

2018 Middle School Summer Reading

Students in grades six through eight are required to choose one books to read from the master list below. Middle school teachers and administrators will also read one of these choices. When we return to school in the fall, each teacher will host a book discussion group for students who have read that particular selection. This model seeks to encourage students to read for the sake of reading, involve teachers across content areas, and cross grade levels to group students in discussion groups.

While reading your chosen book, please fill out the attached sheet and be prepared to share during the book discussion groups.

Students will be given the opportunity to hear more about the titles in the coming weeks during their ELA classes.

***Beyond the Bright Sea* by Lauren Wolk (adventure)**

Twelve-year-old Crow has lived her entire life on a tiny, isolated piece of the starkly beautiful Elizabeth Islands in Massachusetts. Abandoned and set adrift in a small boat when she was just hours old, Crow's only companions are Osh, the man who rescued and raised her, and Miss Maggie, their fierce and affectionate neighbor across the sandbar. Crow has always been curious about the world around her, but it isn't until the night a mysterious fire appears across the water that the unspoken question of her own history forms in her heart. Soon, an unstoppable chain of events is triggered, leading Crow down a path of discovery and danger.

***Bound by Ice* by Sandra Neil Wallace (adventure)**

Bound by Ice follows the journey of George Washington De Long and the crew of the USS *Jeannette*, who departed San Francisco in the summer of 1879 hoping to find a route to the North Pole. However, in mid-September the ship became locked in ice north of Siberia and drifted for nearly two years before it was crushed by ice and sank. De Long and his men escaped the ship and began a treacherous journey in extreme polar conditions in an attempt to reach civilization.

***The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill (fantasy)**

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon. Xan rescues the children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own. As Luna's thirteenth birthday approaches, her magic begins to emerge--with dangerous consequences. Meanwhile, a young man from the Protectorate is determined to free his people by killing the witch. Deadly birds with uncertain intentions flock nearby. A volcano, quiet for centuries, rumbles just beneath the earth's surface. And the woman with the Tiger's heart is on the prowl...

***A House Without Mirrors* by Marten Sanden (fantasy/mystery)**

Thomasine has spent months living in her great-great-aunt's dusty, dark house with her father, and her aunt, uncle and cousins. While her father's siblings bicker about how much the house must be worth, her distant, elderly aunt is upstairs,

dying, and her father has disappeared inside himself, still mourning the death of Thomasine's little brother. But one day, her youngest cousin makes a discovery: a wardrobe, filled with all the mirrors missing from the big house. And through the mirrors, a different world - one in which you can find not what you most wish for, but perhaps what you most need...

***Nine, Ten* by Nora Raleigh Baskin** (historical fiction)

Ask anyone: September 11, 2001, was serene and lovely, a perfect day—until a plane struck the World Trade Center.

But right now it is a few days earlier, and four kids in different parts of the country are going about their lives. Sergio, who lives in Brooklyn, is struggling to come to terms with the absentee father he hates and the grandmother he loves. Will's father is gone, too, killed in a car accident that has left the family reeling. Naheed has never before felt uncomfortable about being Muslim, but at her new school she's getting funny looks because of the head scarf she wears. Aimee is starting a new school in a new city and missing her mom, who has to fly to New York on business. These four don't know one another, but their lives are about to intersect in ways they never could have imagined.

***Refugee* by Alan Gratz** (historical fiction)

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.

***Serafina and the Black Cloak* by Robert Beatty** (mystery)

A brave and unusual girl named Serafina lives secretly in the basement of the grand Biltmore Estate amidst the splendor of the Gilded Age. Serafina's Pa, the estate's maintenance man, has warned her to keep herself hidden from the fancy folk who live on the floors above, but when children at the estate start disappearing, Serafina and her friend Braeden Vanderbilt must work together to solve a dark and dangerous mystery.

***The Seventh Most Important Thing* by Shelley Pearsall** (realistic fiction)

Arthur T. Owens grabbed a brick and hurled it at the trash picker. Arthur had his reasons, and the brick hit the Junk Man in the arm, not the head. But none of that matters to the judge—he is ready to send Arthur to juvie forever. Amazingly, it's the Junk Man himself who offers an alternative: 120 hours of community service... working for him. Arthur is given a rickety shopping cart and a list of the Seven Most Important Things: glass bottles, foil, cardboard, pieces of wood, lightbulbs, coffee cans, and mirrors. He can't believe it—is he really supposed to rummage through people's trash? But it isn't long before Arthur realizes there's more to the Junk Man than meets the eye, and the "trash" he's collecting is being transformed into something more precious than anyone could imagine...

