



NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
IROQUOIS AND VAN ANTWERP MIDDLE SCHOOLS

June 2016

To all Middle School Students and Families:

Summer is a wonderful opportunity to take advantage of the time to read. Find out what your friends are reading, talk to your parents about what they are reading, and explore the links below and suggested titles attached. With the adoption of the NYS Common Core Standards for ELA and Literacy, we have seen an increase in the amount of high quality informational/non-fiction books available for young adults. This year we are encouraging students to read widely, and explore areas of interest across literature and informational books.

Teachers look forward to learning more about their students' summer reading journeys. We encourage all students to jot down reading reflections or maintain a reading journal for sharing with their friends and classmates when they return to school in the fall. ***Please be prepared to bring a copy of one book you read over the summer to school when you return in September.***

Please contact me at 377-4666, ext 50751, if you have any questions. We hope you have a wonderful summer full of rich experiences both out in the world and among the pages of books.

Ms. Jean Winkler  
Director of English Language Arts & Library Media, K-8

### **Online Resources:**

- <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/explore.htm> - Summer Reading at New York Libraries allow you to search leveled lists of books that include New York settings and topics.
- <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-resources/reading-lists> - International Literacy Association – Provides several reading lists including books chosen by children and teachers.
- <http://capregboces.lib.overdrive.com/> - Our middle school Media Centers are offering ebooks. Check out titles online, and read or listen offline on PC or Mac®, smartphones, MP3 players, and eBook readers including Sony® Reader and Kindle® . You'll need your ID number in order to check out. Your ID number is your LIBRARY Number (AKA Lunch Number) for students. Make sure your number is FIVE DIGITS LONG! Students, please add a “0” if your ID is only 4 digits long.

# Summer Reading Book Recommendations

## GRADE 6 – Non-Fiction

***Buried Alive!: How 33 Miners Survived 69 Days Deep Under the Chilean Desert*** Elaine Scott

Trapped in the steamy darkness, 2000 feet below the surface of the earth. What did they eat? How did they get along? And most important, how did they survive? Now a major motion picture.

***Into the Unknown: How Great Explorers Found Their Way by Land, Sea, and Air*** Stewart Ross

Travel along with 14 of history's greatest explorers, from Marco Polo to Neil Armstrong. Boldly go where no person has gone before with intriguing details about the explorers' amazing lives and exciting journeys.

***The Mighty Mars Rovers: The Incredible Adventure of Spirit and Opportunity*** Elizabeth Rusch

Take a heart-pounding journey to another planet with two of the most advanced robot explorers ever created. Sent to Mars on one of the greatest scientific missions of our time, this suspenseful page-turner captures every hair-raising moment of their journey from blastoff to final contact. See the critical cameo one of the rovers makes in the film, *The Martian*.

***Queen of the Falls*** Chris Van Allsburg

In 1901, 63-year-old Annie Edson Taylor, looking for a way to make money, decided that a trip over Niagara Falls in a barrel held the key to the fame and fortune she sought. Witness her entire journey, and discover the spirit that spawned a plethora of daredevils hoping to recreate this historic event.

***Space, Stars, and the Beginning of Time: What the Hubble Telescope Saw*** Elaine Scott

Amazing images and the stories behind them take you on a journey beyond the stars through the evolution of our universe, exploring new galaxies, investigating dark matter, speculating on the Big Bang Theory and the question of where we came from.

## GRADE 6 – Fiction

***Among the Hidden*** Margaret Peterson Haddix

The first in the Shadow Children Series is bound to get you hooked into a world where Luke lives in the shadows hiding from the population police. He is the third child in a world where families are only permitted two.

***Because of Winn Dixie*** Kate DiCamillo

A lonely girl's life is changed immeasurably when she convinces her father to take in a scruffy mutt. Lots of colorful characters will draw you into this Newbery award-winning book.

***The Lightning Thief*** Rick Riordan

Percy can't help that trouble seems to follow him around, and get him almost kicked out of school. Once he learns he has a famous, and immortal, father, his troubles grow exponentially.

***Pictures of Hollis Woods*** Patricia Reilly Giff

Moving from foster home to foster home has taken its toll on Hollis. So, she'll do whatever it takes to stay in the first place that really feels like home.

***Schooled*** Gordon Korman

Join Cap as he enters middle school after spending his whole life homeschooled by his grandmother. You can't imagine how much he has to learn about public school, and how much he has missed.

***Things Not Seen*** Andrew Clements

Imagine waking up one day to find that you are invisible, really, a total missing person. Fun for a little while, but living an invisible life is harder than you think.

## **GRADE 7 – Non-Fiction**

### ***An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793*** Jim Murphy

Early in our nation's history, an outbreak of an incurable disease threatens all that the founders of our country had worked so hard to achieve. Filled with amazing stories of the stark realities of a deadly epidemic and the brave, unsung heroes who helped overcome this tragic time.

