

## **Suggestions for Additional Summer Reading for Middle School Students (grades 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>)**

### **Smith Betty. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn.***

Fiction

First published: 1943.

Young Francie Nolan experiences the problems of growing up in a Brooklyn, New York slum.

### **Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer***

Fiction

First published: 1876

The adventures and pranks of a mischievous boy growing up in a nineteenth-century Mississippi River town as he plays hookey on an island, witnesses a crime, hunts for pirate treasure, and becomes lost in a cave

### **Greene, Bette. *The Summer of My German Soldier.***

Fiction

Published: 1973

Sheltering an escaped German prisoner of war is the beginning of some shattering experiences for a 12-year-old Jewish girl in Arkansas.

A 1973 National Book Award Finalist

An ALA Notable Book

A New York Times Outstanding Book of the Year

### **Peck, Richard. *A Long Way from Chicago: A Novel in Stories.***

Fiction

These seven stories tell of the seven summers that Joey and his sister Mary Alice spend with their no nonsense grandmother in rural Illinois during the Depression. As she interacts with the colorful characters of her small rural town, Grandma continually astonishes her grandchildren with her outrageous schemes and humorous antics.

### **George, Jean Craighead. *My Side of the Mountain.* originally**

Fiction

Published: 1959

A young boy relates his adventures during the year he spends living alone in the Catskill Mountains, including his struggle for survival, his dependence on nature, his animal friends, and his ultimate realization that he needs human companionship.

### **Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island.***

Fiction, Adventure

First published 1883.

After finding a treasure map on a deceased guest, Jim Hawkins sets sail to find a pirate's treasure. Among the crew members are pirates also looking to discover the treasure.

### **Cushman, Karen. *Catherine, Called Birdy* (Trophy Newbery)**

Grade 6-9-This unusual book provides an insider's look at the life of Birdy, 14, the daughter of a minor English nobleman. The year is 1290 and the vehicle for storytelling is the girl's

witty, irreverent diary. She looks with a clear and critical eye upon the world around her, telling of the people she knows and of the daily events in her small manor house.

**Keyes, Daniel.** *Flowers for Algernon*

**Susan Eloise Hinton.** *The Outsiders*

**Deborah Ellis.** *The Breadwinner*

Living in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, Parvana's family relies on her after her father is arrested. Cutting her hair short and donning boy's clothing, she leaves home daily to earn enough money for her family to buy food.

**Elizabeth Cody Kimmel.** *Ice Story: Shackleton's Lost Expedition*

The suspenseful true story of the 1914 Shackleton Antarctic expedition where their ship, The Endurance, was crushed in a frozen sea and the men were forced into a perilous journey over ice and stormy seas to reach inhabited land.

**Cooper, Susan.** *King of Shadows*

While in London preparing to perform in a replica of the famous Globe Theater, Nat Field falls ill and awakens to find himself in London at the time of Queen Elizabeth, where he is to be part of A Midsummer Night's Dream under the direction of William Shakespeare, himself. 186 pgs.

**Salinger, J.D.** *The Catcher in the Rye.*

**O'Brien, Tim.** *The Things They Carried.*

**Bober, N.** *Restless Spirit - The Story of Robert Frost*

Non-Fiction

**Bohner.** *Bold Journey: West with Lewis and Clark*

Historical Fiction

What sets this story apart from other fictionalized accounts of the Lewis & Clark Expedition is its unique perspective. Written from the point of view of a young member of the Corps of Discovery, Bold Journey is an insightful and absorbing narrative of the famed Mississippi-to-Pacific expedition as experienced by the men who lived it. As young Hugh chronicles the adventures, the hardships, and the occasional boredom of this monumental journey, he offers vivid glimpses into the personalities of Lewis and Clark. He also begins to grow in his understanding of people who are different from himself.

