



Recommended Reading List

Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The

Twain, Mark.

The adventures of a mischievous young boy and his friends growing up in a Mississippi River town in the nineteenth century.

Among the Hidden

Haddix, Margaret Peterson.

In a future where the Population Police enforce the law limiting a family to only two children, Luke has lived all his twelve years in isolation and fear on his family's farm, until another "third" convinces him that the government is wrong.

Bearstone

Hobbs, Will.

A troubled Indian boy goes to live with an elderly rancher whose caring ways help the boy become a man.

Because of Winn-Dixie

DiCamillo, Kate.

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie.

Black Snowman, The

Mendez, Phil.

Through the powers of a magical kente, a black snowman comes to life and helps young Jacob discover the beauty of his black heritage as well as his own self-worth.

The Boys of San Joaquin

Smith, James.

Twelve year old Paolo is the middle of the 10 children. His father is from Appalachia, and his mother is Italian. Paolo has five older siblings - two brothers and two sisters; he has four younger siblings, three sisters and one brother. And, he has an eight year old deaf cousin, Billy. Paolo's maternal grandparents also live with them. Oh, they also have a big dog named Rufus. Now, with this crowd, anything can happen, and does. As the story opens, Rufus comes into the yard with part of a \$20 bill hanging out of his mouth. Paolo tells Billy that surely there is more "where this came from." This begins their quest to solve the mystery.

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Bully, The

Anne E. Schraff

A new life. An new school. A new bully. That's what Darrell Mercer faces when he and his mother move from Philadelphia to California. After spending months living in fear, Darrell is faced with a big decision. He can either keep running from this bully--or find some way to fight back.

Call of the Wild, The

London, Jack.

The dog hero, Buck, is stolen from his home and pressed into service as a sledge dog in the Klondike.

Children of the Dust Days

Coombs, Karen Mueller.

Focuses on the experiences of children during the Dust Bowl era of the 1930s, when prolonged drought, coupled with farming techniques, caused massive erosion from Texas to Canada's wheat fields.

Children of the River

Crew, Linda

To escape the Khmer Rouge army, Sundara fled Cambodia with her aunt. Now she is a high school student in Oregon. Reconciling American values with Cambodian traditions is difficult.

Christmas Carol, A

Dickens, Charles.

Scrooge is a crochety old miser who wants to be left alone until the "humbug" of Christmas is over. But then four ghostly visitors-his partner Marley, and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Yet to Come-appear to show him the tragic error of his ways.

Day No Pigs Would Die

Peck, Robert Newton.

To a thirteen-year-old Vermont farm boy whose father slaughters pigs for a living, maturity comes early as he learns "doing what's got to be done," especially regarding his pet pig who cannot produce a litter.

Grade 7 Recommended Reading List

Dear Miss Breed

Oppenheim, Joanne.

In what must be one of the most comprehensive books about the internment experience from the eyes of children and young adults, Joanne Oppenheim brings the life of librarian, Clara Breed, onto center stage. This is not where Breed would have wanted it because all she was interested in was offering some sort of small hope to the Japanese American children who were trapped in the camps. Clara Breed received many letters from children in camps around the country. To the children, she was a solid rock in their shifting world. Oppenheim stumbled across Clara Breed's contributions as she was attempting to locate some of her high school classmates for their reunion. From interviews with the adults who wrote the letters to Miss Breed, the articles that Clara Breed wrote for *Hornbook* and *Library Journal* about her experiences, and from the children's letters that Clara had kept for so many years, Oppenheim presents a clear picture of a true "lifeline" that Clara Breed was for these children

Dacey's Song

Voigt, Cynthia.

Now that the four abandoned Tillerman children are settled in with their grandmother, Dacey finds that their new beginnings require love, trust, humor, and courage.

Dogsong

Paulsen, Gary.

A fourteen-year-old Eskimo boy who feels assailed by the modernity of his life takes a 1400-mile journey by dog sled across ice, tundra, and mountains seeking his own "song" of himself.

Durango Street

Bonham, Frank.

As headman of his teenage gang, Rufus Henry has to deal not only with other gangs, but also with the police sanctioned sponsor who has involved himself with

Forged by Fire

Draper, Sharon M. (Sharon Mills)

Gerald, a teenager who has spent years protecting his fragile half-sister from their abusive father, must face the prospect of one final confrontation before the problem can be solved.

Grade 7 Recommended Reading List

Frindle

Clements, Andrew.

When he decides to turn his fifth-grade teacher's love of the dictionary around on her, clever Nick Allen invents a new word and begins a chain of events that quickly moves beyond his control.

