

## Summer Book Selections Grade 8 - 2017

Your summer goal is to read at least **three** books. Following is a list of suggestions. However, all three books may be of your own choosing. Our focus is on student reading engagement. Books marked with an \* may be borrowed in either eBook or digital audiobook format from the NAMS 24/7/365 Virtual Library.

### RAISE: (These books connect to our R.A.I.S.E. initiative)

Montgomery, L. M. *Anne of Green Gables*

- Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her.

Montgomery, Sy. *Temple Grandin: How the Girl Who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World*

- A portrait about Temple Grandin's life with autism and her groundbreaking work as a scientist and designer of cruelty-free livestock facilities describes how she overcame key disabilities through education and the support of her mother.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Maniac Magee*

- After his parents die, Jeffrey Lionel Magee's life becomes legendary, as he accomplishes athletic and other feats which awe his contemporaries.

Additional suggestions of books connecting to our R.A.I.S.E. initiative are included in the [Superintendent's Summer Reading Challenge](#).

### Contemporary

Reynolds, Jason. *Ghost*

- *Ghost* wants to be the fastest sprinter on his elite middle school track team, but his past is slowing him down in this first electrifying novel in a new series from Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award-winning author Jason Reynolds.

Lai, Thanhha. *Listen, Slowly*

- *Listen, Slowly* is a *New York Times Book Review* Notable Book and a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year! This remarkable and bestselling novel from Thanhha Lai, author of the National Book Award-winning and Newbery Honor Book *Inside Out & Back Again*, follows a young girl as she learns the true meaning of family.

Alexander, Kwame. *Booked* \*

- In this follow-up to the Newbery-winning novel *THE CROSSOVER*, soccer, family, love, and friendship take center stage as twelve-year-old Nick learns the power of words as he wrestles with problems at home, stands up to a bully, and tries to impress the girl of his

dreams. Helping him along are his best friend and sometimes teammate Coby, and The Mac, a rapping librarian who gives Nick inspiring books to read.

DiCamillo, Kate. *Raymie Nightingale* \*

- A 2016 National Book Award Finalist!  
Two-time Newbery Medalist Kate DiCamillo returns to her roots with a moving, masterful story of an unforgettable summer friendship.

Roth, Veronica. The *Divergent Trilogy* (#1 - *Divergent*; #2 - *Insurgent*; #3 - *Allegiant*)

- In a future Chicago, sixteen-year-old Beatrice Prior must choose among five predetermined factions to define her identity for the rest of her life, a decision made more difficult when she discovers that she is an anomaly who does not fit into any one group, and that the society she lives in is not perfect after all.

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner Trilogy* (#1 - *The Maze Runner*; #2 - *The Scorch Trials*; #3 - *The Death Cure*; Prequel - *The Kill Order*)

- Sixteen-year-old Thomas wakes up with no memory in the middle of a maze and realizes he must work with the community in which he finds himself if he is to escape.

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games Trilogy* (#1 - *The Hunger Games*; #2 - *Catching Fire*; #3 - *Mockingjay*)

- Survival is second nature for sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who struggles to feed her mother and younger sister by secretly hunting and gathering beyond the fences of District 12.

Riordan, Rick. The *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* \* series (#1 - *The Lightning Thief*; #2 - *The Sea of Monsters*; #3 - *The Titan's Curse*; #4 - *The Battle of the Labyrinth*; #5 - *The Last Olympian*)

- A young boy finds that due to a hereditary link, he has powers beyond his belief that will lead him to becoming part of an extraordinary group of friends and take him onto incredible adventures!
- This series leads into *The Heroes of Olympus* \* series

Riordan, Rick. *The Kane Chronicles* \* series (#1 - *The Red Pyramid*, #2 - *The Throne of Fire*, #3 - *The Serpent's Shadow*)

- This series dives into ancient Egyptian Mythology and is based on the adventures of a young boy, Carter Kane, and his sister Sadie....taking Carter and Sadie on a series of adventures through their world, and a dark journey to the House of Life.

Lupica, Mike.

- *Million-Dollar Throw* - Eighth-grade star quarterback Nate Brodie is frantic to win a million dollars by completing a pass during the halftime of a New England Patriot's game to help his family and his best friend Abby who is going blind.
- *Last Man Out* - Twelve-year-old Tommy Gallagher, the bravest and toughest football player on the field, faces his biggest battle ever when his father, a Boston firefighter, is fatally injured while rescuing a child.

- **Fantasy League** - In Los Angeles, twelve-year-old Charlie's skill at fantasy football gains the attention of both the local media and the owner of a professional football team.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Flipped*

- In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years. As the characters develop, there are many twists and turns, leading them to an understanding of how a strong friendship is necessary to have a stronger relationship.

Cooper, Susan. *The Dark is Rising Sequence* (#1 - *Over Sea, Under Stone*; #2 - *The Dark is Rising*; #3 - *Greenwitch*; #4 - *The Grey King*; #5 - *Silver on the Tree*)

- Three siblings on vacation in Cornwall find an ancient manuscript which sends them on a dangerous quest that entraps them in the eternal battle between the forces of the Light and the Dark.

Green, John.

