

8th Grade Summer Reading List

Title & Author	AR Level	What's It All About?
The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child by Francisco Jimenez	5.3	In the 1940s, Francisco and his family crossed the Mexican border. Together they worked picking crops in California, struggling to make a life and a permanent home in a new country.
Dancing at the Odinochka by Kirkpatrick Hill	5.5	Erinia and her family live on a small trading post in Russian America. Life is hard, but Erinia is happy. When America buys the territory, life changes. Will the Pavaloffs be able to survive?
Lord of the Deep by Graham Salisbury	4.0	This summer, 13 year-old Mikey is the youngest deckhand in the marina. He soon realizes that working on his stepdad's boat is complicated. When two customers asked for "special" treatment, Mikey has to decide where his loyalty lies.
The Kite Rider by Geraldine McCaughrean	6.5	In thirteenth-century China, Hayou works as a kite rider. It's a terrifying job, but as he soars through the clouds he sometimes sees his father's spirit. Can these sightings give Hayou the wisdom and courage to save his mother and himself?
Sorceress by Celia Rees	5.6	Agnes grew up on a Mohawk reservation in upstate New York. When she starts dreaming of a 17th-century ancestor, she goes home to her Aunt M for help. Is Agnes going crazy or is someone trying to tell her secrets of her family's past?
The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle by Avi	5.3	At only 13, Charlotte is a perfect young lady. When she's on a ship traveling to America, she swears she will never leave her cabin, but by the end of the voyage, she's been accused of murder, tried, and found guilty.
Code Orange by Caroline B. Cooney	6.2	Mitty panics when he remembers his biology paper. He grabs some old medical books from his mother's office and finds an envelope of smallpox scabs from 1912. Has Mitty just unleashed a deadly virus on New York City.
A Girl Named Disaster	5.1	Nhamo isn't even 12 when she's forced to marry a cruel man with three wives. Her

by Nancy Farmer		grandmother convinces her to run away, and Nhamo must find her way from Mozambique to Zimbabwe on her own.
The Rag and Bone Shop by Robert Cormier	5.7	A little girl has been murdered. Trent, an expert interrogator, is brought to Monument, Massachusetts to meet the 12-year-old suspect, Jason Dorrant. If Trent can get the boy's confession it'll make his career, but is Jason really guilty?
A Thief in the House by Tym Wynne-Jones		Declan barely remembers his mother, but this year the memories have started coming back. Sometimes he thinks he can see and hear her in his old house Can Declan recall his "real" mom and still trust his dad?
Hope Was Here by Joan Bauer	5.1	Hope and her aunt are starting over again-this time at a diner in small-town Wisconsin. When G.T., the owner decides to run for mayor even though he has a terminal illness, Hope gets sucked into the campaign.
Song of the Trees by Mildred D. Taylor	3.8	Times are tough for Cassie Logan and her famil. They don't even have enough to eat. But when someone offers to buy the trees that have whispered outside of her window for as long as she can remember, Cassie knows she must protect them.
I, Juan de Pareja by Elizabeth Borton de Trevino	6.5	A man named Juan de Pareja is enslaved in Spain during the 1600s. By watching his owner, a famous artist, Juan learns to paint - a skill forbidden to slaves. If he reveals his true talent, will he be celebrated, or punished?
Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli	4.2	Leo knows Stargirl is different from the rest of Mica High. She has a pet rat and a ukulele and at basketball games she cheers for the other team. When Leo falls in love with her he likes her just the way she is - at first.
An Innocent Soldier by Josef Holub	4.6	Adam is only 16 when he's forced to serve in Napoleon's army in the place of his employer's son. He is trapped in freezing Russia with a sick lieutenant his own age. Slowly the two boys become friends, but will they survive?
The Voice that Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights by Russell Freedman	8.2	Marian Anderson was an acclaimed singer, but there were some segregated concert halls that wouldn't let her perform. She helped to erase these barriers.

