

Veterans Middle School

Summer Reading List



A new adventure is just a page away!

These works were chosen as **required** selections to prepare students for the upcoming school year. We have provided an extensive list based on interest and reading levels. Students must choose one selection from the grade-level list and complete the grade-level **Reading Assignment** in this packet. Please visit <https://www.bccls.org> for local library listings as well as <https://www.gutenberg.org/> for digital and audio options.

Important Information about the Selection Process:

****Interest Level** numbers indicate topics that are considered appropriate for this particular age group. These ratings were taken from the following resources: <http://www.scholastic.com>, <https://www.goodreads.com>, <http://commonreads.com> and <https://www.commonensemedia.org/>. These readings were also screened by the NAMS Language Arts Department. Parents and/or Guardians, who do not find readings suitable for their children, may contact the Curriculum Office and request alternate options.

***Lexile Level** is "the numeric representation of an individual's reading ability or a text's readability (or difficulty)." For more information, visit <https://lexile.com/>. or www.fab.lexile.com

Guided Reading Level is the Teachers College reading level that helps organize reading skill acquisition and learned strategies so that readers are matched with appropriate texts.

Incoming 6th Grade - Summer Book Choices

Summer Reading Themes: Growing up / Independence / Self-esteem

Flora and Ulysses

by Kate DiCamillo

Holy unanticipated occurrences! A cynic meets an unlikely superhero in a genre-breaking new novel by master storyteller Kate DiCamillo. It begins, as the best superhero stories do, with a tragic accident that has unexpected consequences. The squirrel never saw the vacuum cleaner coming, but self-described cynic Flora Belle Buckman, who has read every issue of the comic book "Terrible Things Can Happen to You!," is just the right person to step in and save him. What neither can predict is that Ulysses (the squirrel) has been born anew, with powers of strength, flight, and misspelled poetry and that Flora will be changed too, as she discovers the possibility of hope and the promise of a capacious heart.

From bestselling author Kate DiCamillo comes a laugh-out-loud story filled with eccentric, endearing characters and featuring an exciting new format - a novel interspersed with comic-style graphic sequences and full-page illustrations, all rendered in black-and-white by up-and-coming artist K. G. Campbell.

Winner of the 2014 Newbery Medal



Genre: Adventure; Comedy and Humor

****Interest Level:** Grades 3-7

***Lexile:** 520L

Guided Reading Level: U

When You Reach Me

by Rebecca Stead

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. By sixth grade, Miranda and her best friend, Sal, know how to navigate their New York City neighborhood. They know where it's safe to go, like the local grocery store, and they know whom to avoid, like the crazy guy on the corner. But things start to unravel. Sal gets punched by a new kid for what seems like no reason, and he shuts Miranda out of his life. The apartment key that Miranda's mom keeps hidden for emergencies is stolen. And then Miranda finds a mysterious note scrawled on a tiny slip of paper: *I am coming to save your friend's life and my own. I must ask two favors. First, you must write me a letter.*

The notes keep coming, and Miranda slowly realizes that whoever is leaving them knows all about her, including things that have not even happened yet. Each message brings her closer to believing that only she can prevent a tragic death. Until the final note makes her think she's too late.

Genre: Mystery and Suspense; Historical Fiction; Science Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 5-8

***Lexile:** 750L

Guided Reading Level: V

Tangerine

by Edward Bloor

Paul Fisher's older brother Erik is a high school football star, but to Paul, he's no hero. Paul's own game is soccer, which he plays even though he has to wear thick glasses because of a mysterious eye injury. When the Fishers move to Tangerine, Florida, Paul tries to make sense of things. Like why people live in a place where underground fires burn for years, a sinkhole swallows his school, and lightning strikes the same practice field every day. Why he fits into the toughest group around, which just happens to be his new soccer team. And most of all, why no one but he can see the terrifying truth about Erik.

