



OES SUMMER READING LIST 2026



Welcome to summer, welcome to reading. We have a long-standing tradition in the Middle School of celebrating summer reading. For this year's summer reading, each grade level has a **required reading** book that was chosen by me and teachers from each grade level. Below, you can learn about each title and how each grade level will approach the book. I have also included a selection of optional reads for those who might be looking for a list to follow.

My challenge this year is for you to find as many analog ways to unwind. It can be finding old magazines from Goodwill and creating a collage; reading the atlas on a road trip and learning the cities between here and wherever you're headed with populations between 10,000 - 50,000; reading the back of a cereal box during breakfast; or even trying to read the entirety of a Dr. Bronner's soap container. Try to read a book about whittling and learn how to whittle; read a book about birds and learn some bird calls. Whatever it might be, those who have the most entertaining ways of unwinding in an analog way can share them with me at the beginning of the new school year and receive a prize.

Happy reading!

Patrick Fuller
Middle School Librarian

6th Grade

Over the summer, incoming 6th graders are required to read ***The First State of Being* by Erin Entrada Kelly**. It's the summer of 1999, and twelve-year-old Michael Rosario is panicking over the looming Y2K computer crisis and feeling responsible for his family's financial struggles. His ordinary, worry-filled world is flipped upside down when he and his babysitter meet Ridge, a confident, carefree teenager claiming to be the world's first time traveler from the year 2199.

You can find your copy at your local library or bookstores such as [Broadway Books](#) or [Powell's](#), or wherever you purchase books. When we return for the new school year, you will learn about ways the book connects to some of your classes such as humanities.

7th Grade

Over the summer, incoming 7th graders are required to read ***Mountain of Fire: The Eruption and Survivors of Mount St. Helens* by Rebecca E. F. Barone**. On May 18, 1980, Mount St. Helens shook with an earthquake, triggered the largest landslide in recorded history, and exploded with the force of hundreds of atomic bombs. The book tells the thrilling, true stories of the scientists, campers, and loggers who found themselves trapped in the disaster zone as a wave of scorching ash raced toward them at hundreds of miles per hour. By mixing fast-paced

survival stories with cool science, the book shows how human courage and quick thinking helped a few lucky survivors outrun a literal waking nightmare.

You can find your copy at your local library or bookstores such as [Broadway Books](#) or [Powell's](#), or wherever you purchase books. When we return for the new school year, you will learn about ways the book connects to some of your classes such as history, English and science.

8th Grade

Over the summer, incoming 8th graders are required to ***Everything is Tuberculosis* by John Green**. Imagine a disease that has been around since the time of ancient mummies, has a cure that was invented decades ago, and yet *still* kills over a million people every single year. In his book, author John Green tells the story of a young boy named Henry to show how this terrible disease, tuberculosis, affects real families today. He explains that fixing this problem isn't about finding a new medicine, it's about making sure the medicine actually reaches the people who need it most.

You can find your copy at your local library or bookstores such as [Broadway Books](#) or [Powell's](#), or wherever you purchase books. When we return for the new school year, you will learn about ways the book connects to some of your classes such as history, English and science.



If you're in need of some additional reading, here are some ideas....

Romance

Home Is Where the Cupcake Is by Coco Simon (Ages: 8 - 12)

Just as Mia begins to find her place at sleepaway camp, she can't help but feel like a big part of her is missing. She wishes Aaron and her friends and family back home could be a part of her new experiences at Camp Evergreen. Mia's feelings of homesickness get more complicated when she develops a new crush on a boy who isn't Aaron. Can she like two boys at once? Mia can't seem to shake the unsettling feeling that she's leaving everyone back home behind.

Fun in the Sun by Lee Heart (Ages: 10 - 14)

Anna expects her spring break trip to visit her grandmother to be a total snooze-fest, but everything changes when she meets her grandma's friend's incredibly cute grandson, Mason. The two hit it off immediately, but Anna's relaxing vacation quickly turns chaotic when the neighbor's chatty grandkids arrive and trigger an unexpected middle school love triangle. Suddenly, Anna is left hilariously trying to decipher mixed signals, dodge unwanted attention, and figure out if her crush actually likes her back before vacation ends.

As You Wish by Nashae Jones (Ages: 10 - 14)

Birdie has a foolproof equation for a "normal" eighth-grade experience: get herself a boyfriend and find a girlfriend for her best friend, Deve. But when her master plan causes a massive blow-up fight with Deve instead, a new girl named Nancy shows up claiming to be Anansi, the chaos-loving West African trickster spider god, and offers Birdie three wishes to fix the mess. Birdie quickly learns to be careful what she wishes for, as each magical do-over twists her reality in ways she never imagined, forcing her to figure out how to undo the magic before she loses her best friend forever.

The Secret Identity of Devon Delaney by Lauren Barnholdt (Ages 9 - 13)

When Devon Delaney moves to a new school for the summer, she decides to reinvent herself as a cool, popular girl. The lie works perfectly until she moves back home for eighth grade and discovers that her new school's popular crew is best friends with her summer crush, who thinks she's someone completely different. Suddenly, Devon is stuck frantically living a double life, trying to keep her old life and her glamorous new secret identity from crashing into each other.

