**Summer Reading Recommendations for Incoming 8th Graders, 2023**

\*If a series is listed, it is the first in the series that is described. Read “any in the series” if you are reading the books in their proper sequence.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. Chains **HISTORICAL FICTION, SLAVERY**

After being sold to a cruel couple in New York City, a slave named Isabel spies for the rebels during the Revolutionary War.

Anthony, Lawrence. Spence, Graham. The Elephant Whisperer. **NONFICTION, ELEPHANTS**

When South African conservationist Lawrence Anthony was asked to accept a herd of "rogue" wild elephants on his Thula Thula game reserve in Zululand, his common sense told him to refuse. But he was the herd's last chance of survival: they would be killed if he wouldn't take them.

Bloor, Edward. London Calling **WORLD WAR II, TIME TRAVEL, HISTORICAL FICTION**

Seventh-grader Martin Conway believes that his life is monotonous and dull until the night the antique radio he uses as a night-light transports him to the bombing of London in 1940.

Bradbury, Ray.  The Martian Chronicles **SCIENCE FICTION, CLASSIC**

This book contains some of the scariest and most imaginative science-fiction stories ever, by the master science-fiction writer himself. Another from your grandparents reading list!

Bronte, Charlotte.  Jane Eyre **CLASSIC, ROMANCE, FICTION**

Young Jane Eyre was orphaned and sent to live with her uncle, who dies shortly after her arrival. Her step-aunt despises her and sends her to Lowood School so that she can become a governess. This one is great! Grandma knew some good booksJ

Bruchac, Joseph.  Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of WWII **HISTORICAL NONFICTION**

After being taught that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men learn how necessary their language is when they are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers.

Clements, Andrew.  Things Not Seen **FANTASY, ADVENTURE**

When fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up and finds that he is invisible, he, his parents, and his new blind friend, Alicia, try to find out what caused his condition and how to reverse it.

\*Dashner, James. The Eye of Minds **SUSPENSE, GAMING, SCIENCE FICTION**

Michael is a skilled internet gamer in a world of advanced technology. When a cyber-terrorist begins to threaten players, Michael is called upon to seek him out and discover his secrets.

Denenberg, Barry. Ali: An American Champion **BIOGRAPHY, NONFICTION**

This book puts the famous world heavyweight champion boxer in to historical context with gripping immediacy through the use of newspaper articles, interviews, opinion pieces, and photographs.

Deuker, Carl. Golden Arm **BASEBALL, SCHOOL, FAMILY**

Lazarus Weathers, a high school senior from the wrong side of the tracks, seeks to protect his half-brother while pitching his way out of poverty, one strike at a time.

Evans, Richard Paul. [Michael Vey : the prisoner of cell 25 / Richard Paul Evans.](https://westls.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/wls_catalog/search/results?qu=the+prisoner+of+cell+25&te=&dt=list) **FANTASY, SUPERPOWERS, ADVENTURE, FRIENDS**

Michael Vey, a fourteen-year-old with Tourette's syndrome who possesses special electric powers, discovers that a cheerleader named Taylor also has special powers. With the help of Michael's friend, Ostin, the three of them set out to discover how Michael and Taylor ended up this way, but their investigation brings them to theattention of a powerful group who wants to control the electric children.

Flanagan, John.  The Hunters (Brotherband Chronicles) **ADVENTURE, FANTASY, FICTION**

Determined to recover the Adomal and to prevent the pirate Zavac from doing more damage, Hal and his brotherband crew pursue Zavac to the lawless fortress of Ragusa where, if Hal is to succeed, he will have to go beyond his brotherband training and face the pirate one-on-one in a fight to the finish.

Fleming, Candace. The Family Romanov: murder, rebellion, and the fall of Imperial Russia.

**RUSSIAN CZARS, WORLD WAR I, NONFICTION**

Here is the riveting story of the Russian Revolution as it unfolded. When Russia's last tsar, Nicholas II, inherited the throne in 1894, he was unprepared to do so. With their four daughters (including Anastasia) and only son, a hemophiliac, Nicholas and his reclusive wife, Alexandra, buried their heads in the sand, living a life of opulence as World War I raged outside their door and political unrest grew.

