

June 12, 2020

To the Princeton community,

Summer is upon us, and though this break is bound to be an unusual one, one thing remains constant: the perennial importance of students reading during July and August. But after months of isolation and suffering brought on by the pandemic, and during the wave of protests brought on by the ongoing violence perpetuated against communities of color, we at PPS deeply believe that summer reading can offer more than literacy gains—it can be an opportunity for students, parents, teachers, administrators and community members to read together, to reflect on information and stories, and to imagine ways of being that value diversity, rather than fearing it.

We thus invite students and parents to join us in a series of Community Reads focused on issues of social justice and the Black experience in America. Each of these texts was selected for its ability to give voice to modern concerns and to provoke meaningful conversation. For rising 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, the text designated for their grade level will fulfill one of their required summer reads. (Students, please consult the directions in this packet for your specific grade level; the Community Read option is in red text.) Parents, teachers and community members are welcome to read and converse on any of the texts that appeal to them.

Rising 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders: *Clayton Byrd Goes Underground*, by Rita Williams-Garcia

Rising 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders: *New Kid*, by Jerry Craft

Rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders: *The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas

Rising 10<sup>th</sup> graders: *So you want to talk about race*, by Ijeoma Oluo

Rising 11<sup>th</sup> graders: *A Question of Freedom*, by Reginald Dwayne Betts

Rising 12<sup>th</sup> graders: *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race*, edited by Jesmyn Ward

Given the uncertainty in the future, we will announce the dates and formats (virtual or in-person) for these forums in late summer. We also recognize that the temporary closure of public library buildings disrupts a common approach for securing summer reading texts, and have thus included a “Where Can I Find My Summer Reading Books?” guide at the end of this packet which outlines options for obtaining both paper-based and free electronic text. We eagerly await the opportunity to gather and share our reflections on these texts!

With best wishes for a healthy and fulfilling summer,

Keisha Smith-Carrington, Supervisor of Humanities, PK-6

Stephanie Greenberg, Supervisor of Humanities, 7-12

# *K-12 Resources for Centering Black Voices and Antiracist Literature*

The Princeton Public School Librarians have curated this list of resources to facilitate family and community discussions on race and current day racism towards our Black communities. Included in the list are books focusing on the current day experiences of Black children and young adults written by Black authors (with a few exceptions). The list is not all-inclusive. Books in red text are part of our **Community Reads** program, which will include group discussions during the summer/fall. For an expanded list, please use the resources at the bottom.

## **Videos for Children**

[The Breaking News](#) by Sarah Lynne Reul (video available through June 30th, 2020).

[Hair Love](#) from Matthew A. Cherry

[How to Explain Racism - CNN/Sesame Street Town Hall](#)

[#KidLit Rally for Black Lives](#) (first hour is directed towards children K-12)

## **Books Specifically Related to Discussing Racial Injustice and the News with Children**

[Something Happened in Our Town: A Story of Racial Injustice](#) By Marianne Celano, PhD, ABPP, Marietta Collins, PhD, and Ann Hazzard, PhD, ABPP.

[The Breaking News](#) by Sarah Lynne Reul [Parent Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness](#) by Anatasia Higginbotham (PDF download available through June 19th)

## **Articles to Help Guide Discussions and Personal Introspection on Racism**

[George Floyd, Racism and Law Enforcement: Table Talk Family Conversations about Current Events](#) by the ADL

[How to Talk Racism With Your Family: Ask Code Switch](#)

[Institutional Racism](#) collection of articles on JSTOR

[Racism and Violence in the News: How to Help Kids Handle the News](#) by the Child Mind Institute

[Talking to Kids about Discrimination](#) by the American Psychological Association

[There's No Neutral: 'Nice White People' Can Still Be Complicit in a Racist Society](#)

[Why I Am No Longer Talking to White People About Race](#) by Reni Eddo-Lodge

## **Picture Books for All Ages**

[Anti-Racist Baby](#) by Ibram X. Kendi (available June 16th)

[A is for Activist](#) by Innosanto Nagara

[Black Is a Rainbow Color](#) by Angela Joy

[The Day You Begin](#) by Jacqueline Woodson [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Double Bass Blues](#) By Andrea J. Loney

[Get Up, Stand Up](#) by Cedella Marley

[Hey Black Child](#) by Useni Eugene Perkins

[I Am Enough](#) by Grace Byers [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Intersection Allies: We Make Room for All](#) By Chelsea Johnson, LaToya Council, and Carolyn Choi. (PDF Download available through June 19).

[My Hair Is a Garden](#) by Cozbi A. Cabrera [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Shades of Black: A Celebration of Our Children](#) by Sandra L. Pinkney

[Sing a Song: How 'Lift Every Voice and Sing' Inspired Generations](#) by Kelly Starling Lyons [Activity Guide](#) (pdf)

[Skin Again](#) by bell hooks

[Sulwe](#) by Lupita Nyong'o [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[The Undefeated](#) by Kwame Alexander

[You Matter](#) by Christian Robinson [Activity Sheets](#) (pdf)

## **Middle Grade Novels (best for ages 8+)**

[As Brave As You](#) by Jason Reynolds [Discussion Guide](#)

[Black Brother Black Brother](#) by Jewell Parker Rhodes [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Blended](#) by Sharon Draper [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Booked](#) by Kwame Alexander

[Clean Getaway](#) by Nic Stone [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