### ***The Elephant Scientist*** Caitlin O'Connell & Donna M. Jackson

The world of elephants comes alive as we ride along with American scientist, Caitlin O'Connell, as she made the groundbreaking discovery of how elephants communicate.

### ***Mysterious Bones: The Story of Kennewick Man*** Emma Stevenson

In 1991, two young men sneaked into a boat race and accidentally uncovered a skeleton along a bank of the Columbia River in Kennewick, Washington. They had no idea of the impact their discovery would have.

### ***Phineas Gage: A Gruesome But True Story About Brain Science*** John Fleischman

An incredible story of the railroad worker who, in 1848, survived for over 10 years with a hole in his head, caused by the piercing blast of a 13-pound iron rod. Learn how Gage's misfortune actually played an intriguing and important role in the development of our knowledge of the brain.

### ***Witches: The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem*** Rosalyn Schanzer

Hysteria, confusion and tragedy are a few words that describe the Salem Witch Trials. Find out what drove people to accuse their own family and friends of being witches, and get a firsthand look at court proceedings and witness testimonies.

### ***Zombie Makers: True Stories of Nature's Undead*** Rebecca Johnson

They walk, crawl and slither among us. They are innocent creatures whose minds and bodies have been taken over by nature's true zombie makers. A real life story of the walking dead that is not for the squeamish!

## **GRADE 7 – Fiction**

### ***Because of Mr. Terupt*** Rob Buyea

A true tear jerker. If you've ever had a great teacher, you'll cry! This realistic fiction story is told from the viewpoint of multiple students in Mr. Terupt's class, so you get to see what happens from many different angles.

### ***City of Ember*** Jeanne DuPrau

What would it be like to live underground in a world of darkness? Read the first book in an excellent science fiction series.

### ***Eragon*** Christopher Paolini

Great start to a fantasy series. Paolini was 17 when he wrote it!

### ***Heat*** Mike Lupica

Michael can do no wrong on the baseball field, throwing heat and heading to the Little League World Series. Unfortunately, his life off the field seems to keep throwing the "heat" right back at him.

### ***Matched*** Allyson Condie

If you like *The Hunger Games*, this book one of the series is for you!

### ***Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer*** John Grisham

Prolific writer of adult books, Mr. Grisham introduces a crime solving youth who navigates the legal system like a pro. Just the first of a series of impossible to put down mysteries.

### ***Touching Spirit Bear*** Ben Mikaelson

Lots of graphic visuals in this book as troubled Cole struggles to survive in the wilderness. It will make you cringe it's so realistic.

## **GRADE 8 – Non-Fiction**

### ***Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart*** Candace Fleming

In one of the greatest unsolved mysteries of our time, ride along with Amelia Earhart on her journey from an imaginative young girl to become one of history's most daring pilots. This story takes you on her tragic final flight, and the search for her plane which still continues to this day.

### ***Bomb: The Race to Build and Steal the World's Most Dangerous Weapon*** Steve Sheinkin

Spies, military commando units, and brilliant scientists working in top-secret locations... the race to build the world's first atomic bomb is a fascinating true story of action and espionage with an outcome that changed the world forever.

### ***Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition*** Karen Blumenthal

Gangsters, bootlegging, and crime are just three of the unfortunate side effects resulting from the ban of alcohol in America. Filled with photographs, anecdotes, and portraits of unique characters from the era, this fascinating book looks at the rise and fall of the disastrous social experiment known as Prohibition.

### ***Flesh and Blood So Cheap*** Albert Marrin

In 1911, a tragic fire ripped through the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in NYC, killing 146 workers inside ... but the tragedy is only the beginning. It is also a story of immigrants working hard to make a better life despite poor working conditions and greedy bosses. This book captures pride and activism of fearless immigrants and women who stood up to business, got America on their side. They finally changed working conditions for our entire nation, initiating radical new laws we take for granted today.

### ***Little Rock Girl 1957: How a Photograph Changed the Fight for Integration*** Shelley Tougas

In 1957, a photograph of a courageous young African American girl, being taunted, harassed and threatened by an angry mob, grabbed the world's attention and put the issue of segregation at the forefront.

## **GRADE 8 – Fiction**

### ***Ashes of Roses*** Mary Jane Auch

If you love historic fiction, this is for you. Set in NYC in 1911, this is a fictional account of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory tragedy. A great female protagonist, Margaret Rose Nolan, is someone we can all look up to.

### ***Freak the Mighty*** Rodman Philbrick

You can't help but cheer for this dynamic duo whose unlikely friendship takes them on dangerous quests (real and imagined).

### ***House of the Scorpion*** Nancy Farmer

A different kind of science fiction book. Matteo was born to serve a very specific purpose; to guarantee someone else's survival.

### ***Milkweed*** Jerry Spinelli

A well-written portrait of a harrowing time in history. If you know a little about the Holocaust, this book will shake you!

### ***Hunger Games*** Suzanne Collins

Don't just watch the movie; live and fight with the characters as you read this dystopian novel.