

AJHS Recommended 7th & 8th Grade Summer Reading List 2010

- Abrahams, Peter.** *Down the Rabbit Hole: An Echo Falls Mystery.* Laura Geringer Books, 2005. Eighth grader Ingrid Levin-Hill idolizes Sherlock Holmes, so it is not surprising when, stumbling across a murder, she opts to keep what she knows a secret and tries to solve the crime herself.
- Aronson, Marc.** *Robert F. Kennedy: Crusader.* Viking, 2007. A behind the scenes glimpse at how the “runt” of a wealthy and powerful political family came to represent the poor in the race for the Presidency in the late 1960s.
- Barakat, Ibtisam.** *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood.* Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2007. The innocence of her childhood is shattered as planes bomb young Ibtisam’s home, Israeli soldiers conduct raids, and members of her family become Palestinian refugees following the Six-Day War of 1967.
- Bauer, Joan.** *Peeled.* Putnam, 2008. In an upstate New York farming community, high school reporter Hildy Biddle’s determination to be a reporter who her father would have been proud of, finds herself pitted against psychics and unexplained phenomenon.
- Bloor, Edward.** *Tangerine.* Harcourt, 1997. Twelve-year-old Paul’s family revolves around his football-hero brother, and fails to notice Paul as he fights for the right to play soccer after his bad eyesight disqualified him.
- Budhos, Marina.** *Ask Me No Questions.* Atheneum, 2006. After September 11th, 2001, Nadira’s Bangladesh family, living in New York City, become extremely anxious when their visas expire, leading to a series of actions and reactions that bring terror and sorrow.
- Cabot, Meg.** *Airhead.* Point, 2008. Sixteen-year-old Emerson Watts, an advanced placement student with a disdain for fashion, is the recipient of a “whole body transplant” and finds herself transformed into one of the world’s most famous teen supermodels.
- Card, Orson Scott.** *Ender’s Game.* Tor, 1984. Andrew “Ender” Wiggin, who spends his childhood at military school in outer space, believes he is playing computersimulated war games; in fact, he is commanding the last great fleet of Earth. Hugo Award; Nebula Award.
- Carey, Janet Lee.** *Dragon’s Keep.* Harcourt, 2007. In 1145 A.D., as foretold by Merlin, fourteen-year-old Rosalind, who will be the twenty-first Pendragon Queen of Wilde Island, has much to accomplish to fulfill her destiny, all the while from her people the dragon’s claw she was born with that reflects a dark secret.
- Chima, Cinda Williams.** *The Wizard Heir.* Hyperion, 2007. Sixteen-year-old Seph McCauley is sent to the Havens, a boys’ school in Maine, after being kicked out of several private schools for his untrained magical powers; but his headmaster, Gregory Leicester, has his own mysterious agenda when he agrees to help Seph channel his magic.

- Christie, Agatha.** *A Pocket Full of Rye*. First published 1953. The wealthy Rex Fortescue falls dead at a normal tea shortly after partaking of the fare, and when the only clue is rye in his pocket, Miss Marple uses the old nursery rhyme “Sing a Song of Sixpence” to help solve the murder.
- Colfer, Eoin.** *Airman*. Hyperion, 2008. In the late nineteenth century on an island off the Irish coast, Conor Broekhart discovers a conspiracy to overthrow the king. He is branded a traitor, imprisoned, and forced to mine for diamonds under brutal conditions while he plans a daring escape from Little Saltee prison by way of a flying machine that he must design and build.
- Cooney, Caroline.** *Diamonds in the Shadow*. Delacorte, 2007. The Amabo family, refugees from a tyrannical regime in an African country, are beginning to adjust to their new lives with a good-hearted American family—even as another African refugee is pursuing a dangerous course that will impact both families.
- Crane, E. M.** *Skin Deep*. Delacorte, 2008. Andrea Anderson, high school student and outsider, struggles with her place in the world until she meets an artistic neighbor and her dog, who together demonstrate how much she means to them.
- Curtis, Christopher Paul.** *Bucking the Sarge*. Wendy Lamb, 2004. Deeply involved in his cold and manipulative mother’s shady business dealings in Flint, Michigan, fourteen-year-old Luther keeps a sense of humor while running the Happy Neighbor Group Home For Men, all the while dreaming of going to college and becoming a philosopher.
- Draper, Sharon M.** *Fire from the Rock*. Penguin, 2007. In 1957, honor student Sylvia Patterson is thrilled to be chosen to be among the first African American students to attend the all-white Central High School in Little Rock Arkansas, but threats of violence by racist mobs cause Sylvia to reconsider.
- Farmer, Nancy.** *The House of the Scorpion*. Atheneum, 2002. In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patron, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.
- Feinstein, John.** *Cover-Up: Mystery at the Super Bowl*. Knopf, 2007. Steve Thomas and Susan Carol Anderson, high school reporters, learn that every player on the offensive line of a pro football team slated to play in the Super Bowl has failed his drug test and that the team owner has covered it up. Now they must find a way to prove it.
- Flinn, Alex.** *Beastly*. HarperTeen, 2007. Kyle Kingsbury, a vain, spoiled private school student who judges others by their appearances, is turned into a frightening monster by a girl he humiliates. In order to break the spell, Kyle must find true love.
- Gardner, Sally.** *I, Coriander*. Dial, 2005. In 17th century London, Coriander, a girl who has inherited magic from her mother, must find a way to use this magic in order to save both herself and an inhabitant of the fairy world where her mother was born.
- Grandits, John.** *Blue Lipstick: Concrete Poems*. Clarion, 2007. A fifteen-year-old girl named Jessie expresses her sarcastic and hilarious take on high school life sing concrete poetry.