***The Stars Beneath Our Feet* by David Barclay Moore** (realistic fiction)

It's Christmas Eve in Harlem, but twelve-year-old Lolly Rachpaul and his mom aren't celebrating. They're still reeling from his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting just a few months earlier. Then Lolly's mother's girlfriend brings him a gift that will change everything: two enormous bags filled with Legos. Lolly's always loved Legos, and he prides himself on following the kit instructions exactly. Now, faced with a pile of building blocks and no instructions, Lolly must find his own way forward. His path isn't clear—and the pressure to join a "crew," as his brother did, is always there. When Lolly and his

friend are beaten up and robbed, joining a crew almost seems like the safe choice. But building a fantastical Lego city at the community center provides Lolly with an escape—and an unexpected bridge back to the world.

***Thornhill* by Pam Smy (mystery)**

1982: Mary is a lonely orphan at the Thornhill Institute For Children at the very moment that it's shutting its doors. When her few friends are all adopted or re-homed and she's left to face a volatile bully alone, her revenge will have a lasting effect on the bully, on Mary, and on Thornhill itself.

2017: Ella has just moved to a new town where she knows no one. From her room on the top floor of her new home, she has a perfect view of the dilapidated, abandoned Thornhill Institute across the way, where she glimpses a girl in the window. Determined to befriend the girl and solidify the link between them, Ella resolves to unravel Thornhill's shadowy past.

***Undeclared* by Steve Sheinkin (sports/history)**

An astonishing underdog sports story—and more. It's an unflinching look at the U.S. government's violent persecution of Native Americans and the school that was designed to erase Indian cultures. It's the story of a group of young men who came together at that school, the overwhelming obstacles they faced both on and off the field, and their absolute refusal to accept defeat. Before these men became legends, they met in 1907 at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in American football history. Called "the team that invented football," they took on the best opponents of their day, defeating much more privileged schools such as Harvard and the Army in a series of breathtakingly close calls, genius plays, and bone-crushing hard work.

***The Unexpected Life of Oliver Cromwell Pitts* by Avi (historical fiction/adventure)**

In the seaside town of Melcombe Regis, England, 1724, Oliver Cromwell Pitts wakes to find his father missing and his house flooded by a recent storm. He's alone in his ruined home with no money and no food. Oliver's father has left behind a barely legible waterlogged note: he's gone to London, where Oliver's sister, Charity, is in trouble. Exploring damage to the town in the storm's aftermath, Oliver discovers a shipwreck on the beach. Removing anything from a wrecked ship is a hanging offense, but Oliver finds money that could save him, and he can't resist the temptation to take it. When his crime is discovered, Oliver flees, following the trail of his father and sister. The journey is full of thieves, adventurers, and treachery--and London might be the most dangerous place of all.

***The Warden's Daughter* by Jerry Spinelli (realistic fiction)**

Cammie O'Reilly lives at the Hancock County Prison--not as a prisoner, she's the warden's daughter. She spends the mornings hanging out with shoplifters and reformed arsonists in the women's exercise yard, which gives Cammie a certain cache with her school friends. But even though Cammie's free to leave the prison, she's still stuck. And sad, and really mad. Her mother died saving her from harm when she was just a baby. You wouldn't think you could miss something you never had, but on the eve of her thirteenth birthday, the thing Cammie most wants is a mom. A prison might not be the best place to search for a mother, but Cammie is determined and she's willing to work with what she's got.

***Yard War* by Taylor Kitchings (sports)**

Trip Westbrook has spent his first twelve years far from the struggle for civil rights going on in Mississippi. The one black person he knows well is Willie Jane, the family maid, who has been a second mother to him. When Trip invites her son, Dee, to play football in the yard, he discovers the ugly side of his smiling neighbors. Trip's old pals stop coming by. He is bullied, his house is defaced, and his family is threatened. The Westbrooks will be forced to choose between doing the right thing or losing the only home Trip has ever known. Who knew that playing football in the yard could have such consequences?

Summer Reading Book Buzz!

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

This book is: _____ fiction _____ non-fiction

Summary (don't give away the ending!):

What was your favorite quotable quote from the book?

Would you recommend this book to others? Why or why not?

Reviewed by: _____