Freedman, Russell. Because They Marched **NONFICTION, CIVIL RIGHTS**

An account of the 1965 civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, is presented. This event sparked the signing of the Voting Rights Act and is the event upon which the recent movie, Selma, is based.

Gratz, Alan.PROJEKT 1065, **WWII, SPIES, GERMANY**

A young man and his parents relocate from Ireland to Germany during World War II and have a secret life as spies within Hitler's army.

Jackson, Holly. Good Girl’s Guide to Murder **MYSTERY, FRIENDS, SCHOOL**

As her senior capstone project, Pippa Fitz-Amobi is determined to find the real killer in a closed, local murder case, but not everyone wants her meddling in the past.

Loan. A Pho Love Story **ROMANCE, HIGH SCHOOL, VIETNAMESE**

School seniors B£ao and Linh, whose feuding families own competing Vietnamese restaurants, conceal their budding romance, as well as Linh's desire to become an artist.

Littman, Sarah. Anything But Okay **REALISTIC FICTION, PTSD, FRIENDS**

Life has suddenly turned chaotic for high school student Stella since her brother, Rob, got home from his second tour of duty in Afghanistan: her school is on edge with ethnic tensions and her brother seems to be suffering from post-traumatic stress but will not talk about it. But when Rob's anger finally spirals out of control, Stella realizes she has to find the courage to take a stand against the forces of hate in her hometown.

London, Jack.  White Fang **CLASSIC, ADVENTURE, FICTION**

This is the story of a wolf born in the frozen-hearted Northland wild, and how he became known as “the Blessed Wolf.”

\*Lore, Pittacus. I Am Number Four (or any in series) **SCIENCE FICTION, ROMANCE, SUPERPOWERS**

In rural Ohio, friendships and a beautiful girl prove distracting to a fifteen-year-old who has hidden on Earth for ten years waiting to develop the Legacies, or powers, he will need to rejoin the other six surviving Garde members and fight the Mogadorians who destroyed their planet, Lorien.

Lowry, Lois.  A Summer to Die **REALISTIC FICTION, SIBLINGS, ILLNESS**

Thirteen-year-old Meg envies her sister Molly’s beauty and popularity.  Her feelings don’t make it any easier for her to cope with Molly’s strange illness and eventual death.

 Lu, Marie. Warcross  **FANTASY FICTION, COMPUTER CRIME, SUSPENSE**

When teenage coder Emika Chen hacks her way into the opening tournament of the Warcross Championships, she glitches herself into the game as well as a sinister plot with major consequences for the entire Warcross empire.

McManus, Karen M. One of Us is Lying **REALISTIC FICTION, MYSTERY**

"When the creator of a high school gossip app mysteriously dies in front of four high-profile students all four become suspects. It's up to them to solve the case.

\*Mikaelsen, Ben. Touching Spirit Bear (or any in the series) **REALISTIC FICTION, ADVENTURE**

After his anger erupts into violence, Cole, in order to avoid going to prison, agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the Native American Circle Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island where an encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life.

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. Dairy Queen **REALISTIC FICTION, SPORTS, ROMANCE**

After spending her summer running the family farm and training the quarterback for her school's rival football team, sixteen-year-old D.J. decides to go out for the sport herself, not anticipating the reactions of those around her.

Nielsen, Jennifer A. A Night Divided **HISTORICAL FICTION, WWII, FAMILY**

When the Berlin Wall went up, Gerta, her mother, and her brother Fritz are trapped on the eastern side where they were living, while her father, and her other brother Dominic are in the West--four years later, now twelve, Gerta sees her father on a viewing platform on the western side and realizes he wants her to risk her life trying to tunnel to freedom.

Pratchett, Terry. Nation **HISTORICAL FICTION, SURVIVAL**

After a tsunami destroys all that they have ever known, Mau, an island boy, and Daphne, an aristocratic English girl, together with a small band of refugees, set about rebuilding their community and the things that matter to them.