Sir Walter Raleigh and the Quest for El Dorado by Marc Aronson	8.2	Walter Raleigh was a favorite courtier of Queen Elizabeth. After her death, he tried to regain his glory by returning to South America in search of El Dorado, the fabled city of gold.
Summerland by Michael Chabon	6.3	Ethan is the worst ballplayer in the league. He's called Dog Boy because "he's always hoping for a walk." Surprised when a mysterious talent scout chooses him to help save Summerland, the home of baseball, Ethan hopes he's up to the task.
The Boxer by Kathleen Karr	4.5	in 1880s New York, 15-year-old Johnny is the one who has to work to feed his family. One night he sees a sign promising five dollars to anyone willing to fight, and suddenly he's a boxer. Will he win enough to get his family out of the tenements?
Full Tilt by Neal Shusterman	5.0	Focused, steady Blake has had one purpose his whole life: to keep his impulsive brother Quinn out of trouble. When Quinn steals Blake's ticket for a mysterious carnival, Blake goes to save his brother-again. But maybe Blake is the one who needs help.
Olive's Ocean by Kevin Henkes	4.7	Soon after Olive's death, Martha is given a page from Olive's journal. The two girls were never friends, but when Martha realizes they had a lot in common, she begins to see life differently. She spends the summer at the ocean, trying to fulfill Olive's dream.
Run, Boy, Run by Uri Orlev	4.0	Srulik is only eight when he manages to escape from the Nazi-controlled ghetto into the Polish countryside. His father tells him he must forget who he is and do anything necessary to fit in and survive. But forgetting comes at a cost.
Iqbal by Francesco D'Adamo	5.1	Everything changes at the carpet factory when 13-year-old Iqbal is chained to a loom next to Fatima. Iqbal tells the children their owner will never release them, but he promises to escape. If Iqbal does get free, should he try to help his friends and risk recapture?
Fish by L.S. Matthews	5.4	Tiger's family moved from their home country to a drought-stricken village to run a clinic. They stay until the civil war forces them to leave, but the borders have closed, and only a treacherous trip over the mountains will bring them to safety.

Four Wings and a Prayer by Sue Halpern	none	Every fall, millions of butterflies form an orange and black wa that rolls down from Canada or New York all the way to Mexico. Every spring a new generation of butterflies return to their parents' homes. How do the butterflies know where to go?
Saving the Planet and Stuff by Gail Gauthier	5.2	As an intern at an environmental magazine in Vermont, Michael must live without a car, TV, or air conditioning. He thinks about quitting, but instead he stays and learns about business, composing, and himself.
Tofu and T.rex by Greg Leitich Smith	4.8	Freddie was protesting the treatment of her new school's mascot, a live bull, when the football field caught fire. She's been sent back to Chicago to live with her cousin and grandfather. Can a vegetarian survive life with two meat-eaters?
East by Edith Pattou	6.1	Rose was born curious. When a white bear shows up and asks her to go with him so her family can prosper, teenaged Rose agrees. She doesn't realize that living with a bear is only the beginning of a longer journey.
Mable Riley: A Reliable Record of Humdrum, Peril, and Romance by Marthe Jocelyn	6.1	The year is 1901, and Mable hopes she'll have an adventure when she moves away with her sister. At first, life remains boring. But everything changes when Mable meets the neighbor.
The Thief Lord by Cornelia Funke	4.8	Prosper and Bo have run away to Venice to escape their aunt and uncle. They Are taken in by the Thief Lord, a masked boy who leads a band of children. When the Thief Lord accepts a mysterious assignment, the adventures of the band get complicated.
The Cay by Theodore Taylor	5.3	Phillip and his mother escape the German invasion of Curacao on a freighter, but the boat is torpedoed. Phillip wakes up on a life raft with a cat and a West Indian named Timothy. Will Phillip be able to survive with only an old man for support?
A Step from Heaven by An Na	4.2	Young Ju is only four when her family moves to the U.S. from Korea. At first, everyone is happy, but then her parents start fighting again. Young Ju has been raised to respect her elders, but she knows that sometimes her father isn't right . What should she do?
The Book Thief	5.1	Liesel is a little girl the first time she meets Death in Nazi Germany. The second

