

# 2017 Middle School Summer Reading Suggestions

This list of recently released titles includes a wide variety of books to appeal to the interests and reading levels of many students. Parents are encouraged to review book selections with their children in order to help them make appropriate choices. Students may read books from this list over the summer or find a comparable book on their own they are interested in! Many of the authors listed offer other great titles. You will find many of these books at local public libraries, Amazon, or other bookstores. Also, be sure to check out Overdrive for eBooks and audiobooks.

Barnhill, Kelly Regan – ***The Girl Who Drank the Moon***

**\*\*2017 Newberry Medal Winner\*\***

Once a year in the Protectorate there is a Day of Sacrifice. The youngest baby is taken by the Elders and left in the forest to die, thus appeasing the witch who threatens to destroy the village if not obeyed. Unbeknownst to the people, Xan, the witch of the forest, is kind and compassionate. When she discovers the first baby left as a sacrifice, she has no idea why it has been abandoned. She rescues the infants, feeds each one starlight, and delivers the shining infants to parents in the Outside Cities who love and care for them. On one occasion, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight along with starlight, filling her with glowing magic. Xan is smitten with the beautiful baby girl, who has a crescent moon birthmark on her forehead, and chooses to raise her as her own child. Twists and turns emerge as the identity of the true evil witch becomes apparent. [Fantasy]

Benjamin, Ali – ***The Thing about Jellyfish***

After her best friend dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the true cause of the tragedy must have been a rare jellyfish sting--things don't just happen for no reason. Retreating into a silent world of imagination, she crafts a plan to prove her theory--even if it means traveling the globe, alone. Suzy's achingly heartfelt journey explores life, death, the astonishing wonder of the universe...and the potential for love and hope right next door. [Realistic Fiction]

Black, Holly - ***The Iron Trial***

All his life Callum Hunt has been warned by his father that practicing magic is a guaranteed death sentence, the only certain way to make sure he doesn't reach his 18th birthday. When Call is summoned to attend the entrance exams for The Magisterium, a more-sinister version of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft & Wizardry, he promises his father he will deliberately fail the test to avoid the dangerous lure of magic school. Unfortunately, magic is in Call's blood, and though his permanent limp and sarcastic attitude do not appear to serve him well during testing, he is selected with two other "Iron Years" to be a pupil of the greatest mage of all, Master Rufus. [Fantasy; Read the entire series!]

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker – ***The War that Saved My Life***

**\*\*2016 John Newbery Medal Honor Recipient and Schneider Family Book Award Winner\*\***

Nine-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So, when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute--she sneaks out to join him. So begins a new adventure of Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan--and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But, in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother? [Historical Fiction; Look for Book 2 in October 2017!]

Brown, Peter – ***The Wild Robot***

The crate containing ROZZUM unit 7134 wasn't meant to be shipwrecked on an island. Roz is baffled by the wildness of the environment, but her robot brain is programmed to learn and master tasks. She

## 2017 Middle School Summer Reading Suggestions

camouflages herself as clumps of seaweed, meadow flowers, and fallen logs to quietly observe and learn from the flora and fauna. Scared of the unknown, the animals initially think she's a monster and run in terror. But, Roz rescues a goose egg and reaches out to the animal community for help. Roz and the animals fall into a happy routine, but that bliss is broken by environmental and technological threats to the island. [Science Fiction; Look for Book 2 in October 2017!]

Colfer, Chris – *The Wishing Spell*

When Alex and Conner's father unexpectedly dies, the twins lose the person who always had the perfect story to cheer them up. Then, on their 12th birthday, their grandmother gives them the book of fairy tales he used to read to them. Suddenly it seems to come to life, and the youngsters find themselves falling into the Land of Stories, seemingly with no way to get out. Desperate, they follow instructions in a mysterious journal: if they gather eight items from various residents in the kingdoms of the Land of Stories, they can complete the Wishing Spell and have one wish granted. After scaling castle walls, diving deep into the home of mermaids, and meeting characters from all of the beloved fairy tales, they are stymied by the Evil Queen, who has escaped from Snow White's dungeon. [Fantasy; Read the entire series!]

Davis, Kenneth - *In the Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives*

\*\*2017 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction\*\*

Did you know that many of America's Founding Fathers—who fought for liberty and justice for all—were slave owners? Through the powerful stories of five enslaved people who were "owned" by four of our greatest presidents, this book helps set the record straight about the role slavery played in the founding of America. From Billy Lee, valet to George Washington, to Alfred Jackson, faithful servant of Andrew Jackson, these dramatic narratives explore our country's great tragedy—that a nation "conceived in liberty" was also born in shackles. These stories help us know the real people who were essential to the birth of this nation but traditionally have been left out of the history books. Their stories are true—and they should be heard. [Non-Fiction]

