

## Recommended Book List for the 8th Grade - Summer ESMS



*\*This book list was curated by the 8th Grade Humanities teachers. This is a list of books that have been or would be available in our classroom libraries. For more comprehensive lists, please refer to YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association). These books are optional. We hope you enjoy reading over the summer!*

Genre:	Title and Author:	Brief Summary:
Fiction	To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee	<p>Growing up in Alabama during the 1930s, six-year-old Scout Finch leads a fairly charmed life. Her dad, Atticus, is a kind single parent and a well-regarded attorney. Her older brother, Jem, and their lively, offbeat neighbor Dill are her best friends, and together they explore their sleepy hometown of Maycomb. Most of their time is spent observing (and making up stories about) their reclusive neighbor, Boo Radley.</p> <p>But Scout's innocence is short-lived. A young African American man named Tom Robinson is unjustly accused of raping a white woman. And when Atticus takes on the man's case and defends him to the best of his ability, Maycomb's searing and deep-rooted prejudices boil over. Atticus is scorned, Tom is convicted (though clearly innocent), and Scout loses faith in the community she trusted and loved. Can the young girl ever move past this incredible injustice?</p>
	Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck	Published in 1937, it tells the story of George Milton and Lennie Small, two displaced migrant ranch workers, who move from place to place in California in search of new job opportunities during the Great Depression in the United States
	The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas	Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. This book is about Starr and how she grapples with racism, police brutality, and activism after witnessing her black friend murdered by the police.
	If You Come Softly by Jacqueline Woodson	Jeremiah feels good inside his own skin. That is, when he's in his own Brooklyn neighborhood. But now he's going to be attending a fancy prep school in Manhattan, and black teenage boys don't exactly fit in there. So it's a surprise when he meets Ellie the first week of school. In one frozen moment their eyes lock, and after that they know they fit together--even though she's Jewish and he's black. Their worlds are so different, but to them that's not what matters. Too bad the rest of the world has to get in

Fiction, Cont..		their way.
	The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo	<p>Winner of the National Book Award for Young People's Literature, the Michael L. Printz Award, and the Pura Belpré Award!</p> <p>Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking.</p> <p>But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers—especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about.</p> <p>With Mami's determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club, she doesn't know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out. But she still can't stop thinking about performing her poems.</p> <p>Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent.</p>
	Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds	<p>Justyce McAllister is a good kid, an honor student, and always there to help a friend—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. Despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates.</p> <p>Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.</p> <p>Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.</p>
	All American Boys by Jason Reynolds	In this New York Times bestselling novel, two teens—one black, one white—grapple with the repercussions of a single violent act that leaves their school, their community, and, ultimately, the country

<p>Fiction, Cont..</p>		<p>bitterly divided by racial tension.</p> <p>A bag of chips. That's all sixteen-year-old Rashad is looking for at the corner bodega. What he finds instead is a fist-happy cop, Paul Galluzzo, who mistakes Rashad for a shoplifter, mistakes Rashad's pleadings that he's stolen nothing for belligerence, mistakes Rashad's resistance to leave the bodega as resisting arrest, mistakes Rashad's every flinch at every punch the cop throws as further resistance and refusal to STAY STILL as ordered. But how can you stay still when someone is pounding your face into the concrete pavement?</p> <p>There were witnesses: Quinn Collins—a varsity basketball player and Rashad's classmate who has been raised by Paul since his own father died in Afghanistan—and a video camera. Soon the beating is all over the news and Paul is getting threatened with accusations of prejudice and racial brutality. Quinn refuses to believe that the man who has basically been his savior could possibly be guilty. But then Rashad is absent. And absent again. And again. And the basketball team—half of whom are Rashad's best friends—start to take sides. As does the school. And the town. Simmering tensions threaten to explode as Rashad and Quinn are forced to face decisions and consequences they had never considered before.</p>
	<p>The Skin I'm In by Sharon G. Flake</p>	<p>Maleeka Madison is a strong student who has had enough of being teased about her "too black" skin and handmade clothes. So when she starts seventh grade, she decides to adopt a sassier attitude and a tougher circle of friends. The last thing she expects is to get "messed up" with another "freak," but that's exactly what happens.</p> <p>After a new teacher, whose face is disfigured from a skin disease, enters her life, will Maleeka be able to learn to love the skin she's in?</p>
	<p>Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson</p>	<p>"Speak up for yourself--we want to know what you have to say." From the first moment of her freshman year at Merryweather High, Melinda knows this is a big fat lie, part of the nonsense of high school. She is friendless, outcast, because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so now nobody will talk to her, let alone listen to her. As time passes, she becomes increasingly isolated and practically stops talking altogether. Only her art class offers any solace, and it is through her work on an art project that she is finally</p>

