2019 Middle School Summer Reading List

Fiction

Arnold, Elana. *What Girls Are Made Of*. 9781512410242. Sixteen-year-old Nina experiences sex, betrayal, loss, and a dysfunctional home life, all while trying to understand what it means to be female in the world and whether love can ever be truly unconditional.

Bardugo, Leigh. *The Language of Thorns: Midnight Tales and Dangerous Magic*. Illus. by Sara Kipin. 9781250122520. Traditional fairy tales are refreshingly twisted, re-created, and wrapped in gorgeous illustrations in this stand-alone collection of six short stories. The world-building will be familiar to Bardugo's fans, and readers new to her Grishaverse have the pleasure of knowing they can take further excursions into this world.

Lee, Mackenzi. *The Gentleman’s Guide to Vice and Virtue*. 9780062382801. Montague, the son of a British nobleman, embarks on a European tour with his best friend (and secret crush) Percy and his sister Felicity. Along the way, they encounter adventure and conflict that leads them to a very different destiny than the one awaiting their return to England.

Lu, Marie. *Warcross*. 9780399547966. When bounty hunter and hacker Emika Chen finds herself unexpectedly entered into the exclusive Warcross championship, she is determined to get to the bottom of a dastardly plot while trying to pull off a win in the worldwide virtual reality game.

Moon, Sarah. *Sparrow*. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine. 9781338032581. Sparrow has a secret: her closest friends are birds. When she feels anxious, she goes to the roof and flies. One day, this practice lands her in the hospital, facing questions from the adults in her life. Slowly, she recovers, finds her voice, and makes new friends along the way.

Reynolds, Jason. *Long Way Down*. Simon & Schuster/Atheneum. 9781481438254. Will's brother has been shot. In this free-verse novel, Will steps into an elevator ready to head downstairs and to follow the rules he’s been taught and avenge his brother's death, when he encounters the ghosts of victims of a chain reaction caused by a shooting.

Taylor, Laini. *Strange the Dreamer*. Little, Brown. 9780316341684. Lazlo Strange is an orphan raised by monks, and he’s dedicated his life to learning. His favorite story is of Weep, the lost fairytale city that was literally removed from memory. This is the story of his search for the magical city.

Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give*. Balzer+Bray. 9780062498533. Starr Carter is a black girl caught between two worlds: her poor, black neighborhood, and her suburban, mostly white high school. Occupying this liminal space becomes nearly impossible when Starr witnesses, and is forced to speak out about, the fatal shooting of her unarmed friend by a white cop.
Watson, Renee. *Piecing Me Together*. Bloomsbury USA. 9781681191058. Artist Jade has big dreams, but she recognizes that coming from a rough neighborhood creates barriers. She reluctantly joins Woman to Woman, a mentoring program that promises a scholarship. Her well-intentioned mentor, also black, doesn't understand Jade has no desire to be “saved.” Each has things to learn from the other.

Zappia, Francesca. *Eliza and Her Monsters*. HarperCollins/Greenwillow. 9780062290137. Fellow students don’t know that, when she’s not at school, reclusive senior Eliza is Lady Constellation, creator of the wildly popular Monstrous Sea. New student Wallace is a huge fan of the webcomic, and hr slowly breaks through her shell. However, trying to keep her two lives separate may cost Eliza everything.

Zentner, Jeff. *Goodbye Days*. Crown Books for Young Readers. 9780553524062. Carver's three best friends are killed in a car accident soon after he sends the driver a text message, and grief and guilt take their toll. When the grandmother of one of his deceased friends asks for a “goodbye day,” Carver agrees, hoping for closure.

Non Fiction

Aronson, Marc and Marina Tamar Budhos. *Eyes of the World : Robert Capa, Gerda Taro, and the Invention of Modern Photojournalism*. 9780805098358. Meet Robert Capo and Gerda Taro, young refugees and fearless pioneers of photojournalism, who documented the savagery of the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. In capturing a struggle against fascism that presaged World War II, their body of work reflects the evolution of photography as a journalistic medium.

Brockenbrough, Martha. *Alexander Hamilton, Revolutionary*. 9781250123190. You’ve heard of the Broadway musical *Hamilton*; now meet the real Alexander Hamilton in this fascinating historical biography of the man who was instrumental in creating our democracy and economic system.

Heiligman, Deborah. *Vincent and Theo: The Van Gogh Brothers*. 9780805093391. The bond between brothers was never stronger. Drawing on their lifelong correspondence, Heiligman plumbs their journey from an ascetic upbringing in a Protestant parsonage to the auction houses of Europe as Theo develops business acumen, all the while supporting volatile Vincent’s groundbreaking artistic endeavors both materially and emotionally. Without Theo, there could have been no Vincent van Gogh.