Gathering of Days, A

Blos, Joan W.

The journal of a 14-year-old girl, kept the last year she lived on the family farm, records daily events in her small New Hampshire town, her father's remarriage, and the death of her best friend.

Ghost in the Tokaido Inn, The

Hoobler, Dorothy.

While attempting to solve the mystery of a stolen jewel, Seikei, a merchant's son who longs to be a samurai, joins a group of kabuki actors in eighteenth-century Japan.

Girl Named Disaster, A

Farmer, Nancy

For Nhamo, an 11-year-old Shona girl living in Mozambique in 1981, life is filled with the traditions of her village people. When family circumstances, a ngozi (angry spirit), and a cholera epidemic force her into a horrible marriage, she flees with only her grandmother's blessings, some gold nuggets, and many survival skills. Still, what should have been a two-day boat trip across the border to her father's family in Zimbabwe spans a year. Daily conversations with spirits help to combat her loneliness and provide her with sage and practical advice. The most incredible leg of her journey is spent on an island where Nhamo closely observes and is warily accepted by a baboon family only to have one of them destroy her shelter and food supply. She makes mistakes, loses heart, and nearly dies of starvation. Even after she arrives in Zimbabwe where she lives with scientists before meeting her father's family, Nhamo must learn to survive in civilization and exorcise the demons that haunt her

Glory Field, The

Myers, Walter Dean.

Follows a family's two-hundred year history, from the capture of an African boy in the 1750s through the lives of his descendants, as their dreams and circumstances lead them away from and back to the small plot of land in South Carolina that they call the Glory Field.

Grade 7

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Heat

Lupica, Mike.

Michael Arroyo and his brother Carlos are immigrants from Cuba and are living alone, trying to stay together until Carlos reaches his 18th birthday. Their father was a great part of their lives until his death three months ago. Seventeen year old Carlos works two jobs, and twelve year old Michael plays baseball. Michael's greatest hope is that his team will play in the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Unexpected obstacles get in the way for each boy. Carlos loses one of his jobs and takes on a scalping job. Michael's age is challenged by the coach of an opposing team, and he is taken out of play. The boys can't prove Michael's age because they have no birth certificate from Cuba. Several people help the boys and see that Michael gets the birth certificate, gets to play in Yankee Stadium, and knows his team is headed for Williamsport. Baseball is predominant in this story - Michael eats, breathes, and sleeps it.!

Hobbit, The

Tolkien, J.R.R.

The hobbit-hole in question belongs to one Bilbo Baggins, an upstanding member of a "little people, about half our height, and smaller than the bearded dwarves." He is, like most of his kind, well off, well fed, and best pleased when sitting by his own fire with a pipe, a glass of good beer, and a meal to look forward to. Certainly this particular hobbit is the last person one would expect to see set off on a hazardous journey; indeed, when Gandalf the Grey stops by one morning, "looking for someone to share in an adventure," Baggins fervently wishes the wizard elsewhere. No such luck, however; soon 13 fortune-seeking dwarves have arrived on the hobbit's doorstep in search of a burglar, and before he can even grab his hat or an umbrella, Bilbo Baggins is swept out his door and into a dangerous adventure. The dwarves' goal is to return to their ancestral home in the Lonely Mountains and reclaim a stolen fortune from the dragon Smaug. Along the way, they and their reluctant companion meet giant spiders, hostile elves, ravaging wolves--and, most perilous of all, a subterranean creature named Gollum from whom Bilbo wins a magical ring in a riddling contest.

Grade 7 Recommended Reading List

Hoot

Hiaasen, Carl

Unfortunately, Roy's first acquaintance in Florida is Dana Matherson, a well-known bully. Then again, if Dana hadn't been sinking his thumbs into Roy's temples and mashing his face against the school-bus window, Roy might never have spotted the running boy. And the running boy is intriguing: he was running away from the school bus, carried no books, and here's the odd part-wore no shoes. Sensing a mystery, Roy sets himself on the boy's trail. The chase introduces him to potty-trained alligators, a fake-fart champion, some burrowing owls, a renegade eco-avenger, and several extremely poisonous snakes with unnaturally sparkling tails. Roy has most definitely arrived in Carl Hiaasen's Florida.

JIP: His Story

Paterson, Katherine.

While living on a Vermont poor farm during 1855 and 1856, Jip learns his identity and that of his mother and comes to understand how he arrived at this place.

Julie of the Wolves

George, Jean Craighead.