Fiction, Cont..		<p>able to face what really happened at that terrible party: she was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. Her healing process has just begun when she has another violent encounter with him. But this time Melinda fights back, refuses to be silent, and thereby achieves a measure of vindication. In Laurie Halse Anderson's powerful novel, an utterly believable heroine with a bitterly ironic voice delivers a blow to the hypocritical world of high school. She speaks for many a disenfranchised teenager while demonstrating the importance of speaking up for oneself.</p> <p>Speak was a 1999 National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature.</p>
	Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli	<p>Leo Borlock follows the unspoken rule at Mica Area High School: don't stand out--under any circumstances! Then Stargirl arrives at Mica High and everything changes--for Leo and for the entire school. After 15 years of homeschooling, Stargirl bursts into tenth grade in an explosion of color and a clatter of ukulele music, enchanting the Mica student body.</p> <p>But the delicate scales of popularity suddenly shift, and Stargirl is shunned for everything that makes her different. Somewhere in the midst of Stargirl's arrival and rise and fall, normal Leo Borlock has tumbled into love with her.</p> <p>In a celebration of nonconformity, Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the fleeting, cruel nature of popularity--and the thrill and inspiration of first love.</p>
	The Giver by Lois Lowry	<p>The Giver, the 1994 Newbery Medal winner, has become one of the most influential novels of our time. The haunting story centers on twelve-year-old Jonas, who lives in a seemingly ideal, if colorless, world of conformity and contentment. Not until he is given his life assignment as the Receiver of Memory does he begin to understand the dark, complex secrets behind his fragile community.</p> <p>Lois Lowry has written three companion novels to The Giver, including Gathering Blue, Messenger, and Son.</p>
	Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens agenda, by Becky Albertalli	<p>Sixteen-year-old and not-so-openly gay Simon Spier prefers to save his drama for the school musical. But when an email falls into the wrong hands, his secret is at risk of being thrust into the spotlight. Now change-averse Simon has to find a way to step out of his comfort zone before he's pushed out—without</p>

		<p>alienating his friends, compromising himself, or fumbling a shot at happiness with the most confusing, adorable guy he's never met.</p> <p>Incredibly funny and poignant, this twenty-first-century coming-of-age, coming out story—wrapped in a geek romance—is a knockout of a debut novel by Becky Albertalli.</p>
	<p>The Crossover (series) by Kwame Alexander</p>	<p>"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 from Kwame Alexander.</p> <p>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.</p>
	<p>The Fault in Our Stars by John Green</p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>To All the Boys I've Loved Before by Jenny Han</p>	<p>What if all the crushes you ever had found out how you felt about them...all at once?</p> <p>Sixteen-year-old Lara Jean Song keeps her love letters in a hatbox her mother gave her. They aren't love letters that anyone else wrote for her; these are ones she's written. One for every boy she's ever loved—five in all. When she writes, she pours out her heart and soul and says all the things she would never say in real life, because her letters are for her eyes only. Until the day her secret letters are mailed, and suddenly, Lara Jean's love life goes from imaginary to out of control.</p>

	<p>The Sun is Also a Star by Nicola Yoon</p>	<p>Natasha: I'm a girl who believes in science and facts. Not fate. Not destiny. Or dreams that will never come true. I'm definitely not the kind of girl who meets a cute boy on a crowded New York City street and falls in love with him. Not when my family is twelve hours away from being deported to Jamaica. Falling in love with him won't be my story.</p> <p>Daniel: I've always been the good son, the good student, living up to my parents' high expectations. Never the poet. Or the dreamer. But when I see her, I forget about all that. Something about Natasha makes me think that fate has something much more extraordinary in store—for both of us.</p> <p>The Universe: Every moment in our lives has brought us to this single moment. A million futures lie before us. Which one will come true?</p>
	<p>Monster by Walter Dean Myers</p>	<p>This New York Times bestselling novel from acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers tells the story of Steve Harmon, a teenage boy in juvenile detention and on trial.</p> <p>Presented as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives.</p> <p>Monster is a multi-award-winning, provocative coming-of-age story that was the first-ever Michael L. Printz Award recipient, an ALA Best Book, a Coretta Scott King Honor selection, and a National Book Award finalist.</p> <p>Monster is now a major motion picture called All Rise and starring Jennifer Hudson, Kelvin Harrison, Jr., Nas, and A\$AP Rocky.</p>
	<p>I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter</p>	<p>Perfect Mexican daughters do not go away to college. And they do not move out of their parents' house after high school graduation. Perfect Mexican daughters never abandon their family.</p> <p>But Julia is not your perfect Mexican daughter. That was Olga's role.</p> <p>Then a tragic accident on the busiest street in Chicago leaves Olga dead and Julia left behind to reassemble the shattered pieces of her family. And no one seems to acknowledge that Julia is broken, too. Instead, her mother seems to channel her grief into</p>