Hennessey, Jonathan and art by Jack McGowan. *The Comic Book Story of Video Games: The Incredible History of the Electronic Gaming Revolution*. 9780399578908. Just like Life will find a way to survive, in any situation, so will gamers find a way to co-opt whatever nascent technology exist so that they can play and compete in electronic games. This cleverly illustrated graphic novel goes into great detail about paradigm-changing games going back to the very first computers.
Leatherdale, Mary Beth and Lisa Charleyboy. #NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women. 9781554519576. The editors present a stereotype-busting, zine-like collection of personal essays, illustrations, and photos from and about the marginalized experiences of indigenous young women. This energetic showcase of contemporary lives demonstrates the strength and vitality of living heritages through a rich, visually stunning riot of art and memoir.

Levinson, Cynthia and Sanford Levinson. Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws that Affect Us Today. 9781561459452. Think the Constitution is dry as dust? This illuminating look at the United States Constitution illustrates both the brilliance and troubling flaws of what many consider the most important document of our democracy.

Sandler, Martin W. The Whydah: A Pirate Ship Feared, Wrecked, and Found. 9780763680336. Cinematic portrayals of the high seas can’t touch the rollicking realities of life aboard the Eighteenth century ship, The Whydah. This transporting look at the peculiar society of the piratical brotherhood, peppered with first-hand accounts, has much to tell us about successful maritime strategies for maintaining a reign of terror, the Whydah’s wreck and the house-to-house search it inspired, and the truths that artifacts recovered from its discovery off Cape Cod revealed about the golden age of piracy in the American colonies.

Sheinkin, Steve. Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team. 9781596439542. Sheinkin presents the fascinating story of Jim Thorpe, the superb athlete, from his childhood as a marginalized Native American, through his years as a student at the rigorous, abusive Carlisle boarding school where he, his team, and coach Pop Warner “invented football,” on to Thorpe’s momentary triumph as the winner of two Olympic gold medals in 1912 before that honor’s subsequent loss and eventual restoration.


Graphic Novels
The Backstagers. By James Tynion IV. Illus. by Rian Sygh. 9781608869930. Jory, a new student at an all-boys school, feels left out of school life until he stumbles upon the backstage crew of the drama club and the mysterious tunnels they keep watch over.

Black Hammer, Volume 1: Secret Origins. By Jeff Lemire. Illus. by Dean Ormston. 9781616557867. Abraham Slam, Golden Gail, Colonel Weird, Madame Dragonfly, and Barbalien are trapped! In their old lives they were superheroes, but because of a strange occurrence in their multiverse they are thrust into life in a rural town from which they cannot escape.

Brave. By Svetlana Chmakova. Illus. by the author. 9780316363189. Jensen, a daydreaming artist obsessed with sunspots and NASA, navigates middle school, bullies and math!
I Am Alfonso Jones. By Tony Medina. Illus. by Stacey Robison and John Jennings. 9781620142639. Fifteen year old Alfonso Jones is shot by the police while shopping for a suit, and his loved ones and classmates are left behind to address his death and the larger issue of police brutality.

Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation. By Damian Duffy and Octavia E. Butler. Illus. by John Jennings. 9781419709470. It's 1976 and Dana is trying to settle down to a comfortable life with her husband when she finds herself unexpectedly ripped from the present and sent hurtling to the slavery-era past. Here, she is tasked with saving the life of her ancestor, lest she risk never being born.

Lighter than My Shadow. By Katie Green. Illus. by the author. 978194130241. The author's personal account of the eating disorders she developed in an attempt to manage the black scribbles of her inner thoughts. Green candidly recounts both her steps and missteps along her path to recovery.

My Brother's Husband. By Gengoroh Tagame. Illus. by the author. 9781101871515. After the passing of Ryoji, his twin brother, Yaichi, and his now widowed husband, Mike, come together to learn more about the loved one they have both lost.

Pashmina. By Nidhi Chanani Illus. by the author. 9781626720879. Priyanka discovers in her mother's belongings a magical pashmina that leads her on a journey to India, where she seeks to understand secrets of her family and to claim her own personal identity.

Spill Zone. By Scott Westerfeld. Illus. by Alex Puvilland. 9781596439368. An event destroyed the small city of Poughkeepsie three years ago, forever changing reality within its borders. When an eccentric collector makes a million-dollar offer, Addison breaks her own hard-learned rules of survival and ventures farther into the Spillzone than she has ever dared.