"Smart, adaptable, and anchored by a strong sense of self-worth, Paul makes a memorable protagonist in a cast of vividly drawn characters; multiple yet taut plot lines lead to a series of gripping climaxes and revelations. Readers are going to want more from this author." - Kirkus Reviews

Genre: Mystery and Suspense

****Interest Level:** Grades 7-8

***Lexile:** 680L

Guided Reading Level: U

Watson's Go to Birmingham

by Christopher Paul Curtis

Enter the world of ten-year-old Kenny and his family, the Weird Watsons of Flint, Michigan. When Momma and Dad decide it's time for a visit to Grandma, Dad comes home with the amazing Ultra-Glide and the Watsons head South to Birmingham, Alabama...toward one of the darkest moments in America's history.

"Written in a full-throated, hearty voice, this is a perfectly described piece of past imperfect. Curtis's ability to switch from fun and funky to pinpoint-accurate psychological imagery works unusually well. Although the horrific Birmingham Sunday throws Kenny into temporary withdrawal, this story is really about the strength of family love and endurance. Ribald humor, sly sibling digs, and a totally believable child's view of the world will make this book an instant hit." - School Library Journal

1996 Newbery Honor Book; 1996 Coretta Scott King Honor Book; an ALA Notable Book; an ALA Best Book for Young Adults; The New York Times Book Review Best Book; a Horn Book Fanfare



Genre: Historical Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-7

***Lexile:** 920L

Guided Reading Level: U

The Lightning Thief (Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book 1)

by Rick Riordan

Percy Jackson has ADHD, dyslexia, and a taste for trouble, so he's stuck going to a private school in upstate New York for hard-to-handle kids. If he doesn't get his life into shape, this could be the sixth school he's expelled from. Then one day, Percy's world is turned upside down. His math teacher turns into a terrifying monster who tries to kill him, he finds out his best friend is half human and half goat, and he discovers the truth behind the father he never knew: his father is the Greek god Poseidon. Now Percy is on his way to yet another school, a training camp for half-bloods on Long Island, where he finds himself at the center of a fierce battle between Poseidon, Zeus, and Hades. If he can find Zeus's missing lightning bolt within ten days, disaster will be averted. But can he do it?

Follow Percy's mythic adventures as he travels from this world to the Underworld to Mount Olympus in a heart-pounding modern odyssey that was a #1 New York Times bestseller.

Genre: Adventure; Myths and Legends

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 680L

Guided Reading Level: W

RESTART

by Gordon Korman

Chase's memory just went out the window. Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, in fact, remember anything. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name.

He knows he's Chase. But who is Chase? When he gets back to school, he sees that different kids have very different reactions to his return. Some kids treat him like a hero. Some kids are clearly afraid of him. One girl, in particular, is so angry with him that she pours her frozen yogurt on his head the first chance she gets.

Pretty soon, it's not only a question of who Chase is -- it's a question of who he was . . . and who he's going to be.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

****Interest Level:** 5-9

***Lexile:** 730L

Guided Reading Level: W

Incoming 7th Grade Summer Reading List

Summer Reading Themes: Determination/ Perseverance/ Hope

Mr. Terupt Falls Again

by Rob Buyea

Mr. Terupt's class is spending one more year with him before they graduate and head off to junior high. But for seven students, sixth grade comes with its own set of challenges. Peter's parents expect him to attend private school after sixth grade, but Peter has plans to stay right where he is. Eager to grow up, Alexia gets in over her head with some older kids. Danielle suspects that her family is keeping a secret from her, and she's determined to find out what it is. Jeffrey makes a life-changing discovery. Curious about her teacher's past, Jessica uncovers startling details about Mr. Terupt. Anna finally decides she's ready for the truth about her absent dad. And Luke's keen observations lead to questions with unexpected answers.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 680L

Guided Reading Level: Z

Stargirl

by Jerry Spinelli

Stargirl... From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then, they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: *normal*. In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love.