by Markus Zusak		time, she's a book thief and reading them to anyone who needs to listen. Later, she writes her own story. This is the book <i>Death</i> you to hear.
<i>The Merlin Conspiracy</i> by Diana Wynne Jones	5.4	Roddy and Grundo are just teenagers in the Royal Court. No one but an outsider will believe them when they warn of a conspiracy against the king. Can three young magicians win a battle to keep the magic in the multiverse.
<i>Be the Difference: A Beginner's Guide to Changing the World</i> by Danny Seo	none	At 12, Danny Seo inspired thousands of students to join him in an environmental movement. Ten years later, he wrote this book. Read his advice about how teenagers can improve the world.
<i>Uglies</i> by Scott Westerfeld	5.2	In the future, all 16-year-olds have an operation that make them "beautiful." Most of the younger Uglies can't wait until it's their turn for the operation, but a girl named Shay rebels against being the same as everyone else. Will her friend Tally help her or betray her?
<i>Criss Cross</i> by Lynne Rae Perkins	5.5	Debbie and Hector are 14 years old, and they'd like their appearance to reflect the interesting people they hope they're becoming. How will these important changes happen? It's not always clear, but by the end of the summer, a great deal will be different.
<i>Margaux with an X</i> by Ronald Koertge	3.8	Margaux is dazzlingly beautiful and very popular. She's also miserable. Most of the boys in school have crushes on her, but she's only interested in Danny. A shabby-looking outcast, Danny shares her love of language and helps her cope with problems at home.
<i>Colibri</i> by Ann Cameron	4.6	Years ago, a fortune teller told Uncle that Rosa would make him rich. They have been traveling through Guatemala ever since, begging and cheating people to get money and food. Now that Rosa is older, lying to people is harder, and Uncle is getting impatient.
<i>The Black Pearl</i> by Scott O'Dell	5.4	When Ramon finds the Pearl of Heaven, everyone comes to look at it, and his father gives the pearl to the church. Some people think the jewel brings bad luck because

		it belongs to the Manta Diablo. When misfortune hits the village, only Ramon can fix it.
A Year Down Yonder by Richard Peck	4.5	It's the Depression, and people are broke. Mary Alice is sent to live in rural Illinois with her eccentric Grandma Dowdell. Grandma has habits, like "borrowing" the Sheriff's boat or Old Man Nyquist's apples, which seem to make life a little easier.
The Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss	2.9	Annie is only six when Hitler comes to power in Germany and starts making laws that punish the Jews. Annie is glad she lives in Holland so her family is safe, but as the German army gets stronger, how long will Annie's safety last?
Let Me Play: The Story Of Title IX the Law That Changed the Future of Girls is America by Karen Blumenthal	none	Before 1972, many girls weren't able to join a soccer team or enter medical school. Finally, the people fighting against this injustice won, and the law was changed.
The Warrior Heir by Cinda Williams Chima	5.3	Every day Jack takes medicine for his heart condition. One day he forgets, and it's the best day of his life. Suddenly he's faster and stronger. He finds out he's really a magical warrior and his "medicine" was hiding him from people who want to kill him.
Cheating Lessons by Nan Willard	4.6	Wickham High will finally compete against fancy Pinehurst at the State Quiz Bowl. Bernadette can't wait to crush the other team until she realizes there's no way her school honestly aced the test. She has to decide between telling a lie or hurting friends.
Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story Of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth by James Cross Giblin	8.3	Two brothers grow up together. Both become well-known actors like their father, but one goes on to kill the President of the United States. What happened?
Princess Academy by Shannon Hale	6.0	The king's priests have decreed that the next princess will come from tiny Mount Eskel. Suddenly, all the girls in the village have to go to school. Miri decides she has to be the best student. But what will Miri do if the prince chooses her?
Act I, Act II, Act Normal by Martha Weston	4.7	Topher has been waiting for three years to be the lead in the 8th grade play. Too bad this year's production is Rumpelstiltskin, the Musical, written by geeky