		<p>pointing out every possible way Julia has failed.</p> <p>But it's not long before Julia discovers that Olga might not have been as perfect as everyone thought. With the help of her best friend, Lorena, and her first love (first everything), Connor, Julia is determined to find out. Was Olga really what she seemed? Or was there more to her sister's story? And either way, how can Julia even attempt to live up to a seemingly impossible ideal?</p>
	Ghost (series) by Jason Reynolds	<p>Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves.</p> <p>Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?</p>
	Dear Martin by Nic Stone	<p>Justyce McAllister is a good kid, an honor student, and always there to help a friend—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. Despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates.</p> <p>Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.</p> <p>Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media</p>

		fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.
	We Were Liars by E. Lockhart	<p>A beautiful and distinguished family.</p> <p>A private island.</p> <p>A brilliant, damaged girl; a passionate, political boy.</p> <p>A group of four friends—the Liars—whose friendship turns destructive.</p> <p>A revolution. An accident. A secret.</p> <p>Lies upon lies.</p> <p>True love.</p> <p>The truth.</p> <p>We Were Liars is a modern, sophisticated suspense novel from New York Times bestselling author, National Book Award finalist, and Printz Award honoree E. Lockhart.</p> <p>Read it.</p> <p>And if anyone asks you how it ends, just LIE.</p>
	The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton	No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends—true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on "greasers" like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect—until the night someone takes things too far.
Non Fiction	Bomb: The Race to Build--and Steal--The World's Most Dangerous Weapon, by Steve Sheinkin	<p>In December of 1938, a chemist in a German laboratory made a shocking discovery: When placed next to radioactive material, a Uranium atom split in two. That simple discovery launched a scientific race that spanned three continents.</p> <p>In Great Britain and the United States, Soviet spies worked their way into the scientific community; in Norway, a commando force slipped behind enemy lines to attack German heavy-water manufacturing; and deep in the desert, one brilliant group of scientists was hidden away at a remote site at Los Alamos. This is the story of the plotting, the</p>



		risk-taking, the deceit, and genius that created the world's most formidable weapon. This is the story of the atomic bomb.
	Chasing Lincoln's Killer by James L. Swanson	Based on rare archival material, obscure trial manuscripts, and interviews with relatives of the conspirators and the manhunters, CHASING LINCOLN'S KILLER is a fast-paced thriller about the pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth: a wild twelve-day chase through the streets of Washington, D.C., across the swamps of Maryland, and into the forests of Virginia.
	The Port Chicago 50 by Steve Sheinkin	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.
	Wheels of Change: How Women Rode the Bicycle to Freedom (With a Few Flat Tires Along the Way) by Sue Macy	Take a lively look at women's history from aboard a bicycle, which granted females the freedom of mobility and helped empower women's liberation. Through vintage photographs, advertisements, cartoons, and songs, Wheels of Change transports young readers to bygone eras to see how women used the bicycle to improve their lives. Witty in tone and scrapbook-like in presentation, the book deftly covers early (and comical) objections, influence on fashion, and impact on social change inspired by the bicycle, which, according to Susan B. Anthony, "has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world."
	Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World by Rachel Ignotosky	A charmingly illustrated and educational book, New York Times best seller Women in Science highlights the contributions of fifty notable women to the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) from the ancient to the modern world. Full of striking, singular art, this fascinating collection also contains infographics about relevant topics such as lab equipment, rates of women currently working in STEM fields, and an illustrated scientific glossary. The trailblazing women profiled include well-known figures like primatologist Jane Goodall, as well as lesser-known pioneers such as Katherine Johnson, the African-American physicist and mathematician who

