



## Neshaminy School District Recommended Summer Reading List Grades 5-8

The Neshaminy School District has created a list of recommended titles to help students make selections for their summer reading. The purpose of summer reading is to foster continued reading and encourage a lifelong love of literacy. The books below each grade level are intended to provide guidance and are not required texts.

### Recommended Summer Reading 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### Fiction/Realistic Fiction

Title	Author	Description
<i>The One and Only Ivan</i>	Katherine Applegate	Inspired by a true story. Having spent twenty-seven years behind the glass walls of his enclosure in a shopping mall, Ivan has grown accustomed to humans watching him. He hardly ever thinks about his life in the jungle. Instead, Ivan occupies himself with television, his friends Stella and Bob, and painting. But when he meets Ruby, a baby elephant taken from the wild, he is forced to see their home, and his art, through new eyes.
<i>Hope Was Here</i>	Joan Bauer	When Hope and her aunt move to small-town Wisconsin to take over the local diner, Hope's not sure what to expect. But what they find is that the owner, G.T., isn't quite ready to give up yet--in fact, he's decided to run for mayor against a corrupt candidate. And as Hope starts to make her place at the diner, she also finds herself caught up in G.T.'s campaign--particularly his visions for the future. After all, as G.T. points out, everyone can use a little hope to help get through the tough times . . . even Hope herself.
<i>Schooled</i>	Gordon Korman	Capricorn Cap Anderson has been homeschooled by his hippie grandmother, Rain. When Rain is injured in a fall, Cap is forced to attend the local middle school. Although he knows a lot about Zen Buddhism, nothing has prepared him for the politics of public school.
<i>The Batboy</i>	Mike Lupica	Brian is living every baseball kid's dream: he is a batboy for his hometown Major League team. Brian believes that it's the perfect thing to bring him and his big-leaguer dad closer together. And if that weren't enough, this is the season that Hank Bishop, Brian's baseball hero, returns to the Tigers for the comeback of a lifetime. The summer couldn't get much better! Until Hank Bishop starts to show his true colors, and Brian learns that sometimes life throws you a curveball.
<i>Wonderstruck</i>	Brian Selznick	Ben and Rose secretly wish their lives were different. Ben longs for the father he has never known. Rose dreams of a mysterious actress whose life she chronicles in a scrapbook. When Ben discovers a puzzling clue in his mother's room and Rose reads an enticing headline in the newspaper, both children set out alone on desperate quests to find what they are missing.

## Historical Fiction

Title	Author	Description
<i>Souder</i>	William Armstrong	During the difficult years of the nineteenth century South, an African American boy and his poor family rarely have enough to eat. Each night, the boy's father takes their dog, Souder, out to look for food and the man grows more desperate by the day. When food suddenly appears on the table one morning, it seems like a blessing. But the sheriff and his deputies are not far behind. The ever-loyal Souder remains determined to help the family he loves as hard times bear down on them.
<i>Bud, Not Buddy</i>	Christopher Paul Curtis	It's 1936, in Flint Michigan. Times may be hard, and ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, but Bud's got a few things going for him: 1. He has his own suitcase full of special things. 2. He's the author of <i>Bud Caldwell's Rules and Things for Having a Funner Life and Making a Better Liar Out of Yourself</i> . 3. His momma never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: flyers advertising Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression! Bud's got an idea that those flyers will lead him to his father. Once he decides to hit the road to find this mystery man, nothing can stop him—not hunger, not fear, not vampires, not even Herman E. Calloway himself.
<i>Weedflower</i>	Cynthia Kadohata	Twelve-year-old Sumiko feels her life has been made up of two parts: before Pearl Harbor and after it. The good part and the bad part. Raised on a flower farm in California, Sumiko is used to being the only Japanese girl in her class. Even when the other kids tease her, she always has had her flowers and family to go home to. That all changes after the horrific events of Pearl Harbor. Other Americans start to suspect that all Japanese people are spies for the emperor, even if, like Sumiko, they were born in the United States! As suspicions grow, Sumiko and her family find themselves being shipped to an internment camp in one of the hottest deserts in the United States.
<i>Esperanza Rising</i>	Pam Munoz Ryan	Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.
<i>Journey to Topaz</i>	Yoshiko Uchida	Based on Yoshiko Uchida's personal experiences, this is the moving story of one girl's struggle to remain brave during the Japanese internment of World War II. In a bleak and dusty prison camp, eleven-year-old Yuki and her family experience both true friendship and heart-wrenching tragedy.
<i>The Devil's Arithmetic</i>	Jane Yolen	Hannah is tired of holiday gatherings—all her family ever talks about is the past. In fact, it seems to her that's what they do every Jewish holiday. But this year's Passover Seder will be different—Hannah will be mysteriously transported into the past . . . and only she knows the unspeakable horrors that await.