Reynolds, Jason. Ghost **REALISTIC FICTION, SPORTS,**

Ghost, a naturally talented runner and troublemaker, is recruited for an elite middle school track team. He must stay on track, literally and figuratively, to reach his full potential.

Scattergood, Augusta.  Glory Be **CIVIL RIGHTS, HISTORICAL FICTION**

In the summer of 1964 as she is about to turn twelve, Glory's town of Hanging Moss, Mississippi, is beset by racial tension when town leaders close her beloved public pool rather than desegregating it.

Sepetys, Ruta. Salt to the Sea **HISTORICAL FICTION, WWII**

As World War II draws to a close, refugees try escaping the war aboard ship, finding themselves in more danger.

Sheinkin, Steve. Bomb: The Race to Build and Steal The World's Most Dangerous Weapon **NONFICTION, WORLD WAR II,**

The scientific discoveries that enabled atom splitting, the military intelligence operations that occurred in rival countries, and the work of brilliant scientists hidden at Los Alamos is recounted.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. Drums, Girls, & Dangerous Pie **REALISTIC FICTION**

When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, thirteen-year-old Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, his school life, and his desire to support his family.

Spiegelman, Art. Maus **MEMOIR, WORLD WAR II, HOLOCAUST, GRAPHIC NOVEL**

The author-illustrator traces his father's imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp through a series of disarming and unusual cartoons arranged to tell the story as a novel.

Stone, Tanya Lee. Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream **NONFICTION, ASTRONAUTS**

When America created NASA in 1958, there was an unspoken rule in place: astronauts must be white and male. However, thirteen women challenged the U.S. government and proved their strength and valor. Their passage to space was blocked by prejudice, jealousy, and one of the most powerful men in Washington. In the end, though, their inspiring example empowered young women to take their rightful place in the sky, piloting jets, and commanding space capsules.

Smith, Betty.  A Tree Grows in Brooklyn **HISTORICAL FICTION, CLASSIC, ROMANCE**

Francie Nolan and her family lived in the Williamsburg slums of Brooklyn from 1902 until 1919. This is the story of Francie, her resourcefulness, and her wisdom, as she grows up.

\*Stewart, Trenton Lee.  The Mysterious Benedict Society (or any in the series) **REALISTIC FICTION, MYSTERY,**

After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected to go on a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Institute for the Very Enlightened where the only rule is that there are no rules.

\*Tolkien, J.R.R. The Hobbit (or any in *Lord of the Rings* series) **FANTASY, ADVENTURE**

This is the story of the adventures of Bilbo Baggins including his encounters with trolls, goblins, dwarves, and elves.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. The Running Dream **REALISTIC FICTION, SPORTS, COURAGE**

When a school bus accident leaves sixteen-year-old Jessica an amputee, she returns to school with a prosthetic limb and her track team finds a wonderful way to help rekindle her dream of running again

Verne, Jules.  20,000 Leagues Under the Sea **CLASSIC, FICTION**

This is the tale of the mysterious Captain Nemo, his electric submarine, and the crew that farmed the bottom of the sea.

Westerfeld, Scott.  Uglies (or any by author) **SCIENCE FICTION, ADVENTURE**

In Tally’s world, your sixteenth birthday brings an operation that turns you from a repellant ugly into a stunningly attractive pretty.  But Shay isn’t sure she wants to be pretty. She’d rather risk her life on the outside.

Woodson, Jacqueline. Brown Girl Dreaming **MEMOIR, FAMILY, CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

Moving story of the author’s childhood told in verse. 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.

\*Yancey, Rick. The Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp (or any in the series) **FANTASY, KING ARTHUR LEGEND**

Through a series of dangerous and violent misadventures, teenage loser Alfred Kropp rescues King Arthur's legendary sword Excalibur from the forces of evil. Who is he and why can he do the impossible?

Zentner, Jeff. The Goodbye Days **REALISTIC FICTION, LOSS**

"Looks at a teen's life after the death of his best friend and how he navigates through the guilt and pain by celebrating their lives--and ultimately learning to forgive himself"

Zusak, Michael. The Book Thief **WORLD WAR II, HISTORICAL FICTION**

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.