		calculated the trajectory of the 1969 Apollo 11 mission to the moon.
	Can I See Your ID? True Stories of False Identities by Chris Barton	True crime, desperation, fraud, and adventure: From the impoverished young woman who enchanted nineteenth-century British society as a faux Asian princess, to the sixteen-year-old boy who "stole" a subway train in 1993, to the lonely but clever Frank Abagnale of Catch Me if You Can fame, these ten vignettes offer riveting insight into mind-blowing masquerades. Graphic panels draw you into the exploits of these pretenders, and meticulously researched details keep you on the edge of your seat. Each scene is presented in the second person, a unique point of view that literally places you inside the faker's mind. With motivations that include survival, delusion, and plain, old-fashioned greed, the psychology of deception has never been so fascinating or so close at hand.
	The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion and the Fall of Imperial Russia by Candace Fleming	Here is the tumultuous, heartrending, true story of the Romanovs—at once an intimate portrait of Russia's last royal family and a gripping account of its undoing. Using captivating photos and compelling first person accounts, award-winning author Candace Fleming (Amelia Lost; The Lincolns) deftly maneuvers between the imperial family's extravagant lives and the plight of Russia's poor masses, making this an utterly mesmerizing read.
	The Nazi Hunters by Neal Bascomb	<p>In 1945, at the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the head of operations for the Nazis' Final Solution, walked into the mountains of Germany and vanished from view. Sixteen years later, an elite team of spies captured him at a bus stop in Argentina and smuggled him to Israel, resulting in one of the century's most important trials -- one that cemented the Holocaust in the public imagination.</p> <p>THE NAZI HUNTERS is the thrilling and fascinating story of what happened between these two events. Survivor Simon Wiesenthal opened Eichmann's case; a blind Argentinean and his teenage daughter provided crucial information. Finally, the Israeli spies -- many of whom lost family in the Holocaust -- embarked on their daring mission, recounted here in full. Based on the adult bestseller HUNTING EICHMANN, which is now in development as a major film, and illustrated with powerful photos throughout, THE NAZI HUNTERS is a can't-miss work of narrative nonfiction for</p>

		middle-grade and YA readers.
Graphic Novels/ Memoirs	New Kid by Jerry Craft	<p>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.</p> <p>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?</p>
	Nimona by Noelle Stevenson	<p>Nimona is an impulsive young shapeshifter with a knack for villainy. Lord Ballister Blackheart is a villain with a vendetta. As sidekick and supervillain, Nimona and Lord Blackheart are about to wreak some serious havoc. Their mission: prove to the kingdom that Sir Ambrosius Goldenloin and his buddies at the Institution of Law Enforcement and Heroics aren't the heroes everyone thinks they are.</p> <p>But as small acts of mischief escalate into a vicious battle, Lord Blackheart realizes that Nimona's powers are as murky and mysterious as her past. And her unpredictable wild side might be more dangerous than he is willing to admit.</p>
	American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang	<p>Jin Wang starts at a new school where he's the only Chinese-American student. When a boy from Taiwan joins his class, Jin doesn't want to be associated with an FOB like him. Jin just wants to be an all-American boy, because he's in love with an all-American girl. Danny is an all-American boy: great at basketball, popular with the girls. But his obnoxious Chinese cousin Chin-Kee's annual visit is such a disaster that it ruins Danny's reputation at school, leaving him with no choice but to transfer somewhere he can start all over again. The Monkey King has lived for thousands of years and mastered the arts of kung fu and the heavenly disciplines. He's ready to join the ranks of the immortal gods in heaven. But there's no place in heaven for a monkey. Each of these characters cannot</p>

		<p>help himself alone, but how can they possibly help each other? They're going to have to find a way—if they want fix the disasters their lives have become.</p>
	<p>This One Summer by Mariko Tamaki</p>	<p>Every summer, Rose goes with her mom and dad to a lake house in Awago Beach. It's their getaway, their refuge. Rosie's friend Windy is always there, too, like the little sister she never had. But this summer is different. Rose's mom and dad won't stop fighting, and when Rose and Windy seek a distraction from the drama, they find themselves with a whole new set of problems. One of the local teens - just a couple of years older than Rose and Windy - is caught up in something bad... Something life threatening.</p> <p>It's a summer of secrets, and sorrow, and growing up, and it's a good thing Rose and Windy have each other.</p> <p>This One Summer is a tremendously exciting new teen graphic novel from two creators with true literary clout. Cousins Mariko and Jillian Tamaki, the team behind Skim, have collaborated on this gorgeous, heartbreaking, and ultimately hopeful story about a girl on the cusp of childhood - a story of renewal and revelation.</p>
	<p>Boxers and Saints by Gene Luen Yang</p>	<p>China, 1898. Bands of foreign missionaries and soldiers roam the countryside, bullying and robbing Chinese peasants.</p> <p>Little Bao has had enough. Harnessing the powers of ancient Chinese gods, he recruits an army of Boxers - commoners trained in kung fu who fight to free China from "foreign devils."</p> <p>Against all odds, this grass-roots rebellion is violently successful. But nothing is simple. Little Bao is fighting for the glory of China, but at what cost? So many are dying, including thousands of "secondary devils" - Chinese citizens who have converted to Christianity.</p> <p>Boxers &amp; Saints is an innovative new graphic novel in two volumes - the parallel stories of two young people caught up on opposite sides of a violent rift. American Born Chinese author Gene Luen Yang brings his clear-eyed storytelling and trademark magical realism to the complexities of the Boxer Rebellion and lays bare the foundations of extremism, rebellion, and</p>