When You Wish Upon a Lantern by Gloria Chao (Ages: 12+)

Liya Huang secretly continues her family's traditional paper lantern making business, helping the locals fulfill their deepest wishes while desperately trying to save her family's shop from financial ruin. She joins forces with Kai Greyson, her former best friend turned rival, who is managing his own family's competing store in Chicago's Chinatown. As the two work together in

secret to grant wishes for their community, old sparks fly and secrets surface, forcing them to confront their true feelings before they lose everything they love.

Friendship

Happy & Sad & Everything True by Alex Thayer (Ages: 8 - 12)

When sixth grade begins, Dee finds herself hiding in the school bathroom to avoid the sting of seeing her former best friend, Juniper, hanging out with a brand-new crowd. Her quiet hiding spot gets a lot louder when she strikes up a conversation through a ventilation grate with a classmate, accidentally becoming the school's anonymous, go-to bathroom advice giver. Helping other kids with their secrets makes Dee realize she isn't the only one feeling lonely, but she still has to figure out how to navigate real-life friendships, and a flurry of mysterious notes, outside the bathroom stalls.

The Summer Before Boys by Nora Raleigh Baskin (Ages: 10 - 14)

Twelve-year-old Julia is staying with her best friend Eliza for the summer while her mother is deployed in Iraq, hoping for one last season of carefree fun before they start middle school. But the peaceful summer begins to slip away when Eliza develops a massive crush on a boy at the local resort, leaving Julia feeling left behind and completely out of the loop. As their friendship faces its biggest test yet, Julia must learn to navigate the confusing world of growing up and changing dynamics without losing the sisterly bond she relies on most.

Cruel Summer: The Taylors, Version 2 by Elizabeth Eulberg (Ages 10 - 14)

Four best friends, and massive Taylor Swift fans, are reunited for the ultimate summer at a performing arts camp, but keeping their tight-knit bond together is harder than it looks. As they navigate intense competition for camp spotlights, unexpected summer crushes, and the pressure of keeping secrets from one another, their friendship is put to the test. Inspired by the drama and emotion of Taylor's iconic songs, the girls have to figure out how to harmonize their different lives before the final showcase ends.

Historical

More Than This: The Davenports, Book 2 by Krystal Marquis (Ages: 12+)

Set in 1910 Chicago, this dazzling historical romance follows four wealthy Black young adults as they fight for their own dreams and forbidden loves against the strict rules of high society. Olivia Davenport is expected to marry a proper gentleman but finds herself falling for a passionate civil rights activist, while her sister Helen risks everything to pursue her secret talent for fixing cars. Together with their friends and rivals, the sisters must navigate scandalous secrets, family pressure, and a rapidly changing world to prove they are worth far more than the roles society has picked out for them.

Baseball's Shining Season: America's Pastime on the Brink of War by Martin W. Sandler (Ages: 10 - 14)

In 1941, as the United States stood on the precipice of entering World War II, a nation in need of a distraction turned its eyes to the baseball diamond. This compelling narrative nonfiction book explores that legendary season, where a heated rivalry between the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Yankees captivated the public, and superstars Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams shattered records. Yet, the authors pull back the curtain on "America's pastime" to reveal a deeply divided sport, highlighting how Black players were segregated into the Negro Leagues and women fought for their own professional recognition on the eve of a global conflict that would change the country forever.

After My Brother Sam by James Lincoln Collier (Ages: 11+)

Picking up immediately after the devastating conclusion of the Newbery Honor classic *My Brother Sam Is Dead*, young Tim Meeker and his mother are left to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives and keep their Connecticut tavern running amidst the ongoing Revolutionary War. Having lost both his Loyalist father and his Rebel brother to the conflict, Tim is consumed by an unrelenting anger and a desire for revenge.

Deep Secrets: A Titanic Novel by Nikki Shannon Smith (Ages: 9 - 13)

Seamlessly weaving between the bleak realities of the Great Depression and a fateful journey aboard the Titanic, this emotional historical novel explores the true weight of survival and family bonds. The story follows a protagonist harboring deep-seated truths while navigating the luxury and hidden dangers of the ill-fated ocean liner.

Adventure

Destiny and Disaster by Scott Reintgen (Ages: 8 - 12)

Celia Cleary just inherited her family's magical gift of prophecy, but her very first vision is a total nightmare: the quiet boy down the street is about to die. Defying her grandmother's warnings, Celia uses her powers to rewrite fate and save him, only to realize that every tragedy she avoids triggers a brand-new disaster. To make matters worse, she soon uncovers a massive "Doomsday Prophecy" targeted at her entire eighth-grade class, forcing her into a high-stakes race against time to stop a school-wide catastrophe before the clock runs out.

Rialto by Kate Milford (Ages: 10 - 14)

Sisters Ivy and Dahlia expect a normal summer vacation in Rialto, Missouri, but everything changes when they discover the town sits in the shadow of an abandoned theme park that was mysteriously swallowed by the forest overnight. Alongside their new friend Remy, the sisters are drawn into a decades-old mystery as they help deliver a series of strange, final wishes left behind by Remy's late aunt. To solve the puzzle and uncover the secrets of the park's past, they will have to navigate growing up, look out for one another, and find a way to believe in real magic.

