

Middle School: Suggested Summer Reading



**The Country
School**

An Independent School for Grades PreK-8
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<http://www.thecountryschool.org>

Grades 5-8

AUTHOR	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
Achebe, Chinua	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>	The tragic life story of an African man, set in Nigeria
Adams, Richard	<i>Watership Down</i>	Complex and compelling adventure story featuring rabbits as main characters
Alcott, Louisa May	<i>Little Women</i>	Maternal Meg, tomboy Jo, vain Amy, and Beth, the angel- a must-read classic
Alexander, Lloyd	<i>The Philadelphia Adventure</i>	Vesper Holly is a female Indiana Jones.
Armstrong, William H.	<i>Souder</i>	A sad classic about a well-loved dog
Asimov, Isaac	<i>Fantastic Voyage</i> <i>I, Robot</i> <i>Asimov on Chemistry</i>	A bizarre trip inside the human body Science fiction For science and chemistry lovers
Babbitt, Natalie	<i>Tuck Everlasting</i> <i>The Search for Delicious</i>	A girl finds the secret to eternal youth and struggles with choices. Funny adventure about dictionaries, definitions, and points of view
Bach, Alice	<i>They'll Never Make a Movie Starring Me</i>	In boarding school, Alice learns that growing up isn't as easy as it is in the movies.
Bagnold, Enid	<i>National Velvet</i>	Great horse classic about the first girl to ride in a major horse race
Bellairs, John	<i>The House With the Clock in its Walls</i>	Very clever mysteries
Blinn, William	<i>Brian's Song</i>	A true story about a terminally ill football player and his friendships

Borland, Hal	<i>When Legends Die</i>	Native American rodeo rider's ups and downs
Bradbury, Ray	<i>The Illustrated Man</i> (other titles)	Each of his tattoos tells a story
Brown, Claude	<i>Manchild In the Promised Land</i>	An African-American's description of his childhood
Brown, Tom Jr.	<i>The Tracker</i>	True account of a boy educated by an Apache in New Jersey
Buck, Pearl S.	<i>The Good Earth</i>	Life in colonial China Challenging reading
Burnett, Frances H.	<i>The Secret Garden</i>	A classic about the healing power of nature and secrets
	<i>A Little Princess</i>	A classic about a room in the attic and the diamond mines
Burnford, Sheila	<i>The Incredible Journey</i>	Three pets travel to find their original master
Burns, Olive Ann	<i>Cold Sassy Tree</i>	Love Simpson and her reputation shake up this conservative southern town.
Carroll, Lewis	<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>	Hilarious, inventive classic
Carson, Rachel	<i>Silent Spring</i> <i>The Sea Around Us</i>	Some of the first descriptions of growing environmental concerns
Cather, Willa	<i>My Antonia</i> <i>O, Pioneers</i>	Both beautiful stories of prairie life in turn-of-the-century Nebraska
Christie, Agatha	<i>The Cat Among the Pigeons</i> <i>The Murder of Roger Ackroyd</i> (other titles)	Can't-put-down murder mysteries
Christopher, John	<i>The White Mountains</i>	First in a fantasy/science fiction series
Cisneros, Sandra	<i>House on Mango Street</i>	A collection of lyrical prose and poetry about growing up in a Chicago ghetto

Clark, Walter Van T.	<i>The Ox Bow Incident</i>	Classic western story about lynching and mob justice
Collier, James Lincoln	<i>My Brother Sam Is Dead</i>	American Revolutionary War story
Colum, Padraic	<i>The Children's Homer</i>	The classic story very effectively told for kids
Conroy, Pat	<i>The Water is Wide</i> (other titles)	A Vietnam era hippie dodges the draft by teaching in a poor, rural southern school.
Conway, Jill Ker	<i>The Road from Coorain</i>	Autobiography about coming of age on an Australian ranch
Cooney, Caroline	<i>The Face on the Milk Carton</i>	A teenage girls seeks her real parents
Cooper, Susan	<i>Over Sea Under Stone</i>	The first in the <i>Dark is Rising</i> fantasy series: Arthurian legends and love of the earth
Crane, Steven	<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>	A young boy's experience in war
Craven, Margaret	<i>I Heard the Owl Call My Name</i>	A dying man in a small town
Cushman, Karen	<i>Catherine Called Birdy</i>	Very funny diary of a young girl in the year 1290
Dahl, Roald	<i>Boy Going Solo</i>	The author's charming autobiography, in two parts
Danziger, Paula	<i>The Cat Ate My Gymsuit</i>	The growing self awareness of a young girl with the help of a "different" teacher
DeAngeli, Marguerite	<i>The Door in the Wall</i>	A handicapped boy becomes a hero in his medieval village.
Defoe, Daniel	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	Marooned on a desert island, with Friday
DeJong, Meindert	<i>The Wheel on the School</i>	Residents of a small town in Holland try to bring storks back to nest in their village.