- Grant, K.M.** *How the Hangman Lost His Heart*. Walker, 2007. When her Uncle Frank is executed for treason against England's King George in 1746 and his severed head is mounted on a pike for public viewing, daring Alice tries to reclaim the head for a proper burial, finding an unlikely ally in the soft-hearted executioner.
- Grimes, Nikki.** *The Road to Paris*. Putnam, 2006. Inconsolable at being separated from her older brother, eight-year-old Paris is apprehensive about her new foster family but just as she learns to trust them, she faces a life-changing decision.
- Haddix, Margaret Peterson.** *Uprising*. Simon & Schuster, 2007. Newly arrived in New York from Italy in 1911, Bella gets a job at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory working long hours under terrible conditions alongside hundreds of other immigrants. When a spark ignites a bit of cloth, the factory becomes engulfed in flames.
- Hale, Marian.** *Dark Water Rising*. Henry Holt, 2006. In a fictionalized account of the hurricane that devastated Galveston in 1900, actual eyewitness accounts are incorporated into the story.
- Hale, Shannon.** *Book of a Thousand Days*. Bloomsbury, 2007. Dashti, a maid, and Lady Saren, her mistress, are shut in a tower for seven years for Saren's refusal to marry a man she despises, and the two prepare for a long, dark imprisonment. Saren's two suitors—one welcome, and the other decidedly less so arrive outside the tower, bringing both hope and danger.
- Horowitz, Anthony.** *Nightrise*. Scholastic, 2007. After telepathic twins Jamie and Scott are attacked by the evil Nightrise Corporation, one of them is imprisoned while the other escapes, left to fight with the other three gatekeepers against the evil Old Ones in order to save his sibling and prevent the destruction of humanity.
- Hughes, Dean.** *Soldier Boys*. Atheneum, 2001. Two boys, one German and one American, are eager to join their respective armies during World War II, and their paths cross at the Battle of the Bulge.
- Jinks, Catherine.** *Evil Genius*. Harcourt, 2005. Child prodigy Cadel Piggot, an antisocial computer hacker, discovers his true, shocking identity when he enrolls as a first-year student at an advanced crime academy.
- Kerr, P. B.** *The Cobra King of Kathmandu*. Orchard, 2007. Djinn twins John and Phillipa go to India to search for the cobra talisman which gives the person who wields it power over their friend Mr. Rakshasas, a very elderly djinn.
- Kolosov, Jacqueline.** *The Red Queen's Daughter*. Hyperion, 2007. Sixteen-year-old Mary Seymour, a white magician in Queen Elizabeth's court, has vowed never to fall in love, but her attraction to her darkly handsome cousin Edmund, a black magician who seems to understand her better than anyone, cannot be denied, and she finds her beliefs tested when he becomes involved in a plot against the queen.
- Levine, Gail Carson.** *Fairest*. Harper Collins, 2006. Aza, who is not the fairest, is valued for her beautiful singing voice in this fairy tale that include gnomes, magic mirrors and a bumbling good fairy, Lucinda.