		Samantha. Topher takes the role, but will the school bully and the touchy leading lady ruin it for him?
Sweetgrass Basket by Marlene Carvell	5.0	In the early 1900s, Mattie and Sarah are forced to go to a boarding school for Native American children. They're told it's their best chance for a "normal" life. Now far from home, the two girls have to figure out how to survive and keep their traditions.
Hans Christian Andersen: His Fairy Tale Life by Hjordis Varmer and Lilian Brogger	5.0	Everyone knows Andersen's fairy tales, but did you know he was obsessed with fame? He begged rich men, a princess, and even the king, until someone would support his dream to write and act.
China's Son: Growing Up in the Cultural Revolution by Da Chen	6.1	Da Chen suffers in 1960s China, which is run by communists. He father is often in labor camps and his brothers and sisters work in the fields. Then Da gets the chance to apply for college. Will life finally get better?
Guinea Pig Scientists by Leslie Dendy and Mel Boring	none	Scientists who experiment on themselves are brave and sometimes foolhardy. We wouldn't know how the digestive system worked, what animal spread yellow fever, or how to build safer cars with out these people.
O Pioneers! by Willa Cather	6.7	Alexandra is only 16 when her father dies and leaves her in charge of their failing homestead on the Nebraska prairies. Her brothers agree to listen to her advice, but will they let her put the farm deeper in debt to chase her father's dream?
Betsy and the Emperor by Staton Rabin	5.1	After years at boarding school, 14-year-old Betsy is back home on St. Helena. Her family is hosting a special "guest": Napoleon, the former emperor of France is a prisoner at Betsy's house. What can an ex-emperor and a rebellious teenage have in common?
Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy by Gary D. Schmidt	5.9	People in Phippsburg, Maine, don't like it when Turner befriends Lizzie Bright who lives in a nearby African-American settlement. When the town evicts Lizzie's community , Turner helps fight back.
Part of Me: Stories of a Louisiana Family by Kimberly Willis Holt	4.7	Raised in Louisiana during the Great Depression, Rose never goes to college, but she tries to pass on her love of books to her children and grandchildren. Although not all of them follow in her footsteps, the family stories help each generation stay

		strong.
Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two by Joseph Bruchac	6.4	World War II is raging, and Ned wants to help. He joins the Marines and becomes a secret Navajo code talker. He helps create a code that can't be cracked, and then uses it to send and receive messages in the midst of battle. Will Ned survive the fighting?
Gathering Blue by Lois Lowry	5.0	In the future, when society is in ruins from disasters, a crippled orphan like Kira is often destined to die. But Kira's weaving skills are discovered, and suddenly she's important. If only her new job didn't bring with it serious problems.
Ghost Boy by Iain Lawrence	4.4	Harold is an albino, and in his small town he's an outcast. When the circus comes to town, Harold leaves with it. Immediately accepted by members of the sideshow. He soon finds out that even in the circus, he and his friends are considered strange.
Stop the Train! by Geraldine McCaughrean	6.4	In 1893, people came to Florence, Oklahoma, searching for a stake in a new prairie town. Now the Red Rock Railroad Company refuses to stop in Florence. The new town is sure to die unless the settlers can find a way to get the train to stop.
The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place by E.L. Konigsburg	5.5	Margaret Rose is happy to be rescued from Camp Talequa by her uncles. But they seem to accept that the town wants to destroy the three beautiful towers they built in the backyard. Someone has to save these works of art.
Warriors Don't Cry (abridged) by Melba Pattillo Beals	6.5	Melba Pattillo Beals was one of the nine African-American teenagers who integrated the Little Rock Central High School in 1957. In this memoir, she describes both the violent protesters she faced as well as the people and ideals that gave her courage and hope.
Dare to Dream! 25 Extraordinary Lives by Sandra McLeod Humphrey	none	Some of the world's most famous athletes, scientists, artists, and politicians had to overcome serious obstacles to achieve success. This book tells the real-life stories of people who beat the odds.
Come Back to Afghanistan: A California Teenager's Story	6.8	After the fall of the Taliban government, Said and his father returned to Afghanistan. Said tells what it was like to be a teenager working to rebuild a country.