de Saint Exupery, Antoine	<i>The Little Prince</i>	Lovely, sentimental classic about a boy looking for a home
Dickens, Charles	<i>David Copperfield</i> <i>Great Expectations</i> <i>Oliver Twist</i>	Autobiographical epic with great villains and heroes A young man has a mysterious benefactor. Who is he or she? An orphan falls in with a gang of thieves and is redeemed
Dodge, Mary	<i>Hans Brinker, or, The Magic Skates</i>	Fascinating account of ice skating races on the canals of Holland
Doyle, Arthur Conan	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> <i>The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes</i>	The original, great detective stories
Dumas, Alexander	<i>The Three Musketeers</i> <i>The Count of Monte Crisco</i>	Adventures of dashing swashbucklers Unfairly imprisoned, the Count gets revenge.
deMaurier, Daphne	<i>Rebecca</i> <i>Jamaica Inn</i>	Classic gothic mystery; the beautiful dead wife haunts the newlyweds. More gothic mystery: dark secrets lie off the Cornish coast.
Eliot, T. S.	<i>Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats</i>	Funny, silly poetry - incredibly inventive and entertaining
Ende, Michael	<i>The Neverending Story</i>	Wonderful fantasy - it does end, but you'll wish it didn't.
Farley, Walter	<i>The Black Stallion</i> (series)	Adventures of a boy, his wonderful horse, and his snarling trainer
Finney, J.	<i>Time and Again</i>	Mystery and intrigue in old New York
Fitzhugh, Louise	<i>Harriet the Spy</i> <i>The Long Secret</i>	Harriet and her notebooks are so cool- she lives in NYC and spies on her neighbors! A sequel: Harriet spends the summer at the beach and grows up.

Forbes, Esther	<i>Johnny Tremain</i>	The American Revolution: life with Paul Revere
Fox, Paula	<i>Slave Dancer</i> <i>One Eyed Cat</i>	Vivid description of life on board 19th -century slave ships A boy disobeys his parents and struggles with his conscience.
Frank, Anne	<i>Diary of a Young Girl</i>	Incredible and true diary of a girl hiding from the Nazis in WWII Holland
Freedman, Benedict Freedman, Nancy	<i>Mrs. Mike</i>	Young Irish girl and Canadian Mounty: romance and hardship in the wilderness
Fritz, Jean	<i>Homesick</i>	The author's memoirs of life in colonial China during her childhood
Gaines, Ernest	<i>The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman</i> <i>A Gathering of Old Men</i>	The long, vivid life of a slave, before, during and after the Civil War Old men protect a guilty friend by claiming his crime.
Gallico, Paul	<i>The Snow Goose</i>	A classic tearjerker
George, Jean Craighead	<i>Julie of the Wolves</i> <i>My Side of the Mountain</i>	Life on the tundra with wolves for friends A boy runs away from home and learns to live in the wild.
Gibbons, Kaye	<i>Charms for the Easy Life</i>	Three generations of women tell their stories through the eyes of the youngest.
Gibson, William	<i>The Miracle Worker</i>	The story of Helen Keller and her first successful teacher, Anne Sullivan
Gilbreth, Frank B., Jr.	<i>Cheaper By the Dozen</i>	Funny, true stories of the author's huge family and his efficiency expert father
Gipson, Fred	<i>Old Yeller</i>	A boy and his dog
Godden, Rumer	<i>The River</i>	Life in colonial India