[Clayton Byrd Goes Underground](#) by Rita Williams-Garcia [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

*First Rule of Punk* by Celia C. Pérez [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Harbor Me* by Jacqueline Woodson [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*The Jumbies* by Tracey Baptiste [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf)  
*King and the Dragonflies* by Kacen Callender  
*Look Both Ways* by Jason Reynolds [Discussion Questions](#)  
*New Kid* by Jerry Craft [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*The Parker Inheritance* by Varian Johnson [Story Behind the Story](#) and [Discussion Questions](#)  
*Shuri: A Black Panther Novel* by Nic Stone  
*Stars Beneath Our Feet* by David Barclay Moore [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf)  
*Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky* by Kwame Mbalia [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Two Naomis* by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich and Audrey Vernick  
*We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices* by Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson

### **Young Adult Literature (best for ages 12+)**

*The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives:* by Daska Slater [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf) [Additional Resources](#)  
*Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Black Enough: Stories of Being Young and Black in America* Edited by Ibi Zoboi  
*Dear Martin* by Nic Stone [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf)  
*The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi [Discussion Guide](#)  
*Miles Morales Spider-man* by Jason Reynolds [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Monster* by Walter Dean Myers [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Noughts and Crosses* by Majorie Blackman  
*One Person, No Vote: How Not All Voters Are Treated Equally* by Carol Anderson and Tonya Bolden [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf) are for the adult version.  
*Piecing Me Together* by Renée Watson [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Speak No Evil* by Uzodinma Iweala  
*STAMPED: Racism, Anti-Racism and You* A Remix of Stamped from the Beginning by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi [Educator's Guide](#) (pdf) by Sonya Cherry-Paul of the TCRWP.  
*This Book is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on how to wake up, take action and do the work* by Tiffany Jewell  
*We Are Not Yet Equal: Understanding Our Racial Divide* by Carol Anderson with Tonya Bolden [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf) for *White Rage* (adult version)

### **Adult Literature to Facilitate Discussions on Race and Antiracism (ages 14+)**

*How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World and Become a Good Ancestor* by Layla F. Saad  
*The Person You Mean to Be* by Dolly Chugh [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf)  
*So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf)  
*Stamped from the Beginning: The definitive guide of racist ideas in America* by Ibram X. Kendi [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race* Edited by Jesmyn Ward  
*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness* by Michelle Alexander [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy* by Carol Anderson [Discussion Questions](#) (pdf)  
*A Question of Freedom: A Memoir of Learning, Survival and Coming of Age in Prison* by R. Dwayne Betts [Discussion Questions](#)  
*When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* by Patrisse Khan-Coullers and ashe bandele [Discussion Questions](#)  
*White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide* by Carol Anderson [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

### **Videos and Movies for Young Adults - Adults**

*13th* (Netflix) From Ava DuVernay [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
*A Conversation About Racism: All American Boys, 5 years later* with Jason Reynold and Brendan Kiely

[The Hate U Give](#) based on Angie Thomas's novel of the same name [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
[Just Mercy](#) based on Bryan Stevenson's memoir of the same name [Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)  
[#KidLit Rally for Black Lives](#) (all of it - but the second hour is specifically directed to adults)  
[Toni Morrison's Powerful Words on Racism](#) by the Guardian News  
[When They See Us](#) (Netflix) miniseries based upon the 5 Harlem teenagers falsely accused of an attack in Central Park)  
[Discussion Guide](#) (pdf)

**Other Resources:**

[Anti-Defamation League](#)  
[Black Lives Matter Comics Reading List](#) by American Library Association  
[Coretta Scott King Books Awards](#)  
[Don't Just Read About Racism - Read Stories About Black People Living](#) by Nic Stone  
[KidLit Rally 4 Black Lives: Anti-racist Resources for Children, Families and Educators](#)  
[Not in Our Town](#) Princeton  
Princeton Public Library - [Racial Literacy Resources](#)  
[Talking About Race](#) from the National Museum of African American History & Culture  
[Two Thumbs Up: Movies and Documentaries to Use \(and Avoid\) When Teaching Civil Rights](#) by Hasan Kwame Jeffries  
on the Zinn Education Project

## ***Princeton Public Schools – PK- 5 Summer Reading***

For a list of suggested titles by grade level, please visit:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Jzn5z9BTKhhf41oZRocloZ1N3aTMmaDY2lu3iU3X8Qo/edit>

# *John Witherspoon Middle School - Recommendations For Rising Sixth Graders*

At John Witherspoon Middle School, our readers benefit from the variety of fiction and nonfiction titles we offer during Reading Workshop in our English classes. As we believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year, we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all of our students who share varied ability levels, learning styles and interests.

As a result, we are offering twelve *fiction* and twelve *nonfiction* suggested titles at each grade level in our middle school as a reflective example of what students will find in each classroom library. Our JW Community Read selection is a new addition this year which also satisfies the summer reading requirement. ***In September, students should bring a copy of one of the texts read over the summer*** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices during the first full week of school. If the text selected for use in class is not on this list, it may be brought to class if it is of comparable merit and the student has a parent's or guardian's permission.

