating drama, fascinating historical details, loads of archival photographs on almost every page, and quotes from primary sources, this gripping story, which follows the Titanic and its passengers from the ship's celebrated launch at Belfast to her cataclysmic icy end, is sure to thrill and move readers. (*RI Teen Book Award Nominee 2014*)

Kamkwamba, William, and Bryan Mealer. *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind.* Grades 6 & up.

A remarkable true story about a boy who defied poverty and ignorance to build a contraption - a windmill - to improve his life and that of his community. It will inspire anyone who doubts the power of one individual's ability to change his community and better the lives of those around him.

***Krakauer, Jon.** *Into Thin Air*

Grades 8 & up

A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. The storm, which claimed five lives and left countless more – including Krakauer's – in guilt-ridden disarray, would also provide the impetus for this epic account of the May 1996 disaster.

Macy, Sue. *Bylines: A Photobiography of Nellie Bly*

Grades 5 & up

Daring news reporter, globetrotter and advocate for women's rights, Nellie Bly made people stand up and take notice when she posed as an insane person to expose conditions in a New York psychiatric hospital at the end of the 19th century. (*Nonfiction/History*)

Meissner, David . *Call of the Klondike: A True Gold Rush Adventure*

Grades 7 & up

As thousands head north in search of gold, Marshall Bond and Stanley Pearce join them, booking passage on a steamship bound for the Klondike goldfields. The journey is life threatening, but the two friends make it to Dawson City, in Canada, build a cabin, and meet Jack London—all the while searching for the ultimate reward: gold! A riveting, true, action-packed adventure, with their telegrams, diaries, and letters, as well as newspaper articles and photographs.

Murphy, Jim. *The Great Fire*

Grades 5 & up

For more than a century, poor Mrs. O'Leary and her cow have unfairly shouldered the blame for Chicago's infamous Great Fire of 1871. Now Murphy lays bare the facts concerning one of the biggest disasters in American history, in the process clearing the infamous cow and her owner.

(*Newbery Honor Book*)

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Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma for Kids*

Grades 6 & up

"What's for dinner?" seemed like a simple question—until journalist and supermarket detective Michael Pollan delved behind the scenes. From fast food and big organic to small farms and old-fashioned hunting and gathering, this young readers' adaptation of Pollan's famous food-chain exploration encourages kids to consider the personal and global health implications of their food choices.

***Scotti, R.A.** *Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane of 1938*

Grades 8 & up

In the tradition of "The Perfect Storm" *Sudden Sea* harkens back to a natural disaster that struck terror in the hearts of many- The Great Hurricane of 1938, the most financially destructive storm on record. A detailed look at the general extent of the hurricane's destruction adds poignancy to individual stories, such as those of Joseph Matoes, who sees his children swept away from their school bus as they are battered by huge waves and Charles Pierce, a "green and unsure" junior forecaster for a woefully underprepared U.S. Weather Bureau who stands against his experienced superiors as the only forecaster to recognize the danger of the hurricane.

Sheinkin, Steve. *The Port Chicago 50*

Grades 7 & up

On July 17, 1944, a massive explosion rocked the segregated Navy base at Port Chicago, California, killing more than 300 sailors who were at the docks, critically injuring off-duty men in their bunks, and shattering windows up to a mile away. On August 9th, 244 men refused to go back to work until unsafe and unfair conditions at the docks were addressed. When the dust settled, fifty were charged with mutiny, facing decades in jail and even execution. (*National Book Award finalist*)

***Stelson, Caren.** *Sachiko*

Grades 6 & up

This striking work of narrative nonfiction tells the true story of six-year-old Sachiko Yasui's survival of the Nagasaki atomic bomb on August 9, 1945, and the heartbreaking and lifelong aftermath. Having conducted extensive interviews with Sachiko Yasui, Caren Stelson chronicles Sachiko's trauma and loss as well as her long journey to find peace. This book offers readers a remarkable new perspective on the final moments of World War II and their aftermath. (*Sibert Honor Award*)

CLASSICS

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women*

Grades 7 & up

Growing up in New England during the Civil War, the March sisters share everything — their joys and troubles, their loves and secrets. But the four girls couldn't be more different. Meg, the oldest, is the sensible writer. Jo is funny and mischievous. Beth is the shy, dreamy one, and Amy is pretty and artistic. From dances to despairs, through weddings and funerals, the March girls stand as sisters. [Show More](#)

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Bagnald, Enid. *National Velvet*

Grades 4 & up

National Velvet is the story of a 14-year-old girl named Velvet Brown, who rides her horse to victory in the [Grand National steeplechase](#). The novel focuses on the ability of ordinary persons, particularly women, to accomplish great things. Velvet is a teenager in the late 1920s, living in a small [English](#) coastal village in [Sussex](#), dreaming of one day owning many horses.

Doyle, Arthur Conan, Sir. *The Extraordinary Cases of Sherlock Holmes*

Grades 7 & up

Amid the foggy streets of sinister London and the even more sinister smiling countryside, Holmes and Watson once more solve the unsolvable. In 'Speckled Band', 'The Reigate Puzzle' and six other stories, Holmes grapples with the very extremes of treachery, duplicity and murder. Includes an introduction by Jonathan Stroud and more.

