



2019 Middle School Summer Reading List Rising Grades 6, 7, and 8

Plainfield Public School District

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Students entering grades six, seven, and eight should read at least **two** books over the summer.

- Choose two books based on your personal interests, parent or teacher recommendations, and reading ability. You may use the recommended reading list for additional ideas.
- For each book, complete one of the options listed below to help you reflect on what you have read.
- Be prepared to discuss and/or write about your summer reading experiences.

Option 1: Response to Literature (for literary texts) - Write one to two paragraphs for each section. Be sure to include evidence from the text to support your ideas.

1. Identify an important event in the story.
 - What caused the event to happen?
 - What was its effect on the characters and/or the plot?
 - Why was this event important?
2. Select a character in the story.
 - Describe the character's physical and personal traits.
 - What actions by the character show us his/her personal traits?
 - What internal or external dialogue shows us these traits?
 - What do other characters say or think about this character?
3. What is the main conflict of the story?
 - Is this an internal or external conflict? Explain.
 - How does the main character handle the conflict? Discuss how the character's actions lead to the resolution of the conflict.

Option 2: Book Review (non-fiction) - Write a review of the book that includes a brief summary explaining the main idea of the text. Add a personal response in which you connect the ideas in the text to your own experiences, another text you have read, or something happening in the world.

Option 3: Video Project (2 - 4 minutes) - Create a video "book talk" that might encourage another student to read the book. The video report should provide viewers with information about the main ideas or themes of the book and, if it is fiction, the important characters and the main conflict of the story. Be sure to provide important details that illustrate what the book is about.



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RECOMMENDED READING LIST

- Blackmon Lowery, Lynda. ***Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March.*** Speak, 2016. The story of a 15-year-old who was the youngest person to participate in the Selma to Montgomery march. In this memoir, Lowery brings the reader into the heart of the Civil Rights Movement and the fight against social injustice.
- Bragg, Georgia. ***How They Croaked: The Awful Ends of the Awfully Famous.*** Walker Publishing, 2011. Over the course of history men and women have lived and died. In fact, getting sick and dying can be a big, ugly mess—especially before the modern medical care that we all enjoy today. This book relays all the gory details of how nineteen world figures gave up the ghost. Readers will be fascinated well past the final curtain, and feel lucky to live in a world with painkillers, X-rays, and soap.
- Diaz, Alexandra. ***The Only Road.*** Simon and Schuster, 2016. The story of two teen cousins fleeing a violent gang in their poor Guatemalan village and making the perilous journey through Mexico to the United States. Courage, their own talents, the kindness of strangers, and above all the love of friends and family sustain them.
- Freedman, Russell. ***We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement That Defied Adolf Hitler.*** Clarion Books, 2016. The story of Austrian siblings who belonged to Hitler Youth, but grew to form a campaign of active resistance to Hitler and the Nazis, risking their lives to distribute leaflets urging Germans to defy the Nazi government.
- Gownley, Jimmy. ***The Dumbest Idea Ever!*** Graphix, 2014. This graphic novel memoir tells the real-life story of thirteen-year-old Jimmy who had a “dumb idea” that turned his life upside down and became the best thing that ever happened to him.
- Gratz, Alan. ***Refugee.*** Scholastic Press, 2017. Intertwining stories of three young refugees: a Jewish boy in 1930s German, a Cuban girl in 1994, and a Syrian boy in 2015. All are journeying with hope of finding safety from violence and repression.
- Keenan, Sheila. ***Dogs of War.*** Graphix, 2013. This graphic novel tells the unforgettable true stories of three wars heroes from three different eras—World War I, World War II, and Vietnam—and they all happened to have four legs.