New York Times Bestseller, a Parents Choice Gold Award Winner, an ALA Top Ten Best Books for Young Adults Award winner, and a Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year



Genre: Young Adult Fiction; Realistic Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 8-12

***Lexile:** 590L

Guided Reading Level: V

Daniel's Story

by Carol Matas

Daniel barely remembers leading a normal life before the Nazis came to power in 1933. He can still picture once being happy and safe, but memories of those days are fading as he and his family face the dangers threatening Jews in Hitler's Germany in the late 1930s. No longer able to practice their religion, vote, own property, or even work, Daniel's family is forced from their home in Frankfurt and sent on a long and dangerous journey, first to the Lodz ghetto in Poland, and then to Auschwitz, the Nazi death camp. Though many around him lose hope in the face of such terror, Daniel, supported by his courageous family, struggles for survival. He finds hope, life, and even love in the midst of despair.

Genre: Historical Fiction


****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 720L

Guided Reading Level: Z

Maze Runner
by James Dashner

Thomas, a teenager, arrives in a glade at the center of a giant labyrinth. Like the other youths dumped there before him, he has no memory of his previous life. Thomas quickly becomes part of the group and soon after demonstrates a unique perspective that scores him a promotion to *Runner* status -- those who patrol the always-changing maze to find an escape route. Together with Teresa, the only female, Thomas tries to convince his cohorts that he knows a way out.

2011 ALA Best Fiction for Young Adults; 2012 Young Reader's Choice Award 

Genre: Adventure; Dystopian; Science Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 770L

Guided Reading Level: Z

Prisoner B-3087

by Alan Gratz

Survive. At any cost. Ten concentration camps. Ten different places where you are starved, tortured and worked mercilessly. It's something no one could imagine surviving. But it is what Yanek Gruener has to face. As a Jewish boy in 1930s Poland, Yanek is at the mercy of the Nazis who have taken over. Everything he has, and everyone he loves, have been snatched brutally from him. And then Yanek himself is taken prisoner, his arm tattooed with the words PRISONER B-3087.

Genre: Historical Fiction; Biographical Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 760L

Guided Reading Level: W

The Wednesday Wars

by Gary D. Schmidt

The Wednesday Wars, by Gary D. Schmidt, is a coming of age story about a young man, Holling Hoodhood, who learns over the course of his seventh-grade year that there is more to life than what he sees in his own world. With the help of a strict but caring teacher, Mrs. Baker, his flower-child sister, Heather, a host of friends and heroes, and even Shakespeare, Hoodhood learns lessons about discrimination, becoming an adult, war, and determining one's own destiny.

Genre: Bildungsroman; Historical Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 990L

Guided Reading Level: X

Incoming 8th Grade - Summer Book Choices


Summer Reading Themes: Diversity/Strength of the Human Spirit/ Friendship/ Hope

Echo

by Pam Munoz Ryan

Lost and alone in a forbidden forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and suddenly finds himself entwined in a puzzling quest involving a prophecy, a promise, and a harmonica.

Decades later, Friedrich in Germany, Mike in Pennsylvania, and Ivy in California each, in turn, become interwoven when the very same harmonica lands in their lives. All the children face daunting challenges: rescuing a father, protecting a brother, and holding a family together. And ultimately, pulled by the invisible thread of destiny, their suspenseful solo stories converge in an orchestral crescendo.

Newbery Honor Award 

Genre: Fantasy; Historical Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8


***Lexile:** 680L

Guided Reading Level: Y

The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora

by Pablo Cartaya

For Arturo, summertime in Miami means playing basketball until dark, sipping mango smoothies, and keeping cool under banyan trees—plus a few shifts as a junior lunchtime dishwasher at Abuela’s restaurant. But this summer is different. That’s because Carmen, a poetry enthusiast who moved into Arturo’s apartment complex, has turned his stomach into a deep fryer. Arturo is so distracted he almost doesn’t notice the smarmy new land developer with plans to ruin the town. But as the summer wears on, he refuses to let his family and community go down without a fight. And as he schemes with Carmen, he discovers the power of poetry and protest through untold family stories and the work of Cuban poet José Martí.