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time*

Grade 5 & up

This is the story of the adventures in space and time of Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin O'Keefe. They are in search of Meg's father, a scientist who disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government on the tesseract problem. (1963 Newbery Award Winner) (Fantasy)

Forester, C.S. *Horatio Hornblower* (series)

Grades 7 & up

The year is 1793, on the eve of the Napoleonic Wars, and Horatio Hornblower, a seventeen-year-old boy unschooled in seafaring and the ways of seamen, is ordered to board a captured French merchant ship and take command of crew and cargo for the glory of England. Beginning with *Mr. Midshipman, Hornblower* the series traces his adventures across an entire career.

Konigsburg, E.L. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E Frankweiler*

Grades 6 & up

When suburban Claudia Kincaid decides to run away, she knows she doesn't just want to run *from* somewhere she wants to run *to* somewhere--to a place that is comfortable, beautiful, and preferably elegant. She chooses the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Knowing that her younger brother, Jamie, has money and thus can help her with the serious cash flow problem she invites him along. Once settled into the museum, Claudia and Jamie, find themselves caught up in the mystery of an angel statue that the museum purchased at an auction for a bargain price of \$250. The statue is possibly an early work of the Renaissance master Michelangelo, and therefore worth millions. Or is it?

London, Jack. *Call of the Wild*

Grade 7 & up

A classic novel of adventure, drawn from London's own experiences as a Klondike adventurer, relating the story of a heroic dog, who, caught in the brutal life of the Alaska Gold Rush, ultimately faces a choice between living in man's world and returning to nature.

Montgomery, Lucy Maud. *Anne of Green Gables*

Grade 7 & up

When Marilla Cuthbert's brother, Matthew, returns home to Green Gables with a chatty redheaded orphan girl, Marilla exclaims, "But we asked for a boy. We have no use for a girl." It's not long, though, before the Cuthberts can't imagine how they could ever do without young Anne of Green Gables.

O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Grades 4 & up

The story of a 12-year old girl who lives alone on a Pacific island after she leaps from a rescue ship. Isolated on the island for eighteen years, Karana forages for food, builds weapons to fight predators, clothes herself in a cormorant feathered skirt, and finds strength and peace in her seclusion. (1961 Newbery Medal winner)

Pullman, Phillip. *The Golden Compass*

Grades 7 & Up

Lyra Belacqua is content to run wild among the scholars of Jodan College, with her daemon familiar always by her side. But the arrival of her fearsome uncle, Lord Asriel, draws her to the heart of a terrible struggle—a struggle born of Gobblers and stolen children, witch clans and armored bears. And as she hurtles toward danger

in the cold far North, Lyra never suspects the shocking truth: she alone is destined to win, or to lose, this more-than-mortal battle.

Raskin, Ellen . *The Westing Game*

Grades 6 & up

A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. And though no one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, on things for sure: Sam Westing may be dead...but that won't stop him from playing one last game! (*Newbery Medal Winner*)

Rawls, Wilson. *Where the Red Fern Grows*

Grades 4 & up

Billy and his precious coonhound pups romp relentlessly through the Ozarks, trying to "tree" elusive raccoons. In time, the inseparable trio wins the coveted gold cup in the annual coon-hunt contest, captures the wily ghost coon, and bravely fights with a mountain lion. When the victory over the mountain lion turns to tragedy, Billy grieves, but learns the beautiful old Native American legend of the sacred red fern.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit*

Grades 7 & up

Bilbo Baggins just wanted to be left alone in quiet comfort. But when the wizard Gandalf came along with a band of homeless dwarves, Bilbo was soon drawn into their quest, facing evil orcs, savage wolves, giant spiders, and worse. Finally, it was Bilbo—alone and unaided—who had to confront the great dragon Smaug, the terror of an entire countryside.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Grades 6 & up

This childhood classic relates a small-town boy's pranks and escapades with timeless humor and wisdom. In addition to his everyday stunts (searching for buried treasure, trying to impress the adored Becky Thatcher), Tom experiences a dramatic turn of events when he witnesses a murder, runs away, and returns to attend his own funeral and testify in court.

Washington, Irving. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*

Grades 7 & up

Set near the Dutch settlement of Tarry Town in the secluded and mysterious glen of Sleepy Hollow, Ichabod Crane competes with Broom Bones for the attention of the beautiful Katrina. As Ichabod heads home, he is hunted by the Headless Horseman. This creature may be the ghost of a Hessian soldier or something else altogether.

Verne, Jules. *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

Grades 4 & Up

This extraordinary voyage into the depths unknown aboard the legendary submarine *Nautilus* – commanded by the brilliant, tragic Captain Nemo – explores both the limitless possibilities of science and the twisted labyrinth of the human mind.

Book summaries are taken from *Booklist*, *Kirkus Review*, *School Library Journal*, the RI Teen and Children's Book Award lists and Amazon.com.