

2022 incoming 7th graders summer reading choices

Please choose one of the following books to read this summer. Reflect on your reading by writing sticky note annotations (10 minimum, from different parts of the book). Bring your completed book & sticky notes to school at the beginning of the year.

You may read more than one book if you wish, but you only need to write annotations for one of the books. We want you to have fun reading!

Realistic Fiction

***The Brave*, by James Bird**

ISBN-13: 9781250247759

Collin can't help himself—he has a unique condition that finds him counting every letter spoken to him. It's a quirk that makes him a prime target for bullies, and a continual frustration to the adults around him, including his father.

When Collin asked to leave yet another school, his dad decides to send him to live in Minnesota with the mother he's never met. She is Ojibwe, and lives on a reservation. Collin arrives in Duluth with his loyal dog, Seven, and quickly finds his mom and his new home to be warm, welcoming, and accepting of his condition.

Collin's quirk is matched by that of his neighbor, Orenda, a girl who lives mostly in her treehouse and believes she is turning into a butterfly. With Orenda's help, Collin works hard to overcome his challenges. His real test comes when he must step up for his new friend and trust his new family.

***Posted*, by John David Anderson**

ISBN-13: 978-0062338204

In middle school, words aren't just words. They can be weapons. They can be gifts. The right words can win you friends or make you enemies. They can come back to haunt you. Sometimes they can change things forever.

When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well.

In the middle of this, a new girl named Rose arrives at school and sits at Frost's lunch table. Rose is not like anyone else at Branton Middle School, and it's clear that the close circle of friends Frost has made for himself won't easily hold another. As the sticky-note war escalates, and the pressure to choose sides mounts, Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same.

Science Fiction/Fantasy

***The Lion of Mars*, by Jennifer L. Holm**

ISBN-13: 9780593121818

Bell has spent his whole life—all eleven years of it—on Mars. But he's still just a regular kid—he loves cats and any kind of cake, and is curious about the secrets the adults in the US colony are keeping. Like, why don't they have contact with anyone on the other Mars colonies? Why are they so isolated? When a virus breaks out and the grown-ups all fall ill, Bell and the other children are the only ones who can help. It's up to Bell—a regular kid in a very different world—to uncover the truth and save his family...and possibly unite an entire planet.

Mars may be a world far, far away, but in the hands of Jennifer L. Holm, beloved and bestselling author of *The Fourteenth Goldfish*, it can't help but feel like home.

***Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky*, by Kwame Mbalia**

ISBN-13: 978-1368039932

Best-selling author Rick Riordan presents Kwame Mbalia's epic fantasy, a middle grade American Gods set in a richly-imagined world populated with African American folk heroes and West African gods.

Seventh grader Tristan Strong feels anything but strong ever since he failed to save his best friend when they were in a bus accident together. All he has left of Eddie is the journal his friend wrote stories in. Tristan is dreading the month he's going to spend on his grandparents' farm in Alabama, where he's being sent to heal from the tragedy.

But on his first night there, a sticky creature shows up in his bedroom and steals Eddie's notebook. Tristan chases after it--is that a doll?--and a tug-of-war ensues between them underneath a Bottle Tree. In a last attempt to wrestle the journal out of the creature's hands, Tristan punches the tree, accidentally ripping open a chasm into the MidPass, a volatile place with a burning sea, haunted bone ships, and iron monsters that are hunting the inhabitants of this world.

Tristan finds himself in the middle of a battle that has left black American folk heroes John Henry and Brer Rabbit exhausted. In order to get back home, Tristan and these new allies will need to entice the god Anansi, the Weaver, to come out of hiding and seal the hole in the sky. But bartering with the trickster Anansi always comes at a price.

Can Tristan save this world before he loses more of the things he loves?

***The Last Cuentista*, by Donna Barba Higuera**

ISBN: 978-1646140893

There lived a girl named Petra Peña, who wanted nothing more than to be a storyteller, like her abuelita.

But Petra's world is ending. Earth has been destroyed by a comet, and only a few hundred scientists and their children – among them Petra and her family – have been chosen to journey to a new planet. They are the ones who must carry on the human race.

Hundreds of years later, Petra wakes to this new planet – and the discovery that she is the only person who remembers Earth. A sinister Collective has taken over the ship during its journey, bent on erasing the sins of humanity's past. They have systematically purged the memories of all aboard – or purged them altogether.

Petra alone now carries the stories of our past, and with them, any hope for our future. Can she make them live again?

Dystopian

***The Electric Kingdom*, by David Arnold**

ISBN-13: 9780593202241

When a deadly Fly Flu sweeps the globe, it leaves a shell of the world that once was. Among the survivors are eighteen-year-old Nico and her dog, on a voyage devised by Nico's father to find a mythical portal; a young artist named Kit, raised in an old abandoned cinema; and the enigmatic Deliverer, who lives Life after Life in an attempt to put the world back together. As swarms of infected Flies roam the earth, these few survivors navigate the woods of post-apocalyptic New England, meeting others along the way, each on their own quest to find life and love in a world gone dark. *The Electric Kingdom* is a sweeping exploration of art, storytelling, eternal life, and above all, a testament to the notion that even in an exterminated world, one person might find beauty in another.

Historical Fiction

Refugee, Alan Gratz

ISBN-13: 978-0545880831

JOSEF is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world . . .

ISABEL is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America . . .

MAHMOUD is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe . . .

All three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers -- from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of *tomorrow*. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end.

Cuba in My Pocket, by Adrianna Cuevas

ISBN- 978-0374314675

When the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 solidifies Castro's power in Cuba, twelve-year-old Cumba's family makes the difficult decision to send him to Florida alone. Faced with the prospect of living in another country by himself, Cumba tries to remember the sound of his father's clarinet, the smell of his mother's lavender perfume.

Life in the United States presents a whole new set of challenges. Lost in a sea of English speakers, Cumba has to navigate a new city, a new school, and new freedom all on his own. With each day, Cumba feels more confident in his new surroundings, but he continues to wonder: Will his family ever be whole again? Or will they remain just out of reach, ninety miles across the sea

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain, John Boyne

ISBN: 9780857534798

When Pierrot becomes an orphan, he must leave his home in Paris for a new life with his aunt Beatrix, a servant in a wealthy Austrian household. But this is no ordinary time, for it is 1935 and the Second World War is fast approaching; and this is no ordinary house, for this is the Berghof, the home of Adolf Hitler. Pierrot is quickly taken under Hitler's wing and thrown into an increasingly dangerous new world: a world of terror, secrets, and betrayal from which he may never be able to escape.

Mystery/Thriller

How I Became a Spy: A Mystery of WWII London, by Deborah Hopkinson

ISBN: 978-0399557095

Bertie Bradshaw never set out to become a spy. He never imagined traipsing around war-torn London, solving ciphers, practicing surveillance, and searching for a traitor to the Allied forces. He certainly never expected that a strong-willed American girl named Eleanor would play Watson to his Holmes (or Holmes to his Watson, depending on who you ask).

But when a young woman goes missing, leaving behind a coded notebook, Bertie is determined to solve the mystery. With the help of Eleanor and his friend David, a Jewish refugee--and, of course, his trusty pup, Little Roo--Bertie must decipher the notebook in time to stop a double agent from spilling the biggest secret of all to the Nazis.

From the author of *The Great Trouble*, this suspenseful WWII adventure reminds us that times of war call for bravery, brains and teamwork from even the most unlikely heroes.