		faith.
	Anya's Ghost	<p>Anya could really use a friend. But her new BFF isn't kidding about the "Forever" part . . .</p> <p>Of all the things Anya expected to find at the bottom of an old well, a new friend was not one of them. Especially not a new friend who's been dead for a century.</p> <p>Falling down a well is bad enough, but Anya's normal life might actually be worse. She's embarrassed by her family, self-conscious about her body, and she's pretty much given up on fitting in at school. A new friend—even a ghost—is just what she needs.</p> <p>Or so she thinks.</p>
	Dare to Disappoint: Growing up in Turkey by Ozge Samanci	<p>Growing up on the Aegean Coast, Ozge loved the sea and imagined a life of adventure while her parents and society demanded predictability. Her dad expected Ozge, like her sister, to become an engineer. She tried to hear her own voice over his and the religious and militaristic tensions of Turkey and the conflicts between secularism and fundamentalism. Could she be a scuba diver like Jacques Cousteau? A stage actress? Would it be possible to please everyone including herself?</p> <p>In her unpredictable and funny graphic memoir, Ozge recounts her story using inventive collages, weaving together images of the sea, politics, science, and friendship.</p>
	Honor Girl by Maggie Thrash	<p>Maggie Thrash has spent basically every summer of her fifteen-year-old life at the one-hundred-year-old Camp Bellflower for Girls, set deep in the heart of Appalachia. She's from Atlanta, she's never kissed a guy, she's into Backstreet Boys in a really deep way, and her long summer days are full of a pleasant, peaceful nothing . . . until one confounding moment. A split-second of innocent physical contact pulls Maggie into a gut-twisting love for an older, wiser, and most surprising of all (at least to Maggie), female counselor named Erin. But Camp Bellflower is an impossible place for a girl to fall in love with another girl, and Maggie's savant-like proficiency at the camp's rifle range is the only thing keeping her heart from exploding. When it seems as if Erin maybe feels</p>

		the same way about Maggie, it's too much for both Maggie and Camp Bellflower to handle, let alone to understand.
Memoir	Red Scarf Girl by Ji-li Jiang	It's 1966, and twelve-year-old Ji-li Jiang has everything a girl could want: brains, popularity, and a bright future in Communist China. But it's also the year that China's leader, Mao Ze-dong, launches the Cultural Revolution—and Ji-li's world begins to fall apart. Over the next few years, people who were once her friends and neighbors turn on her and her family, forcing them to live in constant terror of arrest. And when Ji-li's father is finally imprisoned, she faces the most difficult dilemma of her life
	Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen by Jose Antonio Vargas	My name is Jose Antonio Vargas. I was born in the Philippines. When I was twelve, my mother sent me to the United States to live with her parents. While applying for a driver's permit, I found out my papers were fake. More than two decades later, I am still here illegally, with no clear path to American citizenship. To some people, I am the "most famous illegal" in America. In my mind, I am only one of an estimated 11 million human beings whose uncertain fate is under threat in a country I call my home.
Science Fiction/ Dystopia/ Fantasy	Ready Player One by Ernest Cline	<p>IN THE YEAR 2044, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines, puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them.</p> <p>But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win—and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.</p>
	<p>Scythe (series) by Neal Shusterman</p> <p>(Book 2: Thunderhead)</p> <p>(Book 3: The Toll)</p>	<p>Two teens must learn the "art of killing" in this Printz Honor-winning book, the first in a chilling new series from Neal Shusterman, author of the New York Times bestselling Unwind dystology.</p> <p>A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control.</p> <p>Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a</p>

		<p>scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the “art” of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own.</p> <p>Scythe is the first novel of a thrilling new series by National Book Award-winning author Neal Shusterman in which Citra and Rowan learn that a perfect world comes only with a heavy price.</p>
	Feed by M.T. Anderson	<p>For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon — a chance to party during spring break. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its ever-present ability to categorize human thoughts and desires. M. T. Anderson's not-so-brave new world is a smart, savage satire that has captivated readers with its view of an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now.</p>
	Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury	<p>Guy Montag is a fireman. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life and wife, Mildred, who spends all day with her television “family.” But when he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn’t live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known.</p>
Historical Fiction	The Book Thief by Markus Zusak (World War II)	<p>It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still.</p> <p>Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can’t resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.</p>
	The Brooklyn Nine: A Novel in Nine Innings by Alan Gatz	<p>Baseball is in the Schneider family blood. Each member of this family, from family founder Felix Schneider in the 1800s to Snider Flint in the present day, has a strong tie to the game and to Brooklyn. Through the years this family has dodged bullets on a battlefield, pitched perfect games, and dealt with the devastating loss of family and the Brooklyn Dodgers. Nine innings--nine</p>