While running away from home and an unwanted marriage, a thirteen-year-old Eskimo girl becomes lost on the North Slope of Alaska and is befriended by a wolf pack.

Koyal Dark, Mango Sweet

Sheth, Kashmira.

Sixteen year old Jeeta is relieved that her mother has two older daughters to marry off before her turn comes. The constant talk of prospective grooms annoys her, and when her new friend Sarina introduces her to a world in which Indian women have professional careers she begins to see other possibilities for her life. Multiculturalism here has a new twist. Jeeta lives in Mumbai, where her middle class family struggles with the culture change so evident in modern India. Her father seems to accept the changing times and new role of women, although he lets her domineering mother handle their own family life. When Jeeta's budding romance with Neel, a boy she met at a local pool is exposed, it is her father who stands up for her. And when her older sister, Mohindi, is abused by her new husband, it is Jeeta she writes for help.

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La Linea

Jaramillo, Ann.

Fifteen-year-old Miguel's father has finally sent money to Don Clemente so that Miguel can join his family in California. The trip across La Linea will be difficult, and Miguel is nervous about three things: seeing his parents for the first time in seven years, meeting his younger twin sisters, and leaving his grandmother and thirteen-year-old sister, Elena, in San Jacinto, Mexico. Following his going-away celebration, Miguel takes the bus toward his first destination. However, the *federales* stop the bus and demand that everyone get off for questioning. During the interrogation, Miguel recognizes Elena who has disguised herself as an *india*. The two, along with several others, are put on a bus going south rather than north. It is at this point that the harrowing experience of crossing the border between Mexico and California begins. Miguel and Elena hop freight trains, are robbed, and nearly die in the desert of southern California, but they safely reach their destination. The last chapter, "The Phone Call," brings closure to the book as ten years later Miguel and Elena are in the midst of their annual phone call. The author, married to a Mexican American, teaches English as a Second Language to seventh and eighth graders in Salinas, California. This book comes from the stories that her husband's family told and from the stories that she hears daily from her students.

Landry News, The

Clements, Andrew.

A fifth-grader starts a newspaper with an editorial that prompts her burnt-out classroom teacher to really begin teaching again, but he is later threatened with disciplinary action as a result.

Loser

Spinelli, Jerry.

Even though his classmates from first grade on have considered him strange and a loser, Daniel Zinkoff's optimism and exuberance and the support of his loving family do not allow him to feel that way about himself.

Lupita Manana

Beatty, Patricia.

To help her poverty-stricken family, 13-year-old Lupita enters California as an illegal alien and starts to work while constantly on the watch for "la migra."

Grade 7 Recommended Reading List

Midsummer Night's Dream, A

Shakespeare, William.

Presents the text of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," a comedy about a pair of young lovers who become caught up in a world of sprites and fairies, and includes notes and commentary, as well as an introduction which discusses the critical and historical background to the play.

Mismatch

Namioka, Lensey.

Fifteen year old Sue Hua finds herself combating racism is found on many fronts in this smoothly written tale. New to Lakeview High, her white friends immediately match her up with Andy, a handsome Japanese American. "You're both Asian...And you both play in the orchestra. So you're perfect together." In fact, the two talented violinists do become involved. But Sue's grandmother lived through the Japanese occupation of China, and Andy's father views the Chinese as "...a dirty people" - and the teens have no idea how to introduce the other to their family. In third person singular, Namioka presents readers with alternate chapters describing Andy and Sue's experiences with their immediate families, and takes the story further when the orchestra visits Japan. Andy is placed with a high-ranking Japanese family due to his Japanese ancestry, but their daughter snubs him because he isn't "American" enough. Sue is placed with a Korean family who are held in low social esteem at the private school due to the fact that their forebears were brought to Japan as forced labor. Andy and Sue struggle to understand their place in both worlds while pursuing their own relationship.

Missing May

Rylant, Cynthia.

When May dies suddenly while gardening, Summer assumes she'll never see her beloved aunt again. But then Summer's Uncle Ob claims that May is on her way back--she has sent a sign from the spirit world. Summer isn't sure she believes in the spirit world, but her quirky classmate Cletus Underwood--who befriends Ob during his time of mourning--does. So at Cletus' suggestion, Ob and Summer (with Cletus in tow) set off in search of Miriam B. Young, Small Medium at Large, whom they hope will explain May's departure and confirm her possible return.