Goldman, William	<i>The Princess Bride</i>	Funny fantasy story of knights, princesses, etc.
Grahame, Kenneth	<i>The Wind In the Willows</i>	Toad of Toad Hall and his hilarious friends; animal fantasy
Gray, Elizabeth	<i>Adam of the Road</i>	The adventures of a medieval minstrel
Green, Bette	<i>Summer of My German Soldier</i>	WWII drama about German POWs being held in a southern American town
Greenberg, Joanne	<i>I Never Promised You A Rose Garden</i>	Mentally ill teenage girl shares her moving story.
Griffin, John Howard	<i>Black Like Me</i>	A white man disguises himself as an African-American and describes his new status.
Guthrie, A.B.	<i>The Way West</i>	Magnificent historical novel: the heroic struggle of pioneers to Oregon
Guy, Rosa	<i>The Friends</i>	Trinidadian heroine growing up in Harlem: sensitive exploration of friendship
Hall, Charles and James	<i>Pitcairn's Island</i>	Part three of the <i>Bounty Trilogy</i> : one of the greatest sea stories of all time
Hautzig, Esther	<i>The Endless Steppe</i>	10-year-old Polish girl is deported to Siberian work camp for five years.
Hemingway, Ernest	<i>The Old Man and the Sea</i>	The old man has gone 84 days without catching a fish.
Herriot, James	<i>All Creatures Great and Small</i> (series)	True stories about a country veterinarian in England
Hinton, S.E.	<i>The Outsiders</i> (other titles)	Great books about teenagers on their own; the author was only 17!
Hope, Anthony	<i>Prisoner of Zenda</i>	Swashbuckling adventure
Houston, James	<i>Drifting Snow</i>	Elizabeth, an Inuit Eskimo, has never known her real name, her family or the wild and beautiful land she was meant to live in.

Hughes, Langston	<i>Not Without Laughter</i>	The poet's early work; a novel about African-American life
Hughes, Richard	<i>High Wind in Jamaica</i>	Classic about Colonialism in the Caribbean
Hunt, Irene	<i>Across Five Aprils</i>	Revolutionary War in America
Jackson, Shirley	<i>We Have Always Lived in the Castle</i>	Who poisoned Merricat's parents? Most people think she did.
James, Henry	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i>	Creepy Victorian ghost story; what did the governess see?
Juster, Norton	<i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i>	Fantasy about time, language, how to amuse yourself, and a dog named Tock
Kelly, Eric	<i>The Trumpeter of Krakow</i>	Newbery Award winner about old Poland
Key, Alexander	<i>The Forgotten Door</i>	Jon, from another planet, finds himself on a strange new planet: Earth!
Kincaid, Jamaica	<i>Annie John</i>	A young woman from Antigua prepares to leave home.
Klein, Gerda Weissmann	<i>All But My Life</i>	True account by a survivor of the Nazi concentration camps
Knowles, John	<i>A Separate Peace</i>	Memories of Finney, the most popular boy in school, and a dark secret
Konigsberg, E.	<i>A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver</i> <i>From the Mixed up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler</i>	King Arthur fantasy Claudia decides not to run away from somewhere but to run to somewhere
Krakauer, Jon	<i>Into Thin Air</i>	The gripping record of a recent and disastrous attempt to climb Mt. Everest
Latham, Jean L.	<i>Carry On Mr. Bowditch</i>	Newbery Award winner: Biography of the father of modern navigation