**Community Read Selection:** *New Kid* by Jerry Craft

## **Fiction Selections**

*Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix  
*Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis  
*The Cavendish Home for Boys and Girls* by Claire Legrand  
*Delilah Dirk & The Turkish Lieutenant* by Tony Cliff  
*Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library* by Chris Grabenstein  
*Falling Over Sideways* by Jordan Sonnenblick  
***Front Desk* by Kelly Yang**  
*Game Changers* by Mike Lupica  
*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling  
*The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan  
*Save Me a Seat* by Sarah Weeks & Gita Varadarajan  
***The Season of Styx Malone* by Kekla Magoon**

## **Nonfiction Selections**

*Alexander the Great: Master of the Ancient World* by Doug Wilhelm  
*Claudette Colvin: Towards Justice* by Phillip M. Hoose  
*The Faithful Spy: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Plot to Kill Hitler* by John Hendrix  
*The Great White Shark Scientist* by Sy Montgomery  
*Hazardous Tales: Alamo All-Stars* by Nathan Hale  
*Knots in My Yo-Yo String* by Jerry Spinelli  
*Lincoln's Grave Robbers* by Steve Sheinkin  
*Saved by the Boats* by Julie Gassman  
*Scientists in the Field* by Pamela S. Turner  
*The Tarantula Scientist* by Sy Montgomery  
*This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality* by Jo Ann Allen Boyce & Debbie Levy  
*Women Who Changed the World* by Laurie Calkhovem

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Please encourage your child to read 20-minutes a day all summer long. We partner with the Princeton Public Library and recommend all students register for the 2020 Youth Summer Reading Program.

Appreciatively,

English Department

John H. Witherspoon Middle School

**Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

**(Students: Return this completed paper to your English teacher during the first week of school.)**

*Questions students can expect to see from their teachers upon their return from summer vacation...*

**Fiction:**

1. Was there one character similar to you in any book? Would the story be different if you were the main character?
2. Discuss one memorable moment of the story? Why is it memorable?
3. What was one major theme you recognized in any book?

**Nonfiction:**

1. What is something new that you learned? Please explain why it is significant to you.
2. Did any new information surprise you? Please explain that surprise and how it added to your knowledge of the subject.
3. Did anything change, challenge or confirm what you already knew? Please explain.

# ***John Witherspoon Middle School - Recommendations For Rising Seventh Graders***

At John Witherspoon Middle School, our readers benefit from the variety of fiction and nonfiction titles we offer during Reading Workshop in our English classes. As we believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year, we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all of our students who share varied ability levels, learning styles and interests.

As a result, we are offering twelve *fiction* and twelve *nonfiction* suggested titles at each grade level in our middle school as a reflective example of what students will find in each classroom library. Our JW Community Read selection is a new addition this year which also satisfies the summer reading requirement. ***In September, students should bring a copy of one of the texts read over the summer*** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices during the first full week of school. If the text selected for use in class is not on this list, it may be brought to class if it is of comparable merit and the student has a parent's or guardian's permission.

**Community Read Selection:** *New Kid* by Jerry Craft

## **Fiction Selections**

*The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis  
*Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson  
*Calico Joe* by John Grisham  
*City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau  
*Dove Arising* by Karen Bao  
*Hoops* by Walter Dean Myers  
*In Real Life* by Cory Doctorow & Jen Wang  
*Life as We Knew It* by Susan Beth Pfeffer  
*New Kid* by Jerry Craft  
*Night Diary* by Veera Hiranandani  
*Running Dream* by Wendelin Van Draanen  
*Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech

## **Nonfiction Selections**

*Be Prepared* by Vera Brosgol  
*Crow Smarts: Inside the Brain of the World's Brightest Bird* by Pamela S. Turner  
*Elon Musk & the Quest for a Fantastic Future* by Ashlee Vance  
*The Faithful Spy: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Plot to Kill Hitler* by John Hendrix  
*Frozen in Time* by Mitchell Zuckoff  
*Hidden Figures (Young Reader's Edition)* by Margot Lee Shetterly  
*I am Malala (Young Readers Edition)* by Malala Yousafzai  
*Native American Doctor: The Story of Susan Laflesche Picotte* by Jeri Chase Ferris  
*Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-li Jiang  
*Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story* by Caren Stelson  
*Strong Inside (Young Readers Edition)* by Andrew Maraniss  
*Untold History of the United States (Young Reader's Edition)* by Oliver Stone

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Please encourage your child to read 20-minutes a day all summer long. We partner with the Princeton Public Library and recommend all students register for the 2020 Youth Summer Reading Program.

Appreciatively,

English Department

John H. Witherspoon Middle School

**Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

**(Students: Return this completed paper to your English teacher during the first week of school.)**

*Questions students can expect to see from their teachers upon their return from summer vacation...*

**For Narrative Reading...**

1. How does the conflict change the character?
2. What is the author's tone toward *one* of the characters in your book?
3. What symbols are central in the book? How do they contribute to the theme or to the book as a whole?

**For Nonfiction Reading...**

1. What do you think the author's central idea is? What would you describe as the author's purpose in writing the text?
2. How does the author structure the book? Is it chronological (time order), general to specific, cause and effect, pros and cons...?
3. Was there a specific passage that had a strong tone to it that revealed the author's attitude toward a topic?
4. Did the book make you more aware and knowledgeable about the particular issue? How did earlier opinions about the issue change after reading this book?

# ***John Witherspoon Middle School - Recommendations For Rising Eighth Graders***

At John Witherspoon Middle School, our readers benefit from the variety of fiction and nonfiction titles we offer during Reading Workshop in our English classes. As we believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year, we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all of our students who share varied ability levels, learning styles and interests.