*Funny and poignant, **The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora** is the vibrant story of a family, a striking portrait of a town, and the inspiring tale of one boy’s quest to save both. Pura Belpré, Honor Book for portraying Latino culture.* 

Genre: Realistic Fiction

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8


***Lexile:** 750L

Guided Reading Level: W

New Kid

by Jerry Craft

Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?

Newbery Honor Award, Coretta Scott King Author Award, Kirkus Prize Winner, YALSA Great Graphic Novels for Teens 

Genre: Realistic Fiction; Graphic Novel

****Interest Level:** Grades 6-8

***Lexile:** 320L

Guided Reading Level: W

Brown Girl Dreaming
by Jacqueline Woodson

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.

Newbery Honor Award, Coretta Scott King Author Award



Genre: Biography; Autobiography; Poetry; Songs

****Interest Level:** Grades 7-12

***Lexile:** 990L

Guided Reading Level: U

Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks

by Jason Reynolds

This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy: *Talking about boogers. *Stealing pocket change. *Skateboarding. *Wiping out. *Braving up. *Executing complicated handshakes. *Planning an escape. *Making jokes. *Lotioning up. *Finding comfort.

But mostly, too busy walking home.

Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

Genre: Short Stories

****Interest Level:** Grades 5-9

***Lexile:** 750L

Guided Reading Level: Y

The Sword of Summer
Magnus Chase And The Gods Of Asgard Series (Book: 1)

by Rick Riordan

Magnus Chase has always been a troubled kid. Since his mother's mysterious death, he's lived alone on the streets of Boston, surviving by his wits, keeping one step ahead of the police and the truant officers. One day, he's tracked down by an uncle he barely knows, a man his mother claimed was dangerous. Uncle Randolph tells him an impossible secret: Magnus is the son of a Norse god. The Viking myths are true. The gods of Asgard are preparing for war. To prevent the doomsday battle, Magnus must search the Nine Worlds for a weapon that has been lost for thousands of years. When an attack by fire giants forces him to choose between his own safety and the lives of hundreds of innocents, Magnus makes a fateful decision...

Genre: Adventure; Fantasy; Mythology

****Interest Level:** Grades 7-9

***Lexile:** 630L

Guided Reading Level: Y

Incoming 6th Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Literary Fiction Graphic Organizer

Student's Name: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Answer all of the questions in this graphic organizer. Be sure to use complete sentences when filling this out.

Part 1: Plot Description

Characters (Give names and brief descriptions of the most important characters.)

Setting (When and where did the major events of the story occur? Be descriptive.)

Conflict (What was the main dilemma or problem that led the characters to act the way they did?)

Resolution (How did the characters resolve the conflict?)

Part 2: Thematic Connections

How do the events in the story connect with one or more of the *Summer Reading Themes*? (See the top of the reading list.) Explain your response by using specific details from the story.

Part 3: Novel Review

Write a review of the novel, based on your reading. Explain why you would or would not recommend this novel.

Incoming 7th Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Detailed Summary and Thematic Analysis

Student's Name: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Answer all of the questions in this graphic organizer. Be sure to use complete sentences when filling this out.

Part 1: Detailed Summary

In three to five paragraphs, provide a full description of the novel's plot. Include the following critical attributes: key characters and descriptions, the setting, the primary conflict, the climax of the story, and the resolution.

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Part 2: Thematic Analysis

In one or two paragraphs, describe how the events in the story connected with one or more of the *Summer Reading Themes*. (See the top of the reading list.) Explain your response by using specific details from the story and include at least one quote to justify your response. To make your response even stronger, you may also describe how this theme can be connected to the outside world (i.e. society, your community, a personal experience or opinion, etc.)

[illegible]

Incoming 8th Grade - Summer Assignment

Book in a Box

[Click here](#) to access the **digital version** of the Book in a Box summer assignment.

- You must use your **NAVikings Google Classroom account** to open the Book in a Box Digital Version
- Before you begin, you must **make your own copy** of the Book in a Box Digital Version slide deck! (File >Make a copy >Entire presentation)