## Science Fiction

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Among the Hidden (or other books in this series)</i>	Margaret Peterson Haddix	In a future where the Population Police enforce the law limiting a family to only two children, Luke, an illegal third child, has lived all his twelve years in isolation and fear on his family's farm in this start to the Shadow Children series from Margaret Peterson Haddix.
<i>The City of Ember (or other books in this series)</i>	Jeanne Duprau	In the year 241, twelve-year-old Lina trades jobs on Assignment Day to be a Messenger to run to new places in her decaying but beloved city, perhaps even to glimpse Unknown Regions.

### **Fantasy**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Tuck Everlasting</i>	Natalie Babbitt	<i>What if you could live forever?</i> Is eternal life a blessing or a curse? That is what young Winnie Foster must decide when she discovers a spring on her family's property whose waters grant immortality. Members of the Tuck family, having drunk from the spring, tell Winnie of their experiences watching life go by and never growing older. But then Winnie must decide whether or not to keep the Tucks' secret—and whether or not to join them on their never-ending journey.
<i>Artemis Fowl</i>	Eoin Colfer	Twelve-year-old Artemis Fowl is a millionaire, a genius-and, above all, a criminal mastermind. But even Artemis doesn't know what he's taken on when he kidnaps a fairy, Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon Unit. These aren't the fairies of bedtime stories; these fairies are armed and dangerous.
<i>Gregor the Overlander</i>	Suzanne Collins	When Gregor falls through a grate in the laundry room of his apartment building, he hurtles into the dark Underland, where spiders, rats, cockroaches coexist uneasily with humans. This world is on the brink of war, and Gregor's arrival is no accident.
<i>Inkheart</i>	Cornelia Funke	One cruel night, Meggie's father reads aloud from a book called INKHEART-- and an evil ruler escapes the boundaries of fiction and lands in their living room. Suddenly, Meggie is smack in the middle of the kind of adventure she has only read about in books. Meggie must learn to harness the magic that has conjured this nightmare. For only she can change the course of the story that has changed her life forever.
<i>Warriors: Into the Wild (or other books in this series)</i>	Erin Hunter	For generations, four Clans of wild cats have shared the forest according to the laws laid down by their ancestors. But the warrior code has been threatened, and the ThunderClan cats are in grave danger. The sinister ShadowClan grows stronger every day. Noble warriors are dying—and some deaths are more mysterious than others.
<i>The Lightning Thief</i>	Rick Riordan	Percy Jackson is a good kid, but he can't seem to focus on his schoolwork or control his temper. And lately, being away at boarding school is only getting worse-Percy could have sworn his pre-algebra teacher turned into a monster and tried to kill him. When Percy's mom finds out, she knows it's time that he knew the truth about where he came from, and that he go to the one place he'll be safe.

<i>Eragon</i>	Christopher Paolini	Fifteen-year-old Eragon believes that he is merely a poor farm boy until his destiny as a Dragon Rider is revealed. Gifted with only an ancient sword, a loyal dragon, and sage advice from an old storyteller, Eragon is soon swept into a dangerous tapestry of magic, glory, and power. Now his choices could save-or destroy- the Empire.
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### Humor/Short Stories

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key (or other books in this series)</i>	Jack Gantos	Joey Pigza's got heart, he's got a mom who loves him, and he's got "dud meds," which is what he calls the Ritalin pills that are supposed to even out his wild mood swings. Sometimes Joey makes bad choices. He learns the hard way that he shouldn't stick his finger in the pencil sharpener, or swallow his house key, or run with scissors. Joey ends up bouncing around a lot - and eventually he bounces himself all the way downtown, into the district special-ed program, which could be the end of the line.
<i>No More Dead Dogs</i>	Gordon Korman	Nobody understands Wallace Wallace. This reluctant school football hero has been suspended from the team for writing an unfavorable book report of Old Shep, My Pal. But Wallace won't tell a lie -- he hated every minute of the book! Why does the dog in every classic novel have to croak at the end? After refusing to do a rewrite, his English teacher, who happens to be directing the school play Old Shep, My Pal, forces him go to the rehearsals as punishment. Although Wallace doesn't change his mind, he does end up changing the play into a rock-and-roll rendition, complete with Rollerblades and a moped!
<i>Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life (or other books in this series)</i>	James Patterson	Rafe's plan to break every rule in the school handbook is soon out of his control. *First book in the series.