Grade 7

Recommended Reading List

Mzungu Boy, The **Mwangi, Meja.**

Much of the land in the early 1950's in Kenya was held by European settlers and native Kenyans were relegated to working as tenant farmers. Against this backdrop is the story of two twelve year old boys, Kariuki and Nigel. Kariuki is a native Kenyan and lives for his favorite part of day, walking home from school through the beautiful forests and plains that surround his impoverished village. In the forest he can escape the bullying of the headmaster at school and his mother's constant list of chores. Kariuki's brother Hari has joined a group of rebels that live in the forest. The rebels are plotting an uprising. Their plan is to throw Nigel's family and all the other white settlers off the land. Eventually Nigel is captured by the rebels and Kariuki comes looking for him; he, too, is kidnapped. Hari comes to the aid of the captured boys and helps them make a late night escape. As Nigel and Kariuki head back home, Kariuki pleads with Hari to go with him, but Hari refuses. He tells Kariuki that he must remain with his "brothers" of the forest. The rebels extract a quick revenge and Hari is found dead the next day. This story shows both the beauty and violence of the land, describing a part of history with which most American children are not familiar.

Old African, The **Lester, Julius.**

Lester bases the story on a legend about an African man, brought to this country in chains, who led his Ybo people out of slavery and back home to Africa. The story begins with the old African watching a boy being whipped. Through his magical powers, the old man is able to take the boy's pain so that he does not cry out. As Jaja sits for two days and nights with the boy, he falls asleep and is taken back to the time when he and his wife, Ola, were captured and marched to the ship that would transport them to Georgia. Lester recounts the voyage and its accompanying horrible acts. The story goes that from the time that Jaja saw his wife, Ola, jump overboard, he never spoke again. Yet, he had powers that would allow him to see into the minds of others. He decides to lead his people away from the plantation and back to Africa.

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Outside Shot, The

Myers, Walter Dean.

Recruited by a small midwestern college to play basketball, a Harlem boy has many new experiences, including working with a child who needs physical therapy and dealing with corruption in college sports.

Pinballs, The

Byars, Betsy Cromer.

Three lonely foster children learn to care about themselves and each other.

Prizefighter en Mi Casa

Charlton-Trujillo, E.E.

12-year-old Chula Sanchez is poor, Mexican, and not particularly popular in her south Texas town. She feels that nothing about her is special or unique. Life has never been particularly easy and things only get more difficult when Chula is involved in a terrible car accident caused by her father's drunk driving. The accident leaves him paralyzed and leaves Chula with epilepsy seizures. Classmates avoid her because they don't understand the seizures. Both her teachers and her mother treat her as if she is now mentally slow. Determined to find a way to pull his family out of debt, Chula's father contacts El Jefe, a revered prizefighter from Mexico. He hopes that El Jefe can use his relentless strength to win the local, illegal boxing matches; profits could help the family's finances. Unfortunately, when El Jefe arrives, he brings more confusion to a home already filled with problems. Chula is afraid of the prizefighter, a massive man who looks like a Mexican version of the Hulk. El Jefe has a reputation for showing no mercy in the ring, sometimes even killing those he fights. But when Chula has a fight a school, El Jefe is the one who tries to comfort her. They even talk about her epilepsy, something her family avoids discussing. El Jefe encourages Chula to see herself as special; she takes his advice by working hard at school and eventually becomes an honor student. Still, Chula can't quite figure out the two sides of El Jefe, and struggles to figure out how both good and bad can reside inside one person. In the end, El Jefe changes life for everyone in Chula's family.

Recommended Reading List

Red Scarf Girl

Jiang, Ji-li.

The author tells about the happy life she led in China up until she was twelve years old when her family became a target of the Cultural Revolution, and discusses the choice she had to make between denouncing her father and breaking with her family, or refusing to speak against him and losing her future in the Communist Party.

Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes

Coerr, Eleanor.

Hospitalized with the dreaded atom bomb disease, leukemia, a child in Hiroshima races against time to fold one thousand paper cranes to verify the legend that by doing so a sick person will become healthy.

Scorpions

Myers, Walter Dean.

After reluctantly taking on the leadership of the Harlem gang, the Scorpions, Jamal finds that his enemies treat him with respect when he acquires a gun-- until a tragedy occurs.

Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind

Staples, Suzanne Fisher.

Eleven-year old Shabanu, the daughter of a nomad in the Cholistan Desert of present-day Pakistan, is pledged in marriage to an older man whose money will bring prestige to the family, and must either accept the decision, as is the custom, or risk the consequences of defying her father's wishes.

Sing down the Moon

O'Dell, Scott.

A young Navajo girl recounts the events of 1864 when her tribe was forced to march to Fort Sumner as prisoners of the white soldiers.