by Said Hyder Akbar and Susan Burton		
Stonecutter by Leander Watts	5.4	It's 1835, and 14-year-old Albion is learning to be a stonecutter. His big break comes when he's hired to do the stonework at a new estate. When he gets there, he finds a creepy, half-finished mansion. Something isn't right.
Mortal Engines by Philip Reeve	6.6	What could an assassin, a third-class historian, and a rich man's daughter ever have in common? They are all teenagers who are willing to risk their safety to solve the mystery that threatens to destroy the world.
Eragon by Christopher Paolini	5.6	Eragon lives a quiet life on a farm until he finds a dragon's egg. After it hatches, Eragon's peaceful childhood comes to a violent end. He realizes it's his fate to become a dragon rider and join in the war against the evil King Galbatorix.
The Gadget by Paul Zindel	4.5	Thirteen-year-old Stephen escapes war-torn London to live with his father, who is a scientist on a secret military base in New Mexico. Stephen is determined to learn all he can about the "gadget" his father is working on, but at what price?
The Black Canary by Jane Louise Curry	6.1	James's parents think he will become a musician like them, but that is the one thing he knows he doesn't want. His opinion changes when he finds a portal to another time. He's stuck in the 1600s, and he can't go home until he develops his musical gifts.
Mountain Solo by Jeanette Ingold	5.3	Tess is a violin prodigy, but after a disastrous concert she vows to give up music. She goes to live with her dad and his new wife in Montana. Can the mystery surrounding a young musician from the pioneer days help her figure out her own truth?
This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie by Elizabeth Partridge	7.0	Woody Guthrie was a songwriter who traveled the country, singing about people struggling to get by. His own life was difficult, too, but he inspired people from many generations.
The Exchange Student by Kate Gilmore	6.4	One hundred years after the crash, Daria is the youngest animal breeder working with endangered animals on Earth. The last thing she needs is to host an alien exchange student named Fen who is obsessed with Daria's zoo but who won't say

		why.
Frightful's Mountain by Jean Craighead George	4.7	Frightful is a peregrine falcon that has lived with Sam since she was around 10 days old. When Sam is forced to let her go, she must learn to live in the wild on her own. Will her instincts be enough to guide her?
The Wilderness Family: At Home with Africa's Wildlife by Kobie Kruger	7.1	When Kobie moves to the African bush with her husband and three daughters, she becomes a foster mother to a lion named Leo. Can a human mother teach a young lion about life in the wild?
Heat by Mike Lupica	5.3	Mike's team is sure to make it to the Little League World Series until Mike, their best pitcher, isn't allowed to play. The authorities want proof of his age, and they are asking questions about other things Mike and his brother don't want anyone to know about.
Surviving Antarctica: Reality TV 2083 by Andrea White	4.5	In 2083, five teens are chosen to reenact a historic trip to the South Pole for a television audience. They might die in the process, but they have no other way to improve their lives. Will society tolerate the way they're treated?
Game Design for Teens by Les Pardew and Alpine Studios	none	How do you create a computer game? This book shows you how to take an idea for a game and make it a reality. You'll learn the skills you need and meet people who have invented successful games.
Our Eleanor: A Scrapbook Look at Eleanor Roosevelt's Remarkable Life by Candace Fleming	8.0	Until Eleanor Roosevelt came along, most first ladies didn't try to affect government policy. But Eleanor was different. She persuaded her husband President Roosevelt to make the needs of poor people, women, and children a priority.
Photo by Brady: A Picture of the Civil War by Jennifer Armstrong	8.8	The Civil War was the first war to be photographed. The images captured by the photographers who went to the battlegrounds affected the way those on the homefront viewed the war.
Quicksilver by Stephanie Spinner	5.3	Zeus, the ruler of the Greek gods, decides the fate of everyone. This book is told from the point of view of Hermes, Zeus' favorite errand boy. Hermes is quick and funny, but can he change Zeus's mind when people's lives are on the line?