	(Expansion and Reform) <sup>1</sup>	generations. One game--one family. Through it all, one thing remains true: the bonds of family are as strong as a love of the game.
	Heart of a Samurai by Margi Preus  (Immigrants and Their Stories)	In 1841, a Japanese fishing vessel sinks. Its crew is forced to swim to a small, unknown island, where they are rescued by a passing American ship. Japan's borders remain closed to all Western nations, so the crew sets off to America, learning English on the way. Manjiro, a fourteen-year-old boy, is curious and eager to learn everything he can about this new culture. Eventually the captain adopts Manjiro and takes him to his home in New England. The boy lives for some time in New England, and then heads to San Francisco to pan for gold. After many years, he makes it back to Japan, only to be imprisoned as an outsider. With his hard-won knowledge of the West, Manjiro is in a unique position to persuade the shogun to ease open the boundaries around Japan; he may even achieve his unlikely dream of becoming a samurai.
	The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner by Laurence Yep  (Immigrants and Their Stories)	A young Chinese boy nicknamed Runt records his experiences in a journal as he travels from southern China to California in 1852 to join his uncle during the Gold Rush.
	The Journal of Jesse Smoke: A Cherokee Boy by Joseph Bruchac  (US Government Policy and Native Americans)	When Jesse Smoke and his family are forced to leave their home, land, and belongings, they must journey west, along with several thousand other Cherokees, on The Trail of Tears.
	Birchbark House, The Game of Silence, The Porcupine	"[In this] story of a young Ojibwa girl, Omakayas, living on an island in Lake Superior around 1847, Louise Erdrich is reversing the narrative perspective used in most children's stories about nineteenth-century Native Americans. Instead of looking out at 'them' as dangers or

<sup>1</sup> This and all of the following recommendations come from a book called Experiencing America's Story Through Fiction by Hilary Susan Crew.



	<p>Year, and Chickadee by Louise Erdrich</p> <p>(US Government Policy and Native Americans)</p>	<p>curiosities, Erdrich, drawing on her family's history, wants to tell about 'us', from the inside.</p>
	<p>Letters from the Corrugated Castle: A novel of Gold Rush California, 1850-1852 by Joan. W. Blos</p> <p>(Westward Expansion)</p>	<p>Thirteen-year-old Eldora has always believed that her mother died when she was very little, and for nine years she has lived with people that she calls Aunt and Uncle. The year is 1850, and all three have exchanged their quiet lives in New Bedford, Massachusetts, for new ones in San Francisco, the rapidly growing city that is the heart of the California Gold Rush. Shortly after their arrival, they receive a letter from an unknown woman who believes she is Eldora's mother. She is eager to meet her long-lost daughter, and a visit is arranged. As Eldora deals with her conflicting feelings about this news, she must also adjust to the challenges -- and dangers -- of living in a brash and growing city. She finds herself teaching English to two Mexicano children and beginning to learn Spanish, and an unlikely friendship with a boy named Luke introduces her to the hard, sometimes humorous, and often violent world of the mining camps. Every day seems to bring something different and new to consider. But can Eldora discover where -- and to whom -- she belongs?</p>
	<p>The Water Seeker by Kimberly Willis Holt</p> <p>(Westward Expansion)</p>	<p>Amos Kincaid is the son of a dowser—a person gifted in knowing how to "find" water deep in the ground. As a young person, Amos doesn't reveal his gift to others; he's not sure he wants the burden. But through his experiences growing up and crossing the Oregon Trail, Amos learns about life's harsh realities, especially the pain in losing loved ones. As he cares for those around him, Amos comes to accept his dowsing fate. This epic novel is a fascinating period piece about the westward expansion and one man's destiny as he searches for love and family.</p>
	<p>The Devil's Paintbox by Victoria McKernan</p> <p>(Westward Expansion)</p>	<p>When almost-16-year-old Aiden Lynch and his little sister, Maddy, first meet trailrider Jefferson J. Jackson, they're eating clay and hunting grasshoppers on the remains of their family's drought-ravaged Kansas farm. In short, the two orphans are starving to death, so when this man Jackson offers an escape—a 2000-mile journey across the roughest country in the world—Aiden knows it's their only choice.</p> <p>They say there are a hundred ways to die on the Oregon Trail, and the long wagon journey is broken only by</p>