- London, Jack.** *The Call of the Wild*. First published 1931. Buck, half-St. Bernard, half-Scottish sheep dog, is stolen from his comfortable home in California and compelled first to become a sledge dog in the Alaskan Klondike and then to fight for his survival in a pack of wolves.
- Lupica, Mike.** *Heat*. Philomel Books, 2006. Pitching prodigy Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball. Rival coaches doubt he is only twelve years old, but he has no parents to offer them proof.
- Maguire, Gregory.** *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister*. ReganBooks, 1999. Set in 17th-century Holland, this retelling of the Cinderella story is full of surprises.
- Mazer, Harry.** *A Boy at War: A Novel of Pearl Harbor*. Simon & Schuster, 2001. On December 7, 1941, Adam is fishing with his friends off the coast of Honolulu when the Japanese begin bombing Pearl Harbor. During the chaotic days that follow, Adam tries desperately to find his father, a naval officer serving on the U.S.S. Arizona.
- Murdock, Catherine Gilbert.** *Dairy Queen*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. D. J. Schwenck is running the family dairy farm because her father is injured, and she is asked by her godfather, coach of a rival high school, to train his quarterback during the summer, the way her brothers, star football players, used to train before they went to college.
- Murphy, Jim.** *The Real Benedict Arnold*. Clarion, 2007. Brilliant military strategist Benedict Arnold, although maligned and branded 'traitor,' was a man for whom honor meant a great deal.
- Nelson, Peter.** *Left for Dead: A Young Man's Search for Justice for the USS Indianapolis*. Delacorte, 2002. Fifty years after the sinking of the U.S.S. Indianapolis at the end of World War II, a young boy helps the survivors set the record straight, bringing to light the Navy cover-up and an unfair court-martial of the ship's captain.
- Nix, Garth.** *Abhorsen*. HarperCollins, 2003. In this conclusion of The Old Kingdom Trilogy, Abhorsen-in-Waiting Lirael and Prince Sameth, a Wallmaker, must confront and bind the evil spirit Oranis before it can destroy all life.
- Oppel, Kenneth.** *Airborn*. Eos, 2004. Matt, a young cabin boy aboard an enormous airship, and Kate, a wealthy young girl traveling with her chaperone, team up to search for the existence of mysterious winged creatures and to fight pirates.
- Pearson, Mary E.** *The Adoration of Jenna Fox*. Henry Holt, 2008. Jenna survives a horrific car accident thanks to her scientist father, but at what cost?
- Paolini, Christopher.** *Eragon*. Random House, 2003. In Alagaësia, a fifteen-year-old boy of unknown lineage finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power, peopled with dragons, elves, and monsters. Series

- Parker, Robert B.** *Edenville Owls*. Philomel, 2007. Fourteen-year-old Bobby, living in a small Massachusetts town just after World War II, faces new challenges as he tries to pull together the Owls basketball team, handle new feelings for his old friend Joanie, and discover the identity of a mysterious stranger who appears to be threatening his pretty new English teacher.
- Patterson, James.** *Maximum Ride, the Angel Experiment*. Little Brown, 2005. After the mutant Erasers abduct the youngest member of their group, the “birdkids” take off in pursuit and find themselves battling their seemingly evil creators.
Maximum Ride Series
- Pierce, Tamora.** *Trickster’s Choice*. Random House, 2003. Alianne, kidnapped and put into slavery, calls forth her mother’s courage and her father’s spying skills in order to survive on the Copper Isles in a royal court rife with political intrigue and murderous conspiracy.
- Rees, Celia.** *Sorceress*. Candlewick, 2003. Eighteen-year-old Agnes, a Mohawk Indian descended from a line of shamanic healers, uses her own newly-discovered powers to uncover the story of her ancestor, a seventeenth-century New England English healer who fled charges of witchcraft.
- Reeve, Philip.** *Mortal Engines: A Novel*. EOS, 2003. In the distant future, when cities move about and consume smaller towns, a fifteen-year-old apprentice is pushed out of London by the man he most admires and must seek answers in the perilous Out-Country, aided by one girl and the memory of another.
- Ritter, John H.** *Under the Baseball Moon*. Philomel Books, 2006. Andy and Glory, two fifteen-year-olds from Ocean Beach, California, pursue their respective dreams of becoming a famous musician and a professional softball player.
- Salisbury, Graham.** *Eyes of the Emperor*. Random, 2005. Eddy Okubo, a high school graduate at age sixteen, volunteers for the army a few weeks prior to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor and soon finds himself—along with his friends of Japanese descent—isolated from the rest of the army, humiliated repeatedly, and shipped off to the Gulf Coast. Series
- Shulman, Polly.** *Enthusiasm*. Putnam, 2006. Julia’s best friend Ashleigh has decided that this year Jane Austen’s world will be theirs. They try to master the proper forms of dancing, speech and behavior (sort-of) for the early nineteenth century, and then set off to find the boys of their dreams at the local exclusive boys prep boarding school.
- Shusterman, Neal.** *Unwind*. Simon & Schuster, 2007. In a future world where those between the ages of thirteen and eighteen can have their lives “unwound” and their body parts harvested for use by others, three teens go to extreme lengths to uphold their beliefs—and, perhaps, save their own lives.
- Smith, Roland.** *Peak*. Harcourt, 2007. Plucked by police from the top of a New York skyscraper, a 14-year-old boy and mountain climber wannabe finds himself facing the challenge of his life: climbing Mt. Everest.