The Grimmelings by Rachael King (Ages: 10 - 14)

Thirteen-year-old Ella lives on a remote horse farm in New Zealand, raised on her grandmother's spine-chilling Scottish folklore about kelpies, which are shape-shifting water horses that steal children away. The old stories suddenly feel dangerously real when a mysterious stranger arrives in town, closely followed by a striking, wild black horse that seems to exert a dark hold over Ella's family. To save her little sister and break a generations-old curse, Ella must find the courage to confront the ancient creature and harness the power of her own voice before the dark magic pulls them under.

The Nine Moons of Han Yu and Luli by Karina Yan Glaser (Ages: 8 - 12)

This Newbery Honor-winning novel weaves together the parallel stories of two eleven-year-olds separated by a thousand years: Han Yu in eighth-century China and Luli Lee in 1930s New York City. When a crisis hits their families, a dangerous plague in ancient Chang'an and a Great Depression foreclosure threat in Chinatown, both kids must step up and venture out into a world filled with bandits, art thieves, and unexpected adventures. As Han Yu travels the treacherous Silk Road and Luli tries to save her family's restaurant by curating a mini art museum, their lives connect through a shared piece of ancestral history and ancient poetry.

At the Edge of Lost by Martha Brockenbrough (Ages: 10 - 14)

After spending years moving around the world for his parents' jobs, middle-schooler Caleb finally finds stability in a Seattle retirement community living with his grandfather, Poppy, and his aging Irish wolfhound, Ronan. But their peaceful life is shattered when a dangerous outbreak of bird flu strikes, sending a deathly ill Poppy to the hospital and forcing Caleb into a quarantine home across the water on Bainbridge Island. Separated from his boy, the loyal Ronan escapes into the wilderness to find him, leading Caleb to brave a fierce Pacific Northwest storm in a desperate race against predators, injury, and time to rescue his four-legged best friend.

Graphic Narrative

Chernobyl, Life, and Other Disasters: A Graphic Memoir by Yevgenia Nayberg (Ages: 11+)

Growing up in Ukraine just a few hours away from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, young Yevgenia is taught by her anxious family to fear everything, from glowing radioactive dust to the invisible germs hiding on everyday objects. This beautifully illustrated graphic memoir captures the humor and heartache of a childhood overshadowed by a historic disaster, where every cough feels like a life-or-death crisis. As Yevgenia eventually grows up and moves across the world to America, she discovers that while you can outrun a disaster zone, learning to let go of your childhood anxieties is a journey all its own.

We Could Be Magic by Marissa Meyer (Ages: 12+)

Tabitha Laurie thinks all her dreams are coming true when she lands a spot in the prestigious summer work program at Sommerland, a magical, Disney-like theme park she has loved since childhood. Her ultimate goal is to audition and win a coveted role as one of the park's face princesses, but she quickly runs into the park's rigid, outdated beauty standards that don't favor

plus-size girls. Banished to working at a nacho food stand instead of wearing a crown, Tabi must team up with a new crush and a crew of quirky friends to challenge the park's rules and create her own kind of happily ever after.

Midsummer Sisters by Niki Smith (Ages: 8 - 12)

On the magical island of Midsummer, three triplet sisters, Lark, Wren, and Pip, are about to celebrate their thirteenth birthday, the traditional time when the island's mysterious magic is supposed to grant them their unique powers. However, the ceremony takes a disastrous turn when their magical inheritances go completely awry, leaving the sisters with unpredictable abilities that threaten to tear their tight bond apart. With the island's magic suddenly spiraling out of control, the triplets must put aside their differences, learn to work together, and uncover a deep-seated family secret before their home is changed forever.

Non-Fiction

The Atlas Obscura Explorer's Guide to Inventing the World by Dyllan Thuras (Ages: 8 - 12)

Pack your imaginary bags, complete with a time machine and a samurai sword, for a globe-trotting adventure that explores 50 of humanity's coolest inventions and scientific breakthroughs. Instead of a boring history timeline, this book hops back and forth through time and around the world, showing how ancient discoveries like fire directly led to modern marvels like glass bridges, telescopes, and AI. Packed with awesome illustrations, secret map coordinates, and mind-blowing facts, it is the ultimate guide to seeing how the ordinary objects all around us are actually connected in one giant, world-changing spiderweb.

A World Without Summer: A Volcano Erupts, A Creature Awakens, and the Sun Goes Out by Nicholas Day (Ages: 10 - 14)

When Mount Tambora erupted in 1815, it triggered a global climate catastrophe that blocked out the sun and caused freezing temperatures, crop failures, and famine across the globe. This gripping narrative nonfiction book explores how that bleak "Year Without a Summer" changed history, driving people into a panic as the skies darkened. Amid the global chaos, the story connects the volcanic winter to a legendary night in Switzerland, where a young Mary Shelley was inspired by the eerie, unseasonable weather to write her masterpiece, *Frankenstein*.