As a result, we are offering twelve *fiction* and twelve *nonfiction* suggested titles at each grade level in our middle school as a reflective example of what students will find in each classroom library. Our JW Community Read selection is a new addition this year which also satisfies the summer reading requirement. ***In September, students should bring a copy of one of the texts read over the summer*** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices during the first full week of school. If the text selected for use in class is not on this list, it may be brought to class if it is of comparable merit and the student has a parent's or guardian's permission.

**Community Read Selection:** *New Kid* by Jerry Craft

## **Fiction Selections**

*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith  
*Bull Run* by Paul Fleischman  
*Children of Blood and Bone: Legacy of Orisha, Book 1* by Tomi Adeyemi  
*Counting by 7's* by Holly Goldberg Sloane  
*Darius the Great Is Not Okay* by Adib Khorram  
*Flygirl* by Sherri Smith  
*Furthermore* by Tahereh Mafi  
*Genius: The Game* by Leopoldo Gout  
*Heartless* by Marissa Meyer  
*Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys  
*That Was Then, This Is Now* by S.E. Hinton  
*Zen and the Art of Faking It* by Jordan Sonnenblick

## **Nonfiction Selections**

*The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor* by Sonia Sotomayor  
*Blizzard of Glass: the Halifax Explosion of 1917* by Sally M. Walker  
*The Boys in the Boat (YA Adaptation)* by Daniel James Brown  
*Chasing Lincoln's Killer* by James L. Swanson  
*Flying Higher: Women Airforce Service Pilots of WW II* by Wanda Langley  
*Freedom Walkers* by Russell Freedman  
*Photo By Brady: A Picture of the Civil War* by Jennifer Armstrong  
*The Plot to Kill Hitler* by Patricia McCormick  
*The Race to Save the Lord God Bird* by Phillip Hoose  
*Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yoshitsune* by Pamela S. Turner  
*The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees* by Don Brown  
*Witches: The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem* by Rosalyn Schanzer

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Please encourage your child to read 20-minutes a day all summer long. We partner with the Princeton Public Library and recommend all students register for the 2020 Youth Summer Reading Program.

Appreciatively,  
English Department  
John H. Witherspoon Middle School

**Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

**(Students: Return this completed paper to your English teacher during the first week of school.)**

*Questions students can expect to see from their teachers upon their return from summer vacation...*

### **For Fiction Reading...**

#### **Dynamic Character**

A dynamic character is often easier to build a compelling story around. Dynamic character might go through a major life transition, have a coming-of-age experience, pull through trials and tribulations, mature, have a change of heart or develop more likeable qualities -- or take a turn for the worse. A common misconception is that a dynamic character has an electric, charismatic personality. In fact, the term "dynamic" doesn't define the character's qualities, but rather refers to how those qualities change over time.

Dynamic characters are often easier to spot than static ones. A clear example of a dynamic character is Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' novel, *A Christmas Carol*. His evolution was dramatic as he went from a miserly scrooge to a generous giver after encounters with three ghosts. Another dynamic character is Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*. She starts out as a character that is timid and naive and develops into one that is confident, assertive, and more worldly.

#### **Static Character**

Essentially, a static character is largely the same person at the end of the story as he was in the beginning. Any character in a compelling story experiences some life changes and variation in his environment, but what distinguishes a static character is usually his existing persona, confidence and appeal to readers. More compelling, heroic and charismatic characters often work better as static characters than ones who must undergo change to appeal to the audience and to significantly affect a story.

Change isn't always a good thing, nor necessary. Static characters can go entire seasons or books without changing or experiencing the character development that a more dynamic character does. A static character does not mean that the character is boring; many times the static characters are useful in secondary roles, serving as yardsticks against which your central (and Dynamic) character's growth can be a counter. The

Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz* and Scar from *The Lion King* are both static characters as key aspects of their character do not change.

### **For Fiction Reading...**

1. What is important about the change that a dynamic character exhibits? And why is this important?
2. Why is it important that this static character does not undergo an important change?
3. There are plenty of compelling characters who encounter conflict, yet do not change all that much over the course of a story. If this is the case with your novel, explain how maintaining his/her nature/personality played a role in the book.
4. What conflict does your character face that caused him/her to change in order to overcome circumstances?
5. How is the main character changing? What is he or she learning about life and the role he or she plays in it?

### **For Nonfiction Reading...**

1. What kind of research do you think the author had to do to write this book?
2. Give some examples of specific clue words the author uses that let you know s/he is stating an opinion or a fact.
3. Does this book provide recent information? Where could you look to find more information about the topic?

## *John Witherspoon Middle School: 6th-8th Extension Texts*

Did you read through the whole list and need more suggestions?!? Below are a few of our book award winners, favorite lists of book recommendations created by others, and audiobook pairings\*. While perusing the lists, bear in mind that most of the lists include books that are appropriate for middle school reading levels but may contain content that may not be appropriate for all middle school students.