Single Shard, A

Park, Linda Sue.

Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge near a potters' village, and longs to learn how to throw the delicate celadon ceramics himself.

Grade 7 Recommended Reading List

Skin I'm In, The

Flake, Sharon.

Thirteen-year-old Maleeka, uncomfortable because her skin is extremely dark, meets a new teacher with a birthmark on her face and makes some discoveries about how to love who she is and what she looks like.

So Far from the Bamboo Grove

Watkins, Yoko Kawashima.

A fictionalized autobiography in which eleven-year-old Yoko escapes from Korea to Japan with her mother and sister at the end of World War II.

Stargirl

Spinelli, Jerry.

Stargirl, a teen who animates quiet Mica High with her colorful personality, suddenly finds herself shunned for her refusal to conform.

Surviving the Applewhites

Tolan, Stephanie S.

Jake, a budding juvenile delinquent, is sent for home schooling to the arty and eccentric Applewhite family's Creative Academy, where he discovers talents and interests he never knew he had.

Tangerine

Bloor, Edward.

Paul Fisher's family is moving from Texas to Florida for a number of reasons. The most important one seems to be so that Paul's older brother Erik can impress the football scouts at some major universities. Indeed, most of what his parents do seems to be part of what Paul calls "The Great Erik Fisher Football Dream." It is not that Paul is jealous. He, too, possesses some tremendous athletic ability on the soccer field despite being legally blind. But Erik is the favored son, indulged by parents, teachers, coaches, and friends, even though Paul knows that Erik's behavior is less than perfect. The move to Tangerine, Florida, might just open the eyes of everyone in the Fisher family.

**** Text used in SpringBoard**

There's a Girl in My Hammerlock

Spinelli, Jerry.

Thirteen-year-old Maisie joins her school's formerly all-male wrestling team and tries to last through the season, despite opposition from other students, her best friend, and her own teammates.

Recommended Reading List

Touching Spirit Bear

Mikaelsen, Ben

Cole Matthews is angry. Angry, defiant, smug--in short, a bully. His anger has taken him too far this time, though. After beating up a ninth-grade classmate to the point of brain damage, Cole is facing a prison sentence. But then a Tlingit Indian parole officer named Garvey enters his life, offering an alternative called Circle Justice, based on Native American traditions, in which victim, offender, and community all work together to find a healing solution. Privately, Cole sneers at the concept, but he's no fool--if it gets him out of prison, he'll do anything. Ultimately, Cole ends up banished for one year to a remote Alaskan island, where his arrogance sets him directly in the path of a mysterious, legendary white bear. Mauled almost to death, Cole awaits his fate and begins the transition from anger to humility.

Trouble with Tessa, The

Lachtma, Ofelia Dumas.

This one is just for fun. The reader finds themselves in the warm home of 11-years-old Tessa del Campo. The character of Tessa is a young girl of Mexican descent. She is surrounded by her family, including a lively group of extended Hispanic relatives. Tessa has a stay-at-home mom that cooks for her family and for every charity events that comes along. Tessa is trying to make her way through a boring summer. She can't understand why her father has cancelled a trip that Tessa really wanted to take. Tessa ends up using her vivid imagination to pass the time. When she finds yellowing pages in the bottom of a junky trunk, she realizes that she has found some directions for magic spells. She doesn't think that it is any coincidence that she found the sheets. Tessa decides it must be her destiny to become a witch! She begins working on her magic by casting a spell that will prevent her little sister from calling her "Tess." Tessa can't believe her luck, when the magic spell seems to work. When Tessa's diary with the magic spells disappears, she panics. How can she be a really good witch, if she can't cast any more spells? Tessa's belief in her developing powers, also hit a major roadblock when she thinks she has cast a spell that will cause her parents to divorce. Tessa starts to think about how good her life has been. Suddenly, everything is changing and Tessa fears that her secret powers are spinning out of control.

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Westing Game, The

Raskin, Ellen

When an eccentric millionaire dies mysteriously, sixteen very unlikely people are gathered together for the reading of the will . . . and what a will it is!

When the Legends Die

Borland, Hal.

An orphaned Ute Indian boy wins stardom on the rodeo circuit but, disillusioned by his success, returns to the ways of his ancestors.

Witch of Blackbird Pond, The

Speare, Elizabeth George.

In 1687 in Connecticut, Kit Tyler, feeling out of place in the Puritan household of her aunt, befriends an old woman considered a witch by the community and suddenly finds herself standing trial for witchcraft.