LeGuin, Ursula	<i>The Wizard of Earthsea</i>	Intriguing fantasy about power used unwisely
L'Engle, Madeleine	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i>	Great science fiction fantasy with a cool heroine
Lewis, C. S.	<i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> (series)	Classic fantasy series. Travel to Narnia!
London, Jack	<i>Call of the Wild</i> <i>The Sea Wolf</i> <i>White Fang</i>	Stories of wilderness life
Lord, Walter	<i>A Night to Remember</i>	Story of the <i>Titanic</i>
Lowry, Lois	<i>The Giver</i>	A futuristic society with no rudeness, no envy; all jobs are assigned
Lynch, Chris	<i>Slot Machine</i>	Set at a camp for misfits: issues of peer pressure and search for self
Malamud, Bernard	<i>The Natural</i>	A baseball player disappears and mysteriously returns.
Mason, Bobbie Ann	<i>In Country</i>	A high school senior on a quest to understand the Vietnam War
Margorian, Michelle	<i>Goodnight, Mr. Tom</i>	A boy evacuated from WWII London makes a close and important friend.
McCaffrey, Anne	<i>Dragonsong</i> (series)	Pern is threatened by shimmering, thread-like spores. Fantasy
McCullers, Carson	<i>Member of the Wedding</i>	A tomboy grows up as her brother plans his wedding.
MacDonald, George	<i>At the Back of the North Wind</i>	The haunting and memorable story of Dramond, the coachman's son, and his adventures with the mysterious North Wind
McKinley, Robin	<i>The Blue Sword</i>	Girls can be knights too...and brave ones!
Minot, Susan	<i>Monkeys</i>	A sad family headed by a tyrannical father

Montgomery, L.M.	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i> (series)	Classic- Anne is appealing, independent; a great heroine
Mowat, Farley	<i>Never Cry Wolf</i> (other titles)	A man remembers his childhood troubles with anger.
Naylor, Phyllis R.	<i>Shiloh</i>	Mean man, nice dog, sweet boy
Neufield, John	<i>Lisa, Bright and Dark</i>	Two friends help a 16-year-old girl deal with mental illness.
North, Sterling	<i>Rascal</i>	A lovable raccoon
O'Brien, Patrick	<i>Master and Commander</i>	The first of a wonderful series about ships in the Napoleonic Wars
O'Brien, Robert	<i>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</i>	Escaped lab animals unite.
O'Dell, Scott	<i>Island of the Blue Dolphins</i> (other titles)	A girl stranded on a desert island
Orwell, George	<i>Animal Farm</i>	Political satire using revolutionary animals; they take over the farm and rule themselves
Pappas, Theoin	<i>The Joy of Mathematics</i>	Discovering mathematics all around you
Patterson, Katherine	<i>Bridge to Terabithia</i> <i>Jacob Have I Loved</i> <i>Lyddie</i>	An intense childhood friendship Twin sisters with very different experiences 1880s Lowell textile mill with a determined heroine, set in the Chesapeake Bay
Paulsen, Gary	<i>Hatchet</i> <i>Woodsong</i>	A boy survives the Canadian wilderness with nothing but a hatchet. True account of racing in the Iditarod
Peck, Robert Newton	<i>A Day No Pigs Would Die</i>	Family drama

Philbrick, Rodman	<i>Freak the Mighty</i>	An unusual friendship between two misfits
Porter, Gene S.	<i>Girl of the Limberlost</i>	Elnora wants to go to school. Set in Indiana
Potok, Chaim	<i>The Chosen</i>	A friendship between an Orthodox man and a Hasidic Jewish boy
Pyle, Howard	<i>Otto and the Silver Hand</i>	The story of a young man who has lost his hand in a feud
Randall, Ruth Painter	<i>I, Mary</i>	A biography of the First Lady of the North, the girl who married Abraham Lincoln
	<i>I, Varina</i>	A biography of the First Lady of the South, the girl who married Jefferson Davis
Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan	<i>The Yearling</i>	Jody's devotion to his pet fawn, Flag
Rawls, Wilson	<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>	Animal story
Reiss, Joanna	<i>The Upstairs Room</i>	WWII story about helping to hide Jewish families in Europe
Rushdie, Salman	<i>Haroun and the Sea of Stories</i>	A fantastic allegory about the importance of literature and a terrific adventure
Salinger, J.D.	<i>A Catcher in the Rye</i>	Classic- a loner and his problems with school, family, everything
	<i>Nine Stories</i>	Great short stories, especially "Perfect Day for Bananafish"
Saroyan, William	<i>My Name is Aram</i>	Story of a foreign American Tom Sawyer, born in California, early 1900s
Scoppettone, Sandra	<i>Trying Hard to Hear You</i>	As long as people love instead of hate, what difference does it make who they love?+
Shaara, Michael	<i>Killer Angels</i>	A moving Civil War story