**HEYERDAHL, T.** *Kon-Tiki*

Non-fiction

**TAYLOR, M.** *Let the Circle Be Unbroken*

Multi-cultural

**F. Temple. *Taste of Salt***

Multi-cultural

This arresting first novel presents a powerful fictional portrait of the poverty and oppression in contemporary Haiti. Seventeen-year-old Djo, one of Jean-Bertrand Aristide's bodyguards, has been badly beaten by the macoutes, violent members of Duvalier's private army. While Djo is recovering in the hospital, Fr. Aristide convinces him to dictate his life story to a girl scribe named Jeremie. Djo reveals the key events of his childhood in brutally vivid detail: he left home early because his mother had too many mouths to feed; he taught reading to younger boys at Aristide's shelter; he was kidnapped and sold into slavery as a sugar cane worker. In the person of Djo, Temple has successfully created a martyr for the people. His narrative contains a smattering of social and political insights as well as excerpts from Aristide's motivational writings and speeches. Djo's and Jeremie's dialect is never cumbersome for the reader--a glossary appears at the end of the book--and lends authenticity to their accounts. Djo's extraordinary experiences and circumstances shed harsh light on a people in crisis. Ages 12-up.

**Hurston's. *Their Eyes Were Watching God***

The novel follows the fortunes of Janie Crawford, a woman living in the black town of Eaton, Florida. Hurston sets up her characters and her locale in the first chapter, which, along with the last, acts as a framing device for the story of Janie's life. It was the time for sitting on porches beside the road. It was the time to hear things and talk. These sitters had been tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long. Mules and other brutes had occupied their skins. But now, the sun and the bossman were gone, so the skins felt powerful and human. They became lords of sounds and lesser things. They passed nations through their mouths. They sat in judgment.

One person the citizens of Eaton are inclined to judge is Janie Crawford, who has married three men and been tried for the murder of one of them. Janie feels no compulsion to justify herself to the town, but she *does* explain herself to her friend, Phoeby, with the implicit understanding that Phoeby can "tell 'em what Ah say if you wants to. Dat's just de same as me 'cause mah tongue is in mah friend's mouf."

**Deem, James M. *Bodies from the Ash: Life and Death in Ancient Pompeii***

Details the events that occurred when Mount Vesuvius erupted and buried Pompeii in 79 A.D., focusing on how this information was deduced from the skeletons found by archaeologists at the site.

**Bishop, Nic. *Digging for Bird-Dinosaurs: An Expedition to Madagascar***

The story of Cathy Forster's experiences as a member of a team of paleontologists who went on an expedition to the island of Madagascar in 1998 to search for clues to the mystery of bird evolution.

**North, Sterling. *George Washington, Frontier Colonel***

Chronicles the early life of George Washington, from his childhood years in Virginia, his career as a surveyor, his early victories in the French and Indian War, and his assumption of the leadership of the Continental Army during the Revolution.

**Murphy, Jim. *The Great Fire***

A vivid account of the catastrophe that decimated much of Chicago in 1871, forcing more than 100,000 people from their homes.

**Choldenko, Gennifer.** *Al Capone Does My Shirts*

A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935, when guards' families were housed there, and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister.

**Murphy.** *The Boys` War: Confederate and Union Soldiers Talk About the Civil War*

Includes diary entries, personal letters, and archival photographs to describe the experiences of boys, sixteen years old or younger, who fought in the Civil War.

**Giblin, James Cross.** *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*

Most people know the name John Wilkes Booth, but few likely have heard of his elder brother Edwin. Find out about the brothers through first-hand accounts. Learn how alike and how different they were, and how each made a lasting impression on American history.

**Sloan, Christopher.** *The Human Story: Our Evolution From Prehistoric Ancestors to Today*

Explores the origins of humans, including how such developments as Linnaeus' classification system and recent understanding of the human genome have improved scientists' comprehension of evolution.

**McCaughrean, Geraldine.** *The Kite Ride*

In the colorful, dangerous world of 13th-century China, 12-year-old Haoyou escapes from his family's poverty by becoming a kite rider.

**Wells, Rosemary.** *Red Moon at Sharpsburg*

As the Civil War breaks out, India, a young Southern girl, summons her sharp intelligence and the courage she didn't know she had to survive the war that threatens to destroy her family, her Virginia home, and the only life she has ever known.

**McClafferty, Carla Killough.** *Something Out of Nothing: Marie Curie and Radium*

Meet Manya Sklodowska, better known today as Marie Curie, the co-discoverer of radium, and who became the first woman awarded the Nobel prize for her work on the discovery.