- Spinner, Stephanie.** *Quiver*. Knopf, 2002. Atalanta, abandoned as an infant, has grown to become a renowned archer and swiftest mortal alive due to the intervention of Artemis, goddess of the hunt, so when the father who forsook her so many years before issues an ultimatum that Atalanta marry and produce an heir, she counters with the condition that the man she weds must be able to best her in a footrace or die.
- Stroud, Jonathan.** *Amulet of Samarkand*. Miramax, 2003. Nathaniel, a young magician's apprentice, calls up the djinni Bartimaeus to steal the Amulet of Samarkand from another magician, and they both get caught up in a vast conspiracy of treason and murder.
- Tolkien, J. R. R.** *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. First published 1937. Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit, lives comfortably in his hobbit-hole until the day the wandering wizard Gandalf chooses him to take part in an adventure from which he may never return.
- Updale, Eleanor.** *Montmorency, Thief, Liar, Gentleman?* Orchard, 2004. In Victorian London, after his life is saved by a young physician, a thief utilizes the knowledge he gained in prison and from scientific lectures he attended as the physician's case study exhibit to create a new, highly successful, double life for himself.
- Ursu, Anne.** *Shadow Thieves*. Atheneum, 2006. After her cousin Zee arrives from England, thirteen-year-old Charlotte and he must set out to save humankind from denizens of the underworld, Nightmares, Death, Pain, and a really nasty guy named Phil.
- Vande Velde, Vivian.** *Remembering Raquel*. Harcourt, 2007. Suicide or accident? The life of Raquel Falcone, an unpopular, overweight high school freshman, is recalled by classmates, her parents, and the driver who struck and killed her as she walked home from an animated film festival.
- Verne, Jules.** *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. First published 1869. This is a nineteenth-century science fiction tale of an electric submarine, its eccentric captain, and undersea world, which anticipated many of the scientific achievements of the twentieth century.
- Warren, Andrea.** *Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps*. HarperCollins, 2001. At age fifteen, Jack Mandelbaum was placed in a Nazi concentration camp and managed to overcome intolerable conditions in order to avoid becoming a victim of Hitler's Final Solution.
- Whelan, Gloria.** *Listening for Lions*. HarperCollins, 2005. Left an orphan after the influenza epidemic in British East Africa in 1918, thirteen-year-old Rachel is into assuming a dead girl's identity to travel to England, where her only dream is to return to Africa and rebuild her parents' mission hospital.
- Wrede, Patricia.** *Sorcery & Cecelia, or, the Enchanted Chocolate Pot*. Harcourt, 2003. In 1817 in England, two young cousins, Cecilia living in the country and Kate in London, write letters to keep each other informed of their exploits, which take a sinister turn when they find themselves confronted by evil wizards.

Yancey, Richard. *The Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp*. Bloomsbury, 2005. Orphaned and incurably-geeky teen Alfred Kropp is coerced by his unscrupulous uncle into stealing a valuable sword that turns out to be Excalibur, and he is drawn into a dangerous and violent misadventure.

Yee, Lisa. *Stanford Wong Flunks Big Time*. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2005. When Stanford Wong, named for dad's alma mater, flunks 6th grade, he must attend summer school instead of basketball camp, be tutored by his arch enemy, and somehow keep all of this secret from his friends.

This list of titles has been compiled by librarians of the PALS Library System. It includes both fiction and nonfiction books by some of the best authors for children and young adults. Books on this list are evaluated annually by grade-level committees. Committee members rely on recommendations from standard, professionally prepared evaluation aids and on input from students and teachers. A conscious effort is made to appeal to the broad range of interests, maturity levels, and reading abilities of students. In most cases the number of books by any given author is limited to one or two per grade level list. An older title with superior literary quality may remain on the list despite newer publications by the same author. Students may find that some titles that are required reading for their classes appear on this list. Be advised that if a book for required reading is selected for independent reading, it may have to be re-read with the class at a later date. This list is offered as one possible source of reading guidance. We hope that books from this list bring students many hours of enjoyment and encourage the life-long love of reading.