[Amelia Bloomer Book List](#) feminist themes

[American Indian Youth Literature Award](#) - books by and about Native Americans and Indigenous peoples of North America

[Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature](#) promoting Asian American cultures and heritages

[Batchelder Award](#) books originally published in another country and also translated to English

Book Riot's [50 Must Read Middle Grade Graphic Novels](#)

[Charlotte Huck Award](#) - National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)'s award for fiction

[Charlotte Zolotow Award](#) best picture book text

[Children's Choice Awards](#) and [Children's Choices Reading List](#) chosen for kids by kids

[Coretta Scott King Award](#) African American culture and universal human values

Global Read-Aloud (Fall 2020) <https://theglobalreadaloud.com/blog/>

[Jane Addams Children's Book Award](#) - peace, social justice, global community and equity books

I Read This Book: <https://princetonlibrary.bibliocommons.com/list/share/104628707/1610902694>

Manga for Middle Schoolers

[https://www.nypl.org/blog/2019/02/04/manga-recommendations-middle-schoolers?utm\\_campaign=SocialFlow&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_medium=referral](https://www.nypl.org/blog/2019/02/04/manga-recommendations-middle-schoolers?utm_campaign=SocialFlow&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=referral)

[Mathical Award Winners](#) - books with a mathematical theme

LGBTQ Inclusive <http://www.welcomingschools.org/pages/books-inclusive-of-LGBTQ-family-members-and-characters/>

NCTE's [Excellence in Poetry Award](#) - for poets who publish for children

NSTA's [Outstanding Trade Books in Science](#)

[Newbery Award](#) distinguished contributions to children's literature (usually middle grade fiction)

[New York Public Library's Best Books for Children Lists](#)

[New York Times 2019 Notable Children's Books](#)

[Orbis Pictus Award](#) National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)'s award for non-fiction

PPL Suggestions for Teens <https://princetonlibrary.org/book-suggestions-teens/>

[Pura Belpré Award](#) celebrating the Latinx experience

[Schneider Family Book Award](#) artistic representation of the disability experience

[Scott O'Dell Award](#) historical fiction

[Sibert Informational Book Award](#) distinguished non-fiction

[Stonewall Award](#) GLBT books

[Sync Audiobooks](#) for Teens

[We are KidLit](#) Summer Reading List

## **A Note on Sensitive Topics in PHS Summer Reading**

Our summer reading lists are designed to offer a variety of texts that will be meaningful for and hold the interest of high school students. We seek to create what Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop described as “mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors”: reading experiences that allow individuals both to understand the lives of others and to see themselves and their experiences in books. Given the realities of our hurting world and of the transition from young adult to adult literature, sensitive topics like domestic violence, sexual abuse, suicide, mental health struggles and discrimination and violence based on race, gender and/or LGBTQ+ status are thus addressed in some of the titles on this list.

We feel it important and necessary to acknowledge that the content outlined above could be triggering to those who have experienced trauma, and we thus want to share resources that can support youth while reading and processing. Please access our mental health website, which offers a variety of helplines, at <https://sites.google.com/pps.princetonk12.org/pps-mental-health/resources>. If you/your child has experienced a trauma that could lead to heightened sensitivity to a challenging topic, please read more about the titles before making a selection—the brief summaries offered on these lists are intended only as “teasers,” not as trigger warnings.

We want summer reading to be enriching, not traumatizing. If any text on this list (required or otherwise) is upsetting to a student, please reach out to Ms. Stephanie Greenberg, Supervisor of Humanities, 7-12, and she will be happy to suggest another pedagogically appropriate text in its place.

## ***Princeton High School – 2020 Freshman Summer Reading***

Arriving from different schools, places, and backgrounds, the students at PHS all have the power to contribute equally to our community. Together, we will create an environment in which learning extends beyond the walls of the classroom and helps to build the foundations needed for college-level reading, writing, and thought. By the end of freshman year, students will have developed ideas to help answer the following essential questions:

- How does literature help us learn about the journey of life?
- How does the individual interact within his/her community, and why are these interactions necessary for the survival and well-being of all involved?

The freshman summer reading assignment is the first opportunity for students to take ownership of their education at PHS and to engage with our community of learners. We are offering choices of texts that will entertain and inform students about the world, from ancient times to today.

***REQUIRED:*** Choose and read at least **TWO** of the following texts. (Of course, feel free to read as many as you like!) Below each title is a brief description of the text's appeal.

### **Plays**

#### ***Agamemnon***

In *Agamemnon*, a father and daughter deal with the devastating effects of the Trojan War on their family. Each play tells a different side of the same journey...a journey of love, fear, war, betrayal. It is a sad story...but an important one that shows how the decisions of a few can affect the lives of so many.

#### **Aeschylus**

#### ***A Raisin in the Sun***

*A Raisin in the Sun* is a classic. It tells the story of the multi-generational Younger family, who live on the South Side of Chicago during the 1950s. As each member of the family works, studies and dreams, their frustrations over financial struggles and systemic racism threaten to tear the family apart. Their transcendence, in the face of all, speaks to the Youngers' strength of spirit and resilience.

#### **Lorraine Hansberry**

### **Novels**

#### ***The Poet X***

*The Poet X* is the award-winning debut by famed slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo. Not surprisingly, the main character--Xiomara, or, X--finds her strength and her voice through slam poetry. She navigates a community that tells her she needs to conform, but conform to what? X is confronted by her mother's prescriptive religiosity, her Harlem neighborhood's stereotypes of a teen female, and the pressures she finds at school. Written entirely in verse, *The Poet X* depicts a deeply emotional journey and confronts serious social issues.