Shange, Ntozake	<i>Betsey Brown</i>	A young black girl coming of age during desegregation in St. Louis
Singer, Isaac Bashevis	<i>A Crown of Feathers and Other Stories</i>	A master storyteller who has preserved the Yiddish folk life in numerous tales
Smith, Betty	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	A girl growing up in Brooklyn, dealing with family problems
Speare, Elizabeth	<i>Witch of Blackbird Pond</i>	A Caribbean girl befriends a strange old woman in colonial Connecticut.
Sperry, Elizabeth	<i>Call It Courage</i>	Young Polynesian boy must overcome his fear of the ocean to prove his worth to his villagers.
Staples, Suzanne	<i>Shabanu</i>	A rebellious young woman dealing with the customs of her native Pakistan
Steinbeck, John	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Moving friendship story, set on a ranch in California
	<i>Pearl</i>	A huge pearl becomes the symbol of greed and anger.
	<i>The Red Pony</i>	A boy learns to ride and train his pony.
	<i>Travels with Charley</i>	Charley, the dog, travels around the U.S.A.
Stoker, Bram	<i>Dracula</i>	The original vampire story-challenging reading
Taylor, Mildred	<i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i>	Black sharecroppers living in the American South
Taylor, Theodore	<i>The Cay</i>	During WWII, a young boy is stranded on a desert island with a Caribbean man.
Tey, Josephine	<i>Daughter of Time</i>	Detective with broken leg rethinks the life and legends of Richard III.
Townsend, Sue	<i>The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Age 13 and 3 Quarters</i>	Hilarious, irreverent tell-all
Thurber, James	<i>The 13 Clocks</i>	Hilarious modern fairy tale

Tolkien, J.R.R.	<i>The Hobbit</i> (series)	Fantasy- elves, dwarfs, wizards, hobbits
Twain, Mark	<i>The Adventures of Huck Finn</i> <i>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</i> <i>The Prince and the Pauper</i>	Huck Finn is one of the world's noblest heroes. A funny fantasy about traveling back in time to King Arthur's court The Prince wants a break, so he switches places with an identical commoner.
Verne, Jules	<i>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</i> <i>Around the World in 80 Days</i> <i>Mysterious Island</i>	Great, old-fashioned adventures
Voight, Cynthia	<i>Homecoming</i> (series)	Abandoned by their mother, Dicey and her siblings walk and hitchhike to a new life.
Wangerin, Walter, Jr.	<i>Book of the Dun Cow</i>	A comic adventure about Chanticleer the Rooster
Watson, James D.	<i>The Double Helix</i>	A personal account of the discovery of DNA
Wells, H.G.	<i>The War of the Worlds</i> (other titles)	Science fiction about war against the Martians
White, E.B.	<i>Trumpet of the Swan</i>	A fantasy about a mute swan who uses his wits to overcome adversity
White, Terrence H.	<i>The Once and Future King</i> <i>The Sword in the Stone</i>	Young Arthur is tutored by Merlin the Magician and prepared to rule England. Only the future King of England can pull the sword from the stone.
Wibberly, Leonard	<i>The Mouse that Roared</i>	A small country with a big plan
Wiesel, Elie	<i>Night</i> <i>Dawn</i>	True stories of the author's experience in Nazi concentration camps
Wouk, Herman	<i>Marjorie Morningstar</i>	A beautiful Jewish girl growing up in NYC, in the 1950s

Wright, Richard	<i>Black Boy</i>	Autobiographical account of Wright's escape from the racist south
Wyss, Jonathan	<i>Swiss Family Robinson</i>	Life in the most famous of all tree houses
Yep, Lawrence	<i>Dragonwings</i>	Historical book about early Chinese immigrants
Yolen, Jane	<i>Devil's Arithmetic</i>	A modern seder leads a girl to the past in an unusual way.
Zindel, Paul	<i>The Pigman</i>	Two high school students befriend a lonely old man who knows life's magic.