- *Fault in Our Stars* - Sixteen-year-old Hazel, a stage IV thyroid cancer patient, has accepted her terminal diagnosis until a chance meeting with a boy at her cancer support group forces her to reexamine her perspective on love, loss, and life.
- *An Abundance of Katherines* - Having been recently dumped for the nineteenth time by a girl named Katherine, recent high school graduate and former child prodigy Colin sets off on a road trip with his best friend to try to find some new direction in life while also trying to create a mathematical formula to explain his relationships.
- *Paper Towns* - One month before graduating from his Central Florida high school, Quentin 'Q' Jacobsen basks in the predictable boringness of his life until Margo Roth Spiegelman, Q's neighbor and classmate, takes him on a midnight adventure and then mysteriously disappears.

## Historical Fiction

Hunt, Irene. *Across Five Aprils*

- Young Jethro Creighton grows from a boy to a man when he is left to take care of the family farm in Illinois during the difficult years of the Civil War.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*

- The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963.

Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

- This novel explores life in Depression-era Mississippi as lived by an African-American family, the Logans. The Logans are fortunate; they own their own land in a time and place when many—black and white—are living as sharecroppers on various plantations and racially-motivated crimes are common. Focusing on Cassie Logan (the narrator), the story also is a "coming of age" story as Cassie learns "the way things are".

Anderson, Laurie Halse. The *Seeds of America Trilogy* (#1 - *Chains*; #2 - *Forge*; #3 - *Ashes*)

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

Yep, Laurence. *Dragonwings*

- In this book, Laurence Yep tells and explains the story from the point of view of a young boy named Moon Shadow Lee, or in the Chinese order, Lee Moon Shadow. Moon Shadow grew up never seeing his father, because he had traveled to "The Land of the Golden Mountain" in America and worked hard for "white demons" (Americans). Eventually, Moon Shadow is reunited with his father and receives a few wonderful gifts as he helps him realize his dream of making a flying machine.

## Nonfiction

Murphy, Jim. *The Crossing: How George Washington Saved the American Revolution*

- Presents an account of a landmark event in American history in which the future first U.S. president emerges as a military leader while working to transform a ragtag army into an effective fighting force.

Aronson, Marc and Budhos, Marina. *Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science*

- Traces the panoramic story of the sweet substance and its important role in shaping world history. This well-researched book includes the use of primary source materials and provides a new way to look at world events from ancient times to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Biography / Autobiography

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*

- A memoir and treatise on abolition written by famous orator and ex-slave, Frederick Douglass. It is generally held to be the most famous of a number of narratives written by former slaves during the same period. In factual detail, the text describes the events of his life and is considered to be one of the most influential pieces of literature to fuel the abolitionist movement of the early 19th century in the United States.

Petry, Ann. *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad*

- A biography on the travels of Harriet Tubman and her development of the "Underground Railroad" as a way to help slaves escape the south to live in the north.

Steinbeck, John. *Travels with Charley: In Search of America*

- A travelogue written by American author John Steinbeck. It recounts tales of a 1960 road trip with his French standard poodle, Charley, around the United States. He wrote that he was moved by a desire to see his country on a personal level, since he made his living writing about it. He wrote of having many questions going into his journey, the main one being, "What are Americans like today?" However, he found that the "new America" did not live up to his expectations.

Sheinkin, Steve. *The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery*

- Provides a biography of America's first traitor - Benedict Arnold - that reads like an adventure tale, and is full of heroism, treachery, battle scenes and surprising twists.

Sheinkin, Steve. *Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team*

- In the early 20th century, Jim Thorpe was often considered the "greatest all-around athlete in the world." Combining his story with that of Pop Warner and the early days of football, this is a well-researched and fascinating biography.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Brown Girl Dreaming\**

- In vivid poems that reflect the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, an award-winning author shares what it was like to grow up in the 1960s and 1970s in both the North and the South. This is a beautifully written memoir of growing up with racial discrimination and other challenges, and the power of family love and holding on to your dreams.

## Classics/Poetry

We suggest reading poetry by the following poets:

- \*Robert Frost
- Paul Fleischman
- Marguerite Engle
- Paul Janeczko
- Marilyn Nelson
- Naomi Shihab

Wyss, Johann David. *The Swiss Family Robinson*

- Relates the fortunes of a shipwrecked family as they adapt to life on an island with abundant animal and plant life.

London, Jack. *Call of the Wild*

- The adventures of an unusual dog, part St. Bernard, part Scotch shepherd that is forcibly taken to the Klondike gold fields where he eventually becomes the leader of a wolf pack.

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women*

- The book was written and set in the Alcott family home, Orchard House, in Concord, Massachusetts. The novel follows the lives of four sisters - Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy March - and is loosely based on the author's childhood experiences with her three sisters.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

- An 1876 novel about a young boy growing up along the Mississippi River. The story is set in the Town of "St. Petersburg", inspired by Hannibal, Missouri, where Mark Twain lived. The audience follows Tom Sawyer through adventures and his attempt (along with Huckleberry Finn) to take back a treasure.

**Note:** If you are interested in reading books on a mobile device, check out the *NAMS 24/7/365*

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