#### **Elizabeth Acevedo**

#### ***Turtles All the Way Down***

*Turtles All The Way Down* is one of John Green's newest books, and is just as captivating as *The Fault in our Stars*. You'll love reading this story of Aza, a teenager who is investigating the disappearance of a billionaire even as she is managing her own struggles, including her anxiety and obsessive thoughts.

#### **John Green**

#### ***The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali***

Trying to respect her strict Bangladeshi Muslim parents, Rukhsana hides much of her life from them, figuring that she'll be off to Caltech soon enough, where she will live openly. But when her parents discover her kissing her girlfriend, they send Rukhsana to family in Bangladesh. Rukhsana has to find the balance between her love for her family and culture and her own identity. Facing homophobia and physical and sexual violence, her journey is challenging but redeeming.

#### **Sabina Khan**

***The Secret Life of Bees*****Sue Monk Kidd**

*The Secret Life of Bees* is written from the perspective of fourteen-year-old Lily Owens, whose journey begins when she runs away from her abusive father. While seeking the story of her mother's life and death in Tiburon, South Carolina, she chances upon a group of beekeeping sisters who provide her sanctuary and wisdom that defies her preconceptions about race, family, and femininity. This book features beautiful word choice, authentic characters, a sense of humor, and wisdom.

***The Chosen*****Chaim Potok**

In *The Chosen*, two teenage boys from different worlds struggle to maintain their friendship despite prejudice, ignorance, and tradition. Reuven Malter, a modern orthodox Jew, and his friend Daniel Saunders, a Hasidic Jew, begin as rivals on the baseball field, but soon learn that a lasting friendship is a journey toward understanding. Their story is so sweet....so challenging....so informative....so important.

***The 57 Bus*****Dashka Slater**

*The 57 Bus* is a narrative nonfiction piece based on an incident that lasted only minutes but changed the lives of two teenagers and forced a reckoning in the community. Sasha hails from a privileged home in the hills of Oakland while Richard is from the flatlands of Oakland; he's troubled and struggling but wants to do well. Richard, his cousin, and friend make an impulsive decision, and the ramifications for both Sasha and Richard cause everyone to contemplate issues of race, privilege, justice, and redemption.

***The Hate U Give*****Angie Thomas**

*The Hate U Give* introduces us to Starr, a Black teen from a tight-knit community. She straddles two lives, one in her predominately Black neighborhood, the other in her predominately white, privileged private school. One night, she and her friend Khalil are pulled over; during the stop, the officer mistakes Khalil's phone for a gun, and fatally shoots him. This event causes Starr to wrestle with her identity as a young Black woman and to determine how she can fight for Khalil's legacy to bring him and their community justice.

***Boxers*****Gene Luen Yang**

In the graphic novel, *Boxers*, Little Bao's community is threatened by a group of mysterious foreigners who accuse Bao's village of worshipping false idols. After studying under the Kung Fu master, Red Lantern Chu, Little Bao embarks on a journey to defend his country from the invaders who threaten to destroy his ancient culture. In *Boxers*, Yang uses magical realism and a clear narrative voice to distill the Boxer Rebellion into an accessible, yet deeply personal narrative.

***Homegoing*****Yaa Gyasi**

*Homegoing* is a multi-generational historical fiction novel that opens in eighteenth-century Ghana and focuses on two half-sisters: one lives a life of ease and comfort in a Cape Coast Castle while her sister is imprisoned beneath in its dungeons. The novel follows their descendants over three hundred years and two continents. You will love this book because of its carefully crafted language and the connection you will make with the characters as you journey with them.

**Epic*****The Iliad*****Homer**

In *The Iliad*, Homer masterfully recounts the ways in which one warrior can turn the tide of a ten-year battle. This is a tale about a lost love, a jealous warrior, an angry leader, a clever commander, and of course, a famous wooden horse. It recounts the warrior's journey and represents all that a true epic can be.

## ***Princeton High School – 2020 Sophomore Summer Reading***

Rising sophomores must read two books during the summer. You may want to take notes or keep a journal to stay actively engaged. In September, students will spend several class periods participating in activities related to their selections and will then complete one or more writing assignments involving their two texts. We encourage you to read with attention, consideration, and curiosity.

**REQUIRED:** All rising sophomores must read ***Born A Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood***, by **Trevor Noah**. In this poignant and humorous memoir, Noah details his young life in South Africa, during the final years of apartheid. His story addresses the role that race played in his upbringing and the tools his mother gave him to succeed, despite the many obstacles he faced. Please note that this text does contain profanity and off-color humor; if you would prefer to avoid these elements, you may substitute ***It's Trevor Noah: Born A Crime***, the young adult version of the text.

All rising sophomores ***must also read one additional text*** from the following list:

### **Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451***

This work depicts a dystopian society in which access to knowledge is severely restricted and books are forbidden. Everything is turned on its head in this world as the firemen are called to light fires rather than extinguish them.

### **Ijeoma Oluo's *So you want to talk about race***

Many of us need a guide to understanding both the sweeping truths and the intricacies of race. It's ok to be overwhelmed or insecure when discussing this challenging topic, but if we hope to become anti-racist and contribute to a more just society, we need help developing the language and methodology for these tough, but critical, conversations. This book is hard-hitting but incredibly valuable.

### **Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist***

This novel depicts a young man's journey to find worldly goods, which ultimately turns into a quest to find the treasure within.