		<p>catastrophe: wolf attacks, tornadoes, rattlesnakes, deadly river crossings, Indians, and the looming threat of smallpox, "the devil's paint." But with the sky a cornflower blue and the air sweet with new prairie grass, Aiden and Maddy and a hundred fellow travelers move forward with a growing hope, and the promise of a new life in the Washington Territory.</p>
	<p><b>Black Storm Comin' by Diane Lee Wilson</b></p> <p>(Westward Expansion)</p>	<p>WANTED: Young, skinny, wiry fellows not over eighteen. Must be expert riders. Willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred.</p> <p>When Colton Wescott sees this sign for the Pony Express, he thinks he has the solution to his problems. He's stuck with his ma and two younger sisters on the wrong side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, with no way to get across. They were on the wagon train heading to California when Pa accidentally shot Colton and then galloped away. Ma is sick, and Colton needs money to pay the doctor. He'd make good money as a Pony rider. he also needs to get to California to deliver freedom papers to Ma's sister, a runaway slave. The Pony Express could get him there too...</p> <p>Does Colton have what it takes to be a Pony Express rider? And if so, will traveling the dangerous route over the mountains bring him closer to family, freedom, and everything he holds dear?</p>
	<p><b>March Toward the Thunder by Joseph Bruchac</b></p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>Louis Nolette, a fifteen-year-old Abenaki Indian from Canada, is recruited to fight in the northern Irish Brigade in the Civil War. Though he is too young, and neither American nor Irish, he finds the promise of good wages and the fight to end slavery persuasive enough to join up. But war is never what you expect, and as Louis fights his way through battles, he encounters prejudice and acceptance, courage and cowardice, and strong and weak leadership in the most unexpected places.</p>
	<p><b>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jenny Rodgers: Union Soldier by Lydia Durrant</b></p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>Jennie Rodgers dressed as a boy for the first time in order to help support her impoverished Irish family with a shepherd's wages. Then her arrival in America confirmed her belief that the world offers better opportunities to young men than to young women. So Jennie maintained her outward identity as Albert Cashier, serving as a grocery clerk in Queens, New York; as a farmhand in Ohio; and as a recruit in the 95th Illinois Infantry during the Civil War. Not only did she survive three years in combat with her true identity undiscovered, she chose to continue living as Albert for nearly all of her life.</p>
	<p><b>Annie, Between the States by</b></p>	<p>Annie's home and heart are divided by the Civil War.</p> <p>Annie Sinclair's Virginia home is in the battle path of the</p>

	<p>L.M. Elliot</p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>Civil War. Her brothers, Laurence and Jamie, fight to defend the South, while Annie and her mother tend to wounded soldiers. When she develops a romantic connection with a Union Army lieutenant, Annie's view of the war broadens. Then an accusation calls her loyalty into question. A nation and a heart divided force Annie to choose her own course.</p>
	<p>Two Girls of Gettysburg by Lisa Klein</p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>Lizzie and Rosanna are cousins. But when the Civil War breaks out, Lizzie finds herself committed to the cause of the Union, while Rosie is swept up in the passions of the old south. Torn in their alliances, each girl finds herself grappling with the brutality of war, and the elusive promise of love, until the battle at Gettysburg brings them together once again.</p>
	<p>Soldier's Heart by Gary Paulsen</p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>In June 1861, when the Civil War began, Charley Goddard enlisted in the First Minnesota Volunteers. He was 15. He didn't know what a "shooting war" meant or what he was fighting for. But he didn't want to miss out on a great adventure.</p> <p>The "shooting war" turned out to be the horror of combat and the wild luck of survival; how it feels to cross a field toward the enemy, waiting for fire. When he entered the service he was a boy. When he came back he was different; he was only 19, but he was a man with "soldier's heart," later known as "battle fatigue."</p>
	<p>The River Between Us by Richard Peck</p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>The year is 1861. Civil war is imminent and Tilly Pruitt's brother, Noah, is eager to go and fight on the side of the North. With her father long gone, Tilly, her sister, and their mother struggle to make ends meet and hold the dwindling Pruitt family together. Then one night a mysterious girl arrives on a steamboat bound for St. Louis. Delphine is unlike anyone the small river town has even seen. Mrs. Pruitt agrees to take Delphine and her dark, silent traveling companion in as boarders. No one in town knows what to make of the two strangers, and so the rumors fly. Is Delphine's companion a slave? Could they be spies for the South? Are the Pruitts traitors? A masterful tale of mystery and war, and a breathtaking portrait of the lifelong impact one person can have on another.</p>
	<p>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg by Philbrick Rodman</p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>In this emotive Newbery Honor-winning page-turner, twelve-year-old orphan Homer runs away from Pine Swamp, Maine, to find his older brother, Harold, 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 the Battle of Gettysburg and the dramatic story of the 20th Maine at Little Round Top. Even through a hail of gunfire, Homer never loses heart--but will he find his brother? Or</p>