### Mystery

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Loot</i>	Jude Watson	On a foggy night in Amsterdam, a man falls from a rooftop to the wet pavement below. It's Alfie McQuinn, the notorious cat burglar, and he's dying. As sirens wail in the distance, Alfie manages to get out two last words to his young son, March: "Find jewels."  But March learns that his father is not talking about a stash of loot. He's talking about Jules, the twin sister March never knew he

		had. No sooner than the two find each other, they're picked up by the police and sent to the world's worst orphanage. It's not prison, but it feels like it.
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### Non-Fiction

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</i>	Eleanor Coerr	The star of her school's running team, Sadako is lively and athletic...until the dizzy spells start. Then she must face the hardest race of her life—the race against time. Based on a true story, <i>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</i> celebrates the courage that makes one young woman a heroine in Japan.
<i>Titanic: Voices From the Disaster</i>	Deborah Hopkinson	Survivors' accounts bring the Titanic disaster to life.
<i>Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays</i>	Peg Kehret	A collection of true stories about the amazing lives of eight shelter dogs. Many of these dogs were unwanted because of their size, behavior, or medical condition. All of the dogs found owners who loved and cared for them.
<i>Small Steps: The Year I got Polio</i>	Peg Kehret	In a riveting story of courage and hope, Peg Kehret writes about months spent in a hospital when she was twelve, first struggling to survive a severe case of polio, then slowly learning to walk again.
<i>Stay: The True Story of Ten Dogs</i>	Michaela Muntean	Meet Luciano Anastasini, a man who calls the circus home. Meet ten dogs that have no home. When fate brings man and dogs together, a remarkable story of belief and second chances unfolds.

## Recommended Summer Reading 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Realistic Fiction

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Crossover</i>	Kwame Alexander	Twelve-Year-Old Josh Bell and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood; he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price.
<i>Mockingbird</i>	Kathryn Erskine	Ten-year-old Caitlin, who has Asperger's Syndrome, struggles to understand emotions, show empathy, and make friends at school, while at home she seeks closure to a family tragedy by working on a project with her father.
<i>Fish in a Tree</i>	Lynda Mullaly Hunt	Ally struggles to hide her dyslexia by continually getting in trouble, until a substitute teacher discovers what she is really hiding.
<i>Ghost</i>	Jason Reynolds	Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves.
<i>Echo</i>	Pam Munoz Ryan	In an epic novel, three children find their lives changed through a magic harmonica and their own self-resilience.
<i>Counting by 7s</i>	Holly Goldberg Sloan	Tragedy changes Willow's quirky but comfortable life, and as she adapts, she changes the lives of those around her.
<i>Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie</i>	Jordan Sonnenblick	Steven Alper is a typical eighth grader-smarter than some, a better drummer than most, but with the usual girl problems and family trials. Then, on October 7, his five-year-old brother, Jeffrey, falls, has a nosebleed that doesn't stop, and is diagnosed with leukemia.
<i>Maniac Magee</i>	Jerry Spinelli	Jeffrey Lionel "Maniac" Magee might have lived a normal life if a freak accident hadn't made him an orphan. After living with his unhappy and uptight aunt and uncle for eight years, he decides to run--and not just run away, but run. This is where the myth of Maniac Magee begins, as he changes the lives of a racially divided small town with his amazing and legendary feats.
<i>Flipped</i>	Wendelin Van Draanen	In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.
<i>So B. It</i>	Sarah Weeks	After spending her life with her mentally retarded mother and agoraphobic neighbor, twelve-year-old Heidi sets out from Reno, Nevada to New York to find out who she is.

## Historical Fiction

Title	Author	Description
<i>Chains (or other books in this series)</i>	Laurie Halse Anderson	As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel.
<i>Fever 1793</i>	Laurie Halse Anderson	In 1793 Philadelphia, sixteen-year-old Matilda Cook separated from her sick mother, learns about perseverance and self-reliance when she is forced to cope with the horrors of a yellow fever epidemic.
<i>Al Capone Does My Shirts</i>	Gennifer Choldenko	Today I moved to Alcatraz, a twelve-acre rock covered with cement, topped with bird turd and surrounded by water. I'm not the only kid who lives here. There are 23 other kids who live on the island. And then there are a ton of murderers, rapists, hit men, con men, stickup men, embezzlers, connivers, burglars, kidnappers and maybe even an innocent man or two, though I doubt it. The convicts we have are the kind other prisons don't want. You get to Alcatraz by being the worst of the worst. Unless you're me. I came here because my mother said I had to.
<i>Projekt 1065: A Novel of World War II</i>	Alan Gratz	Infiltrate. Befriend. Sabotage. World War II is raging. Michael O'Shaunessey, originally from Ireland, now lives in Nazi Germany with his parents. Like the other boys in his school, Michael is a member of the Hitler Youth. But Michael has a secret. He and his parents are spies.
<i>Refugee</i>	Alan Gratz	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 <i>tomorrow</i> . And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end.
<i>The Book Thief</i>	Markus Zusak	It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist--books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.