### **Uzodinma Iweala's *Speak No Evil***

This modern, violent tragedy introduces us to prep-school educated, Harvard-bound Niru, the son of doting, conservative Nigerian parents, and his best friend, Meredith. After Niru's father discovers that Niru is gay, the characters' multi-dimensionality is revealed as they struggle to figure out how to balance their paths between the extremes of conformity and resistance.

### **Richard Kim's *Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood***

In this novel, Kim tells the story of a young boy growing up in Korea during the Japanese occupation. He struggles with his identity while his extended family struggles simply to survive.

### **Pablo Neruda's *Fully Empowered***

This collection of poetry includes thirty-six poems that vary from short, intense lyrics to longer odes that speak to Neruda's declared purpose: "to be in his poems a voice for all those people -- and things -- that have no voice: that is the poet's obligation." (from Alastair Reid's *Introduction to the Collection*)

### **Mine Okubo's *Citizen 13660***

This autobiographical graphic novel explores life in a Japanese internment camp during World War II, focusing on one woman's struggles during that dark time.

### **George Orwell's *1984***

This classic dystopian novel chronicles life in a government-controlled country that, in some ways, shines light on trends in our contemporary world.

**Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood***

This graphic autobiography depicts the author's childhood and young adult years in Iran, leading up to and following the Islamic Revolution.

## ***Princeton High School – 2020 Junior Summer Reading***

All rising juniors must complete the following reading assignments prior to the start of school in September. While no written work is required, students should read carefully and thoughtfully. You may want to take notes or keep a journal to stay actively engaged. All students will participate in activities related to summer reading in early September and will complete one or more writing assignments involving these texts.

***Required for ALL rising juniors entering English III or AP English III:*** Choose and read ***ONE OF THE FOUR NOVELS on this list.*** In addition, all rising juniors must read ***ONE additional text*** from the list below (either a second novel, a drama, a poetry collection or a non-fiction text).

### **Novels**

**\* *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

This novel is the story of a Nigerian young woman who moves from Nigeria to Princeton and back again, sharing the milestones and obstacles, large and small, that mark her coming of age journey.

**\* *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

In this classic novel, a young woman in the rural South faces a series of choices in following her heart in order to find love, her voice, and herself.

**\* *Let The Great World Spin* by Colum McCann**

This post-9/11 novel centers on multiple narrators – each of whom faces difficult choices in New York City in the early 1970s. This contemporary text highlights a range of voices and a great tapestry of life experiences built around the exploits of a daredevil acrobat who walks across a tightrope between the two World Trade Center buildings.

**\* *There, There* by Tommy Orange**

Weaving together multiple narratives in distinct voices, Orange's contemporary novel pulls together his character's stories. The novel's narrators are all indigenous Americans, but their perspectives are diverse—and nearly all of them find their way to the same pow-wow for a profound conclusion.

### **Drama**

**\* *Water by the Spoonful* by Quiara Alegria Hudes**

Set in Philadelphia, the protagonist, Elliot, returns from fighting in Iraq and is struggling to find his place in the world while elsewhere, in a chatroom, recovering addicts forge a bond of love and support. This acclaimed play won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

**\* *The Humans* by Stephen Karam**

Breaking with tradition, Erik Blake and his wife descend upon their daughter's apartment in lower Manhattan for Thanksgiving. As they sit down to share their meal, the family confronts its history, exposing the horrors that exist at its core. A Pulitzer Prize finalist and Tony Award-winning play, *The Humans* asks what it means to be a family in contemporary America.

**\* *Angels in America* by Tony Kushner**

Set during the early days of the AIDS crisis, Kushner explores family, political will, religious faith, and the myth of America. While this Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning play focuses primarily on a gay couple living in Manhattan, it also incorporates a much broader array of stories and voices.

## **Poetry**

### **\* *An Atlas of the Difficult World* by Adrienne Rich**

A 1992 Pulitzer Prize finalist, Rich's two-part collection of poems investigates the individual's sometimes unnoticed identities. The poems consider the sadness as well as the significance of the tensions that individuals manage. Often political, Rich's images illuminate the conflicted and nuanced nature of existence in society.

### **\* *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* by Ocean Vuong**

In this thought-provoking and engaging collection of poetry, Vuong expresses conflicted emotions and perspectives as he reflects on his life as a refugee. His poetry wrestles with violence, the immigrant experience, sexuality, and the struggle between the inner life and the outer face.

### **\* *Song of Myself* by Walt Whitman**

The epic poem by "America's Bard," written in 1855, analyzes the world through an exploration of the poet's inner life.

## **Non-Fiction**

### **\* *How Does It Feel to Be a Problem* by Moustafa Bayoumi**

This collection of stories, told from the perspective of seven young Arab immigrants, examines what it means to be young and Arab in America. Each young voice encounters unique struggles in trying to forge a new life, while constantly confronted by the fear of what others do not understand.

### **\* *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel**

Bechdel's graphic novel explores the life of her father, a closeted gay man, in the aftermath of his death, perhaps a tragic accident, perhaps a suicide. In learning about him, Bechdel dives deep into her identity and what her father's identity means for her.

### **\* *A Question of Freedom* by Reginald Dwayne Betts**

The text focuses on Betts's experiences with the American criminal justice system and the ways in which our society pushes to label and define people based on one action. His memoir considers the role of literature in helping him navigate his time in prison and questions how someone can remain free.

