

Ayer Shirley Middle School

Reading Menu

Summer 2026

Lexile Key

6th Grade = 875L to 1180L

7th Grade = 950L to 1250L

8th Grade = 1000L to 1310L



Inside Out and Back Again by *Thanhà Lai* - Told in verse, this moving novel follows Hà, a young girl forced to flee Vietnam with her family after the fall of Saigon. As she starts over in Alabama, Hà struggles to balance the memories of her old home with the challenges of fitting into a completely new world. (800L)

The Sun and the Star by *Rick Riordan and Mark Oshiro* - Nico di Angelo and Will Solace journey into the depths of the Underworld to rescue an old friend and confront painful memories from Nico's past. Their dangerous quest tests both their courage and the strength of their relationship. (850L)

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by *Kelly Barnhill* - Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the mysterious witch in the forest, believing it keeps them safe. But when the witch accidentally feeds one baby moonlight instead of starlight, the child becomes filled with extraordinary magic that could change the fate of the entire world. (640L)

Ghost by *Jason Reynolds* - Castle "Ghost" Cranshaw has always been running; from trouble, from his past, and sometimes from himself. When a track coach spots his incredible speed, Ghost gets a chance to turn his talent into something greater. (730L)

The Crossover by *Kwame Alexander* - Basketball is everything to twin brothers Josh and Jordan Bell, on and off the court. But as family tensions rise and life begins to change, Josh learns that growing up can be the toughest game of all. (750L)

Candle Island by *Lauren Wolk* - After moving to a small island off the coast of Maine, Lucretia and her mother hope for a fresh start. But mysterious events and hidden dangers on the island force Lucretia to uncover secrets that could change everything. (840L)

The Wrong Way Home by *Kate O'Shaughnessy* - Fern has spent her life in a strict off-the-grid community, believing the outside world is dangerous. When she escapes with her mother, Fern must figure out what freedom, family, and home truly mean. (760L)

The Pecan Sheller by *Lupe Ruiz-Flores* - Petra dreams of becoming a writer while helping her family survive during the Great Depression in Texas. As she works in a pecan-shelling factory, Petra discovers the power of courage, education, and speaking up for justice. (700L)

The Library of Unruly Treasures by *Jeanne Birdsall* - When Gwen discovers a mysterious hidden library connected to her family, she is swept into a world of secrets, puzzles, and magical objects. Solving the mystery may reveal truths about her past she never expected. (870L)

A World Without Summer by *Nicholas Day* - This nonfiction book explores the real events behind the strange year of 1816, when volcanic eruptions caused global weather disasters and crop failures. It shows how one environmental catastrophe changed history, science, and literature around the world. (1110L)

Graphic Novels

Wildfire by *Breena Bard* - After a wildfire threatens her rural community, Julianna struggles to cope with fear, loss, and uncertainty. Through art and friendship, she begins to find hope and healing in the aftermath of disaster. (GN410L)

Cabin Head and Tree Head by *Scott Campbell* - Two strange but lovable creatures (one with a cabin for a head and the other with a tree!) set off on a quirky adventure filled with friendship, imagination, and unexpected discoveries. Their journey celebrates creativity and seeing the world in new ways. (GN390L)