## Science Fiction

Title	Author	Description
<i>Matched</i>	Allie Condie	Cassia has always trusted the Society to make the right choices for her, so when Xander appears on-screen at her Matching ceremony, Cassia knows he is her ideal mate-until Ky Markham's face appears for an instance before the screen fades to black.
<i>Maze Runner (or other books in this series)</i>	James Dashner	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.
<i>The House of the Scorpion</i>	Nancy Farmer	In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clones of El Patron, the 142 year old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

<i>Uglies</i>	Scott Westerfield	Just before their sixteenth birthdays, when they will be transformed into beauties whose only job is to have a great time, Tally's best friend runs away and Tally must find her and turn her in, or never become pretty at all.
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## Fantasy

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<i>Artemis Fowl</i>	Eoin Colfer	Twelve-year-old Artemis Fowl is a millionaire, a genius-and, above all, a criminal mastermind. But even Artemis doesn't know what he's taken on when he kidnaps a fairy, Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon Unit. These aren't the fairies of bedtime stories; these fairies are armed and dangerous.
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## Humor/Short Stories

Title	Author	Description
<i>Funny Business</i>	Jon Scieszka	Today's top writers of children's fiction contribute a humorous short story in this compilation of short stories.

## Mystery

Title	Author	Description
<i>The Face on the Milk Carton</i>	Caroline Cooney	No one ever really paid close attention to the faces of the missing children on the milk cartons. But as Janie Johnson glanced at the face of the ordinary little girl with her hair in tight pigtailed, wearing a dress with a narrow white collar—a three-year-old who had



		been kidnapped twelve years before from a shopping mall in New Jersey—she felt overcome with shock. She recognized that little girl—it was she. How could it possibly be true?
<i>The Girl Who Was Supposed to Die</i>	April Henry	"Take her out back and finish her off." She doesn't know who she is. She doesn't know where she is, or why. All she knows when she comes to in a ransacked cabin is that there are two men arguing over whether or not to kill her. And that she must run.

### Non Fiction/Memoirs

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Hitler Youth</i>	Susan Bartoletti	By the time Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, 3.5 million children belonged to the Hitler Youth. It would become the largest youth group in history. Susan Campbell Bartoletti explores how Hitler gained the loyalty, trust, and passion of so many of Germany's young people. Her research includes telling interviews with surviving Hitler Youth members.
<i>Choosing Courage: Inspiring True Stories of What It Means To Be A Hero</i>	Peter Collier	How does an ordinary person become a hero? It happens in a split second, a moment of focus and clarity, when a choice is made. Here are the gripping accounts of Medal of Honor recipients who demonstrated guts and selflessness on the battlefield and confronted life-threatening danger to make a difference.
<i>Escape! The Story of the Great Houdini</i>	Sid Fleischman	A biography of the magician, ghost chaser, aviator and king of escape artists whose amazing feats are remembered long after his death in 1926.
<i>Guts</i>	Gary Paulsen	Guess what -- Gary Paulsen was being kind to Brian. In <i>Guts</i> , Gary tells the real stories behind the Brian books, the stories of the adventures that inspired him to write Brian Robeson's story: working as an emergency volunteer; the death that inspired the pilot's death in <i>Hatchet</i> ; plane crashes he has seen and near-misses of his own. He describes how he made his own bows and arrows, and takes readers on his first hunting trips, showing the wonder and solace of nature along with his hilarious mishaps and mistakes.
<i>My Life in Dog Years</i>	Gary Paulsen	Gary Paulsen has owned dozens of unforgettable and amazing dogs. In each chapter he tells of one special dog, among them Cookie, the sled dog who saved his life; Snowball, the puppy he owned as a boy in the Philippines; Ike, his mysterious hunting companion; Dirk, the grim protector; and his true friend Josh, a brilliant border collie.
<i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i>	Jacqueline Woodson	Told in verse, this book explores what it was like for Woodson growing up during the civil rights movement.
<i>I Am Malala</i>	Malala Yousafzai	When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.  On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

## **Popular Middle Grades Authors**

Laurie Halse Anderson

Kwame Alexander

Sharon Creech

Margaret Peterson Haddix

Carl Hiaasen

Gordon Korman

Lois Lowry

James Patterson

Gary Paulsen

J.K. Rowling

Jerry Spinelli