**Maurer, Richard.** *The Wright Sister: Katharine Wright and her Famous Brothers*

Richard Maurer's account of this little-known but pivotal member of the Wright family is based on an in-depth study of her personal papers and of the Wright family archives.

**Dickinson, Peter.** *A Bone From a Dry Sea*

In two parallel stories, a young female member of a prehistoric tribe becomes instrumental in advancing her people, and a present-day girl visits her paleontologist father on a dig in Africa where they discover important fossil remains.

**Pierson, Stephanie.** *Vegetables Rock!: A Complete Guide for Teenage Vegetarians*

Offering great advice to the more than two million newly vegetarian teenagers is this

reliable source for nutritional information, vegetarian values, recipes and cooking tips.

**Ainbinder, Delia.** *We Just Want to Live Here: A Palestinian Teenager, an Israeli Teenager: An Unlikely Friendship*

An unsparing--yet hopeful--account of what it means to grow up in Jerusalem today as told through the candid exchange of letters between a Palestinian teenager and an Israeli teenager.

**DiCamillo, Kate.** *Because of Winn-Dixie*

Opal describes all the good things that happen because of her big, ugly dog, Winn-Dixie.

**Sullivan, George.** *Built to Last: Building America's Amazing Bridges, Dams, Tunnels, and Skyscrapers*

Built to last profiles 17 architectural and engineering marvels, from the Erie Canal to Boston's Big Dig.

**Burns, Loree Griffin.** *Tracking Trash: Flotsam, Jetsam, and the Science of Ocean Motion*

Describes the work of a man who tracks trash as it travels great distances by way of ocean currents.

**Tomecek, Steve.** *What a Great Idea!: Inventions That Changed the World*

From the hand ax and mathematics to IC chips and the laser, each technological touchstone in human history is described and placed in historical context.

**Dennis B. Fradin.** *With a Little Luck: Surprising Stories of Amazing Discoveries*

From Isaac Newton's sudden grasp of gravity to Alexander Fleming's chance development of penicillin, this collection reveals the thrilling stories behind 11 monumental discoveries, as well as the tragedies and triumphs of the fascinating men and women behind these advances.

**Chaim Potok.** *The Chosen*

In 1940s Brooklyn, two boys who have grown up within a few blocks of each other, but in entirely different worlds, meet for the first time in a bizarre encounter -- a baseball game between two Jewish parochial schools that turns into a holy war. With dramatic force and simplicity that seizes the heart, *The Chosen* depicts the powerful bonds of love and pain that join father and son, the communions and quarrels of friendship, the true religionist's love of God, and the tumults by which the heart is made human.

**L. Frank Baum.** *The Wizard of Oz*

Here is the original book that started the wonderful series and inspired the famous movie! After being transported by a cyclone to the magical land of Oz, Dorothy and her dog, Toto, are befriended by a scarecrow, a tin man, and a cowardly lion who accompany her to the Emerald City in search of a wizard who can help Dorothy return home to Kansas.

**Will Hobbs.** *The Maze*

Stowing away in the back of a pickup, Rick, a 14-year-old foster child, escapes from a juvenile detention facility near Las Vegas and travels to Canyonlands National Park in Utah.

There, he finds himself in a dead end in the surreal landscape of redrock spires and deep canyons called the Maze, and is taken in by an eccentric naturalist who is working on a project to reintroduce condors to the wild.

**Alcott, Louisa M. *Little Women***

The March family endures trials and tribulations while their father is involved in the Civil War.

**Funke, Cornelia. *Inkheart***

Meggie lives alone with her father, a bookbinder, who has the “gift” of reading aloud and bringing the characters to life – literally. When Dustfinger comes to life on a dark and stormy night, their quiet lives change forever. The captivating fantasy continues in **INKSPELL**.

**Selznick, Brian. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret***

When twelve-year-old Hugo, an orphan living and repairing clocks within the walls of a Paris train station in 1931, meets a mysterious toy seller and his goddaughter, his undercover life and his biggest secret are jeopardized. This is the winner of the 2008 Caldecott Medal. (F)

**Sleator, William. *The Boxes***

Annie’s uncle asks her to keep a close watch over two exotic boxes while he goes on a mysterious trip. He said that she must not open them while he is gone. What would it hurt to take a peek inside?