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- Mass, Wendy. ***The Candymakers***. Little, Brown, 2010. Four gifted twelve-year-olds, including Logan, the candymaker's son, are set to be contestants in the Confectionary Association's national competition to determine the nation's tastiest sweet, but nobody anticipates that a friendship will form between the children.
- Medina, Meg. ***Merci Suárez Changes Gears***. Candlewick, 2018. Thoughtful, strong-willed Merci navigates changes that come along with entering the middle school years, both at home and at the school where she and her brother are scholarship students.
- Nazario, Sonia. ***Enrique's Journey (The Young Adult Adaptation): The True Story of a Boy Determined to Reunite with His Mother***. Random House, 2014. The true story of Enrique, a teenager from Honduras, who sets out on a journey, braving hardship and peril, to find his mother, who had no choice but to leave him when he was a child and go to the United States in search of work. Enrique's story will bring to light the daily struggles of migrants, legal and otherwise, and the complicated choices they face simply trying to survive and provide for the basic needs of their families.
- Noah, Trevor. ***It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime – Stories from a South African Childhood (Adapted for Young Readers)***. Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2019. Trevor Noah, who hosts *The Daily Show* on Comedy Central, shares his remarkable story of growing up in South Africa with a black South African mother and a white European father at a time when it was against the law for a mixed-race child to exist. This memoir blends drama, comedy, and tragedy to depict how Trevor surmounted staggering obstacles and created a promising future for himself.
- Rhodes, Jewell Parker. ***Ghost Boys***. Little, Brown, 2018. In Chicago, 12-year-old black youth Jerome is shot and killed by a white police officer who mistakes a toy gun for a real one. As a ghost, Jerome witnesses the aftermath gripping both his family and that of the police officers. The only person who can see Jerome is the daughter of the white police officer, Sarah, and through her eyes, he realizes that his family isn't the only one affected by the tragedy.
- Saeed, Aisha. ***Amal Unbound***. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018. Life is quiet and ordinary in Amal's Pakistani village, but she's busy pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher one day. One day, Amal's life changes completely when an accidental run-in with the son of her village's corrupt landlord results in Amal working as the landlord's servant to pay off her own family's debt.



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Scieszka, Jon. ***Guys Read: True Stories***. Walden Pond Press, 2014. A collection of stories that are unbelievable but true, written by award-winning authors and journalists.

Sepetys, Ruta. ***Salt to the Sea***. Philomel Books, 2016. World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, many with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia, and Florian, whose paths converge en route to the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship that promises salvation. Forced by circumstance to unite, the three find their strength, courage, and trust in each other tested with each step closer to safety.

Shusterman, Neal and Elfman, Eric. ***Tesla's Attic***. Disney-Hyperion, 2014. When Nick holds a yard sale to get rid of the junk in the attic of his new home, he realizes too late that all the objects have mysterious powers and he needs to get them back.

Sullivan, Tara. ***The Bitter Side of Sweet***. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2016. Fifteen-year-old Amadou and his younger brother Seydou travel from Mali to find work and end up being tricked into forced labor on a cacao plantation in the Ivory Coast. When a girl named Khadija arrives, the three join forces to attempt to flee and rejoin their families. Inspired by real-life events.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. ***You Can Fly: The Tuskegee Airmen***. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2016. An innovative history in verse celebrates the story of the Tuskegee Airmen: pioneering African-American pilots who triumphed in the skies and past the color barrier.

Woodson, Jacqueline. ***Harbor Me***. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018. A group of middle school students come together under the direction of an inspiring teacher to share stories and appreciate their differences.

Yousafzai, Malali and McCormick, Patricia. ***I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World***. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2016. Yousafzai recounts her powerful story of how, as a ten-year-old, she advocated for her right to an education in Pakistan.



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A RECOMMENDED AUTHOR/SERIES LIST

Alexander, Kwame	<i>Booked, Crossover, Rebound (and others)</i>
Anderson, Laurie Halse	<i>Chains, Speak (and others)</i>
Draper, Sharon	<i>Blended, Out of My Mind</i>
Freedman, Russell	<i>Freedom Walkers, 100 People Who Changed America</i>
Green, Tim	<i>Football Champ, Football Genius, Football Hero, Baseball Great, Pinch Hit</i>
Dashner, James	<i>The Maze Runner, The Scorch Trials, The Death Cure, The Kill Order</i>
Haddix, Margaret Peterson	<i>The Missing (series)</i>
Khoury, Jessica	<i>The Corpus Trilogy: Origin, Vitro, Kalahari</i>
Myers, Walter Dean	<i>Bad Boy: A Memoir, Cruisers, Monster, The Dream Bearer, The Glory Field, etc.</i>
Patterson, James	<i>Middle School (series)</i>
Pfeiffer, Jules	<i>Phantom Tollbooth</i>
Reynolds, Jason	<i>Ghost, Patina, Sunny, Lu, As Brave as You</i>
Riordan, Rick	<i>Percy Jackson and the Olympians (series)</i>
Tolkien, J. R. R.	<i>The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings trilogy</i>
Westerfeld, Scott	<i>Midnighters (series), Uglies (series)</i>

Your teachers may also recommend other titles and authors, based on their knowledge of you and your interests.