Eagar, Lindsay – *Hour of the Bees*

Like her friends, 12-year-old Carolina eschews most of the Mexican side of her Mexican American culture, shortening her name to Carol and flat-ironing her wild hair. But now she is being forced to spend the summer before her first year of junior high in middle-of-nowhere New Mexico, as her family prepares to move her ailing grandfather, a man she has never met before, off his land and into a home for people with dementia. At first, the summer is as dry as she thought it would be—her father, who hasn't been home in 12 years, is strained; her mother is stressed; and her older half sister is sullen. Then Grandfather Serge begins to tell her stories that sound half-crazed, about her grandmother's wanderlust and his own rootedness, and about a lake in the desert and a tree that made it so no one would ever die. In spite of herself, Carol is drawn into these stories, learning more about her family history, and becoming increasingly uncertain about the truth. [Realistic Fiction]

Freedman, Russell – *We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement that Defied Adolf Hitler*

In the heart of Germany, a student resistance movement called the White Rose took a courageous stand to denounce the Nazis. "They could have chosen to throw bombs," but the young members of the White Rose chose to oppose Nazi Germany with printed words. The clandestine student activists, including Hans and Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst, wrote leaflets decrying Nazi atrocities, urging German citizens to resist the Nazi government, and denouncing the Nazi "dictatorship of evil." Cranking out

## 2017 Middle School Summer Reading Suggestions

thousands of mimeographed leaflets at night in a secret cellar, the students proclaimed to Nazi leaders, "We are your bad conscience," imperiling their lives. [Non-Fiction]

### Hale, Nathan – *One Dead Spy: The Life, Times, and Last Words of Nathan Hale, America's Most Famous Spy*

Nathan Hale, the author's historical namesake, was America's first spy, a Revolutionary War hero who famously said, "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country" before being hanged by the British. In the Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales series, author Nathan Hale channels his namesake to present history's roughest, toughest, and craziest stories in the graphic novel format. *One Dead Spy* tackles the story of Hale himself, who was an officer and spy for the American rebels during the Revolutionary War. Author Hale highlights the unusual, gruesome, and just plain unbelievable truth of historical Nathan Hale--from his early unlucky days at Yale to his later unlucky days as an officer--and America during the Revolutionary War. [Graphic Novel; Read the entire series!]

### Hunt, Lynda Mullaly – *Fish in a Tree*

\*\*Schneider Family Book Award Winner\*\*

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her--and to everyone--than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike. [Realistic Fiction]

### Jamieson, Victoria – *Roller Girl*

\*\*2016 John Newbery Medal Honor Recipient\*\*

For most of her twelve years, Astrid has done everything with her best friend Nicole. But after Astrid falls in love with roller derby and signs up for derby camp, Nicole decides to go to dance camp instead. And so begins the most difficult summer of Astrid's life as she struggles to keep up with the older girls at camp, hang on to the friend she feels slipping away, and cautiously embark on a new friendship. As the end of summer nears and her first roller derby bout (and junior high!) draws closer, Astrid realizes that maybe she is strong enough to handle the bout, a lost friendship, and middle school... in short, strong enough to be a roller girl. [Graphic Novel]

### McCormick, Patricia - *The Plot to Kill Hitler: Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Unlikely Hero*

It was April 5, 1943, and the Gestapo would arrive any minute. Dietrich Bonhoeffer had been expecting this day for a long time. He had put his papers in order—and left a few notes specifically for Hitler's men to see. Two SS agents climbed the stairs and told the boyish-looking Bonhoeffer to come with them. He calmly said good-bye to his parents, put his Bible under his arm, and left. Upstairs there was proof, in his own handwriting, that this quiet young minister was part of a conspiracy to kill Adolf Hitler. This compelling, brilliantly researched account includes the remarkable discovery that Bonhoeffer was one of the first people to provide evidence to the Allies that Jews were being deported to death camps. It takes readers from his privileged early childhood to the studies and travel that would introduce him to peace activists around the world—eventually putting this gentle, scholarly pacifist on a deadly course to assassinate one of the most ruthless dictators in history. [Non-Fiction]

### Nielsen, Jennifer – *Mark of the Thief*

## 2017 Middle School Summer Reading Suggestions

When Nic, a slave in the mines outside of Rome, is forced to enter a sealed cavern containing the lost treasures of Julius Caesar, he finds much more than gold and gemstones: He discovers an ancient bulla, an amulet that belonged to the great Caesar and is filled with a magic once reserved for the Gods -- magic some Romans would kill for. Now, with the deadly power of the bulla pulsing through his veins, Nic is determined to become free. Instead, he finds himself at the center of a ruthless conspiracy to overthrow the emperor and spark the Praetor War, a battle to destroy Rome from within. Traitors and spies lurk at every turn, each more desperate than the next to use Nic's newfound powers for their own dark purposes. In a quest to stop the rebellion, save Rome, and secure his own freedom, Nic must harness the magic within himself and defeat the empire's most powerful and savage leaders. [Fantasy; Read the entire series]

Patterson, James – *House of Robots*

It was never easy for Sammy Hayes-Rodriguez to fit in, so he's dreading the day when his genius mom insists he bring her newest invention to school: a walking, talking robot he calls E--for "Error". Sammy's no stranger to robots--his house is full of a colorful cast of them. But this one not only thinks it's Sammy's brother... it's actually even nerdier than Sammy. Will he be Sammy's one-way ticket to Loserville? Or will he prove to the world that it's cool to be square? It's a roller-coaster ride for Sammy to discover the amazing secret E holds that could change family forever... if all goes well on the trial run! [Series Fiction; Look for more Middle School titles by James Patterson!]