### **\* *The Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin* by Jill Lepore**

This book tells the story of Ben Franklin's younger sister Jane – an avid reader, a prolific writer, and a biting political commentator. Yet, unlike her brother, her primary work was not as a statesman but as a mother of twelve children. Lepore explores this lesser known – but not lesser – life.

### **\* *The Way to Rainy Mountain* by N. Scott Momaday**

This short novel features three voices that each tell the story of the Kiowa people: Momaday's memories of stories from his childhood, the ancient Kiowa voice of his ancestors, and the historical record of these moments.

## ***Princeton High School – 2020 Senior Summer Reading***

All rising seniors must complete the following reading assignments prior to the start of school in September. While no written work is required, students should read carefully and thoughtfully. You may want to take notes or keep a journal to stay actively engaged. All students will participate in activities related to summer reading in early September and will complete one or more writing assignments involving these texts.

### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

**All rising seniors taking AP English IV will read *A Thousand Acres* by Jane Smiley.**

In *A Thousand Acres*, Jane Smiley offers a sweeping narrative exploring the American Dream, rural life, sibling rivalry, and existential crises. As the family patriarch agonizes over his legacy (the thousand-acre family land), his daughters engage in a rivalry that jeopardizes that same legacy. Smiley adapts her tale from Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear*, but her rich language and deep understanding of the bounty and burdens of modern life deliver Shakespeare's drama to a contemporary audience.

**All rising seniors taking English IV will read *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover.**

Tara Westover is born in the mountains of Idaho to Mormon survivalist parents who homeschool their children, practice herbal healing, labor in scrap metal and prepare for the end times. This shocking memoir, a #1 New York Times bestseller, tells the story of Westover's transformation into an Oxford PhD while unflinchingly depicting the realities of abuse, mental illness, family ties and, of course, education.

**In addition** to the required text designated above, all rising seniors **must choose and read one text** from this list of ten options (continued on the next page):

### **FICTION**

\* ***One World: A Global Anthology of Short Stories***

This is an international collection of 23 short stories from a diverse group of world-renowned writers – all of whom share a talent and a desire to write engaging, provocative stories.

\* ***Disgraced* by Ayad Akhtar**

This 2012 play centers around a dinner party with four people from vastly different backgrounds. The play specifically addresses themes related to Islamophobia and the self-identity of Muslim-Americans.

\* ***Home Fire*, by Kamila Shamsie**

This 2018 novel—a reimagining of the classic *Antigone*—achingly depicts the radicalization of a British teenager and the consequences that unfold for him, his family, his community and his country.

\* ***New Jersey Noir* edited by Joyce Carol Oates**

This is a collection of dark short stories and poems -- all set in New Jersey -- from a variety of different writers. Are these literary pieces humorous? Sometimes. Are they fascinating? Always.

## NON-FICTION

\* ***The Best American Essays 2019***

This collection of creative nonfiction essays addresses a wide variety of facets of the American experience in 2019, from politics to sports to love, through the varied perspectives of our greatest writers.

\* ***The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin**

Baldwin's classic personal essay attempts to explain his thoughts about race in America in 1963. It is a compelling examination of racial injustice and a call to all Americans to right a legacy of wrongs.

\* ***The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston**

Kingston details her struggles with her individual and cultural identity as a first-generation Chinese-American woman. This unique, award-winning text is a unique blend of Chinese folktales and memoirs that involves five interconnected chapters, each of which functions like a short story.

\* ***Savage Inequalities* by Jonathan Kozol**

Kozol describes the overwhelming disparities among the many public schools that he has visited throughout the country. He includes interviews with students, teachers, and parents in this seminal sociological work that is simultaneously inspiring and heartbreaking.

\* ***The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race* edited by Jesmyn Ward**

Envisioned as a response to James Baldwin's groundbreaking 1963 work *The Fire Next Time*, these contemporary writers reflect on the past, present, and future of race in America.

\* ***A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf**

This 1929 piece is Woolf's essay response when asked to speak about women and fiction. She ponders how women find the space – both literally and figuratively – to write and to live.

## Where can I find my Summer Reading books?

- The **local bookstores** receive our booklists and make an effort to supply the books for you.
- The **PHS English Department** has a small number of the Summer Reading books for distribution.
- **Princeton Public Library and Cranbury Public Library** are provided our lists so that they can supply in-hand books for you.
- Remember, all PPS students qualify for a **free Princeton Public Library card** which allows you to borrow from the collection.
- **Princeton Public Library (PPL)** offers two databases that can also source your eBooks and audiobooks. Your PPL card is needed for virtual checkout.
  - **Hoopla** offers many eBook and audiobook titles
  - **RB Digital** offers audiobooks (and magazines)
- **PHS Learning Commons** has multiple in-hand copies of any required Summer Reading and at least one copy of your-choice Summer Reading options.
- **Princeton Public Schools, Princeton Public Library, and Cranbury Public Library** also have **OverDrive** copies of the overwhelming majority of these titles in both eBook and Audiobook formats.
  - Download the OverDrive or Sora (school-orientation) app. Both of these apps allow you to add both the school's library and the public libraries' libraries. Libby is also an option, but only for the public libraries' books.
  - Once in the app, you can use your public library card's ID and pin to authorize that library.
  - Or, go to 'sign in', then click on the SSO on the left-hand side, enter your school email address (princetonk12.org) and password to add the Princeton Public School's library.
  - Borrow the book in the format of your choice to your eReader, tablet, or smartphone. Some formats also allow for downloading onto a computer.