		will it be too late?
	<p>Red Moon at Sharpsburg by Rosemary Well</p> <p>(Civil War)</p>	<p>When the Civil War breaks out, life in the South is transformed and nothing remains the same. India Moody must summon the courage she didn't know she had to plunge into one of the war's most tragic and terrifying events—the Battle of Antietam, known in the South as Sharpsburg—in order to get medicine to her desperately sick father. As she struggles for survival during the Union's brutal occupation, India gets an education in love and loss, the senseless devastation of war, and the triumph of hope in the face of despair.</p>
	<p>Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two</p> <p>by Joseph Bruchac</p>	<p>Throughout World War II, in the conflict fought against Japan, Navajo code talkers were a crucial part of the U.S. effort, sending messages back and forth in an unbreakable code that used their native language. They braved some of the heaviest fighting of the war, and with their code, they saved countless American lives. Yet their story remained classified for more than twenty years.</p> <p>But now Joseph Bruchac brings their stories to life for young adults through the riveting fictional tale of Ned Begay, a sixteen-year-old Navajo boy who becomes a code talker. His grueling journey is eye-opening and inspiring. This deeply affecting novel honors all of those young men, like Ned, who dared to serve, and it honors the culture and language of the Navajo Indians.</p>
	<p>We Are Not Free by Traci Chee</p>	<p>From <i>New York Times</i> best-selling and acclaimed author Traci Chee comes <i>We Are Not Free</i>, the collective account of a tight-knit group of young Nisei, second-generation Japanese American citizens, whose lives are irrevocably changed by the mass U.S. incarcerations of World War II.</p> <p>Fourteen teens who have grown up together in Japantown, San Francisco.</p> <p>Fourteen teens who form a community and a family, as interconnected as they are conflicted.</p> <p>Fourteen teens whose lives are turned upside down when over 100,000 people of Japanese ancestry are removed from their homes and forced into desolate incarceration camps.</p> <p>In a world that seems determined to hate them, these young Nisei must rally together as racism and injustice threaten to pull them apart.</p>

These are some additional Historical Fiction recommendations:

### **Reconstruction**

[The Land](#), by Mildred D. Taylor

### **Industrial United States**

[Jason's Gold](#), by Will Hobbs

[Under a Painted Sky](#), by Stacey Lee

[The Breaker Boys](#), by Pat Hughes

[Alligator Bayou](#), by Donna Jo Napoli

[Escape to Gold Mountain: A Graphic History of the Chinese in North America](#), by David H. T. Wong

[The Traitor: Golden Mountain Chronicles. 1885](#), by Laurence Yep

[Threads and Flames](#), by Esther Friesner

[Uprising](#), by Margaret Peterson Haddix

### **Expansion and Reform/The Progressive Era**

[The Brooklyn Nine](#), by Alan Gratz

[Ida M. Tarbell: The Woman Who Challenged Big Business—and Won!](#), by Emily Arnold McCully

[Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition](#), by Karen Blumenthal

### **Immigrants and their Stories**

[Heart of a Samurai](#), by Margi Preus

[The King of Mulberry Street](#) by Donna Jo Napoli

[This Land is Our Land: A History of American Immigration](#), By Linda Barrett Osborne

[The Joy Luck Club](#), by Amy Tan

[The Fire Horse Girl](#), by Kay Honeyman

## **Native American History**

[The Game of Silence](#) and [The Porcupine Year](#), by Louise Erdrich

[Sweetgrass Basket](#), by Marlene Carvell

## **Post-Reconstruction**

[Crow](#), By Barbara Wright

[Outrun the Moon](#), by Stacey Lee

[The Downstairs Girl](#), by Stacey Lee

## **The Great Depression and World War I**

[Out of the Dust](#), by Karen Hesse

[Lucky Strikes](#), by Louis Bayard

## **World War II**

[The Berlin Boxing Club](#), by Robert Sharenow

[Maus](#), by Art Spiegelman

[Salt to the Sea](#), by Ruta Sepetys

[Code Name Verity](#), by Elizabeth E. Wein

[Flygirl](#), by Sherri L. Smith

[The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights](#), by Steve Sheinkin

[They Called Us Enemy](#), by George Takei

[Traitor](#), A Novel of World War II, by Amanda McCrina

## **Civil Rights**

[Fire in the Streets](#), by Kekla Magoon

[Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom](#), by Lynda Blackmon Lowery

[The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano](#), by Sonia Manzano