

The Summer Reading and Exercise Challenge

“There is more treasure in books than in all the pirates’ loot on Treasure Island... and best of all, you can enjoy these riches every day of your life.” —Walt Disney

Suggested Reading List

Poetry

Comets, Stars, the Moon, and Mars: Space Poems and Paintings - by Douglas Florian, ages 5-10.

Tap Dancing on the Roof: Sijo (Poems) - by Linda Sue Park, ages 5-8.

Harlem: A Poem - by Walter Dean Myers, ages 9+.

The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba’s Struggle for Freedom - by Margarita Engle, ages 9-12.

Picture Books

Madeline - by Ludwig Bemelmans. So goes the story: “In an old house in Paris that was covered with vines, lived twelve little girls in two straight lines. They left the house at half past nine...The smallest one was Madeline.”

Harry the Dirty Dog - by Gene Zion. When a white dog with black spots runs away from home, he gets so dirty that his family doesn’t recognize him.

Early Readers

Tar Beach - by Faith Ringgold. Ringgold recounts the dream adventure of 8-year-old Cassie Louise Lightfoot, who flies above her apartment-building rooftop, the “tar beach” of the title, looking down on 1939 Harlem.

The Amazing Impossible Erie Canal - by Cheryl Harness. At first, folks didn’t really believe the Erie Canal would ever be built, but when it was completed in 1825, people said it was “amazing.”

Elementary Readers

Adventure

Stone Fox - by John Gardiner. Brave and determined 10-year-old Willy enters a dog sled race to raise money for back taxes on his grandfather’s farm.

On the Far Side of the Mountain - by Jean Craighead George. Sam’s peaceful existence in his wilderness home is disrupted when his sister runs away and his pet falcon is confiscated by a conservation officer.

Fantasy and Mystery

Dollhouse Murders - by Betty Ren Wright.

A dollhouse filled with a ghostly light and dolls that have been moved from where she last left them leave Amy and her mentally disabled sister to unravel the mystery surrounding grisly murders that took place years ago.

The Dark is Rising - by Susan Cooper. In Cooper’s five-title fantasy “Dark Is Rising Sequence,” 11-year-old Will Stanton discovers he is destined to battle the powers of evil that trouble the land. “When the Dark comes rising, six shall turn it back, Three from the circle, three from the track; Wood, bronze, iron; water, fire, stone; Five will return, and one go alone.”

Friendship

Ivy and Bean - by Annie Barrows. When 7-year-old Bean plays a mean trick on her sister, she finds unexpected support for her antics from Ivy, the new neighbor, who is less boring than Bean first suspected.

Broken Bike Boy and the Queen of 33rd Street - by Sharon Flake. Ten-year-old Queen, a spoiled and conceited African American girl who is disliked by most of her classmates, learns a lesson about friendship from an unlikely “knight in shining armor.”

Humor

Bunnica: A Rabbit-Tale of Mystery - by James Howe. Told by the dog Harold, it tells a story of a very unusual rabbit that sleeps by day and prowls by night – a vampire bunny, perhaps?

The Fortune Tellers - by Lloyd Alexander. This is an original folktale set in Cameroon about a young man who visits and then becomes the village fortune teller. It’s a story full of adventure and sly humor.

History

The Curse of Ravenscourt - by Sarah Masters Buckey. When her family temporarily moves into a luxury apartment building in 1904 Manhattan, 11-year-old Samantha tries to discover whether a series of mishaps is related to a curse on the building’s owner.

Peppe the Lamplighter - by Elisa Bartone. Peppe and his family are immigrants living in Little Italy in lower Manhattan around 1900. The story follows Peppe as he gets a job as a lamplighter in order to help bring in income for his family and contribute to his community.

Sports

Dad, Jackie and Me - by Myron Uhlberg. A narrative, which takes place during 1947 in Brooklyn, follows the growing relationship of a young boy and his deaf father through their shared joy of baseball and Jackie Robinson joining the Dodgers.

Winning Words Sports Stories and Photographs - by Charles R. Smith Jr. This collection of short stories and photographs shows young athletes overcoming their fears and challenging themselves to do their best.

Middle School Readers

Adventure

Good Night, Maman - by Norma Fox Mazer. This story follows a French brother and sister as they escape from the Holocaust during WWII. By foot at first and then by boat, the siblings head to the United States for safety.

The Dark Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural - by Patricia McKissack. Designed to be told during the Dark Thirty – the half hour before sunset – these haunting short works explore the African American experience in the South, rooted in history and folklore.

Friendship

All the Way Home - by Patricia Giff. In 1941, circumstances bring together Brick, a boy from New York’s apple country, and Mariel, a young girl made shy by her bout with polio. The two journey from Brooklyn to upstate New York to help Brick’s elderly neighbors save their apple crop and to help Mariel learn about her past.

Nothing’s Fair in the Fifth Grade - by Barthe DeClements. This story follows Elsie who at first has no friends in school and is disliked by everyone for stealing lunch money, until a girl named Jenny befriends her. This is a read full of friendship, the real world, and fifth grade.

Humor

Flat Stanley - by Jeff Brown. After a bulletin board falls on Stanley while he’s sleeping, he discovers being flat has its advantages.

Anastasia Krupnik - by Lois Lowry. We follow the ups and downs of Anastasia, a precocious 10-year-old who loves keeping lists of important information in her green notebook.

Historical

Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire - by Donna Getzinger. A historical account of the tragic 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire on the top floors of a Manhattan high rise that killed 146 factory workers, most of whom were immigrant women.

A Tugging String - by David Greenberg. A fictionalized account of the author’s years growing up in Great Neck, New York, during the turbulent Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Sports

Heat - by Mike Lupica. A young Cuban immigrant, Michael Arroyo, is a great pitcher in the Little League in the Bronx. When a rival player’s team questions his age and ability, he is sidelined, and the young star athlete cannot help get his team to the Little League World Series.

Sports Shorts - by Joseph Bruchac, et al. This is a collection of eight semi-autobiographical stories about the authors’ sports experiences while growing up.

Read today and imagine your possibilities!

Special thanks goes to the NYS Education Department’s Division of Library Development and librarians across the state for their help.

www.summerreadingnys.org