Reynolds, Jason – *As Brave As You*

\*\*2017 Coretta Scott King Author Award Honor Book and Schneider Family Book Award \*\*

When 11-year-old worrywart Genie and his big brother, Ernie, leave Brooklyn and go to their grandparents' home in rural Virginia, it seems as though they have been dropped on another planet. The city boys are introduced to another way of life and to their blind grandfather, who goes to extreme lengths to conceal his disability. [Realistic Fiction]

Reynolds, Jason – *Ghost*

Castle "Ghost" Cranshaw has been running for three years, ever since the night his father shot a gun at him and his mother. When he is recruited by a local track coach for a championship team, they strike a deal: if Ghost can stop getting into fights at school, he can run for the Defenders, but one altercation and he's gone. Despite Ghost's best intentions, everyone always has something to say about his raggedy shoes, homemade haircut, ratty clothes, or his neighborhood, and he doesn't last 24 hours without a brawl. Will Coach and his mom give him another chance to be part of something bigger than himself, or is he simply destined to explode? [Realistic Fiction; Look for Book 2 in August 2017]

Riordan, Rick – *The Sword of Summer*

Magnus Chase has always been a troubled kid. Since his mother's mysterious death, he's lived alone on the streets of Boston, surviving by his wits, keeping one-step ahead of the police and the truant officers. One day, he's tracked down by an uncle he barely knows--a man his mother claimed was dangerous. Uncle Randolph tells him an impossible secret: Magnus is the son of a Norse god. The Viking myths are true. The gods of Asgard are preparing for war. Trolls, giants and worse monsters are stirring for doomsday. To prevent Ragnarok, Magnus must search the Nine Worlds for a weapon that has been lost for thousands of years. When an attack by fire giants forces him to choose between his own safety and the lives of hundreds of innocents, Magnus makes a fatal decision. Sometimes, the only way to start a new life is to die... [Fantasy; Read the rest of the series!]

Stelson, Caren – *Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story*

\*\*2017 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award Honor\*\*

## 2017 Middle School Summer Reading Suggestions

Sachiko Yasui was just six years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on her hometown of Nagasaki. On August 9, 1945, she went from playing house with her friends to burying them. Yasui also lost a brother that day and would lose many more family members because of radiation sickness. Growing up, she was ostracized for her status as hibakusha, a bomb survivor. Despite her trauma and the bullying she faced, Yasui endured. She sought out inspiration from the likes of Helen Keller, Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr. Their works allowed her to make peace with the events in her life. [Non-Fiction]

### Telgemeier, Raina – *Ghosts*

Catrina and her family have just moved to Northern California. Bahía de la Luna is different from Cat's hometown-for one thing, everyone is obsessed with ghosts-but the sea air makes it easier for Cat's younger sister, Maya, who has cystic fibrosis (CF), to breathe. Carlos, a new friend and neighbor, introduces the girls to a different perspective on the spiritual world. Ghosts, he says, are not frightening; they're the spirits of loved ones. Cat has her doubts-especially after a ghostly encounter puts Maya in the hospital-but as Day of the Dead celebrations draw closer, she starts to reconsider. [Graphic Novel; Look for more great titles by this author!]

### Wolk, Lauren – *Wolf Hollow*

\*\*2017 Newberry Award Honor Book\*\*

Eleven-year-old Annabelle lives in a rural Pennsylvania community in 1943. The continued fighting of World War II haunts everyone, but life is mostly peaceful-until Betty Glengarry's arrival. Betty is cruel and threatening and thrives on inflicting pain. At first, Annabelle is slightly comforted to know that Toby is watching out for her. Toby is a local vagabond, a World War I veteran of few words who has become something like a friend of Annabelle's family. Meanwhile, Betty's violent malice only grows, until one day she goes missing. Toby immediately becomes the prime suspect in Betty's disappearance. Annabelle is sure of Toby's innocence and is determined to prove it. [Historical Fiction]

### Yousafzai, Malala – *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World*

Malala Yousafzai was only ten years old when the Taliban took control of her region. They said music was a crime. They said women weren't allowed to go to the market. They said girls couldn't go to school. Raised in a once-peaceful area of Pakistan transformed by terrorism, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believes. So, she fought for her right to be educated. And on October 9, 2012, she nearly lost her life for the cause: She was shot point-blank while riding the bus on her way home from school. No one expected her to survive. Now Malala is an international symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize winner. Malala's powerful story will open your eyes to another world and will make you believe in hope, truth, miracles and the possibility that one person -- one young person -- can inspire change in her community and beyond. [Non-Fiction]

### Great Authors!

Kwame Alexander	Katherine Applegate	Holly Black	Chris Colfer	Kate DiCamillo
Jeanne DuPrau	John Flanagan	S.E. Golden	Tim Green	Nathan Hale
Jeff Kinney	Gordon Korman	Mike Lupica	Brandon Mull	Jennifer Nielsen
Lauren Oliver	James Patterson	Renee Russell	Rick Riordan	Tui Sutherland