

2024 Suggested Reading for Grades 6-8

*Unless otherwise stated all e-books and e-audiobooks are on OverDrive/Libby

Fiction

Bagley, Jessixa. “Duel” 2023

Sixth-grader Lucy loves fantasy novels and is brand-new to middle school. GiGi is the undisputed queen bee of eighth grade (as well as everything else she does). They’ve only got one thing in common – fencing. Oh, and they’re sisters. They never got along super well, but ever since their dad died, it seems like they’re always at each other’s throats. A rivalry between sisters culminates in a fencing duel.

J GN Bagley, J GN Pop Now Bagley

Booth, Molly Horton. “King Cheer: Arden High 2” 2023

When cheer captain Leah steps down months before graduation, the team is shocked. Waitlisted by her dream college, questioning her identity, and suffering from senioritis, Leah needs to hand the captain’s poms off and focus on her future. But when the competition for captaincy goes awry, the cheerleaders versus the basketball team in a fight for glory. Balls fly, pom-poms shake, hearts are broken — and only one person can heal the rift between the teams. But first she’ll have to heal herself.

YA GN Booth

Bow, Erin. “Simon Sort of Says” 2023

Two years after a tragedy saddles him with viral fame, 12-year-old Simon O’Keeffe and his family move to Grin And Bear It, Nebraska, where the internet and cell phones are banned so astrophysicists can scan the sky for signs of alien life, and where, with the help of two new friends, a puppy, and a giant radio telescope, Simon plans to restart the narrative of his life.

J FIC BOW, e-book, e-audiobook

Cham, Jorge. “Oliver’s Great Big Universe” 2023

Oliver has a lot going on starting his first year of middle school — new friends, new classes, new everything. But at least there’s one thing that still makes sense! Determined to be an astrophysicist one day, Oliver explains everything he learns — like how the sun burps, how ghost particles fly through you, the uncanny similarities between Mercury and cafeteria meatballs, and most important, how the Big Bang is basically just like a fart in the school hallway. Oliver finally feels like he’s starting to figure things out ... but can he stay out of the principal’s office or catch a break from his annoying sister?

J FIC Cham

Dåsnes, Nora. “Cross My Heart and Never Lie” 2023

Tuva is starting seventh grade, and her checklist of goals includes writing out a diary, getting a trendy look, building the best fort in the woods with her BFFs, and much more. But when she starts school, nothing is how she hoped it would be. In this delightfully hand-lettered coming-of-age graphic diary, Tuva gets caught between feeling like a kid and wanting to know HOW to become a teenager. Then Miriam shows up and suddenly Tuva feels as if she’s met her soulmate. Can you fall in love with a girl, keep it from your friends, and survive? **Stonewall Book Award Winner*

J GN Dåsnes, J GN Pop Now Dåsnes

Day, Christine. “We Still Belong” 2023

Wesley is proud of the poem she wrote for Indigenous Peoples’ Day — but the reaction from a teacher makes her wonder if expressing herself is important enough. And due to the specific tribal laws of her family’s Nation, Wesley is unable to enroll in the Upper Skagit tribe and is left feeling “not Native enough.” Through the course of the novel, with the help of her family and friends, she comes to embrace her own place within the Native community. **American Indian Youth Literature Award Winner*

J FIC Day, J Pop Now Day, e-audiobook

Eggers, Dave. “The Eyes and the Impossible” 2023

Free dog Johannes' job is to observe everything that happens in his urban park and report back to the park's three bison elders, but changes are afoot, including more humans, a new building, a boatload of goats, and a shocking revelation that changes his view of the world. **Newbery Award Winner*

J FIC Eggers, J Pop Now Eggers, e-book, e-audiobook

Everett, Sarah. “The Probability of Everything” 2023

Kemi loves probability, but when she learns an asteroid has an 84.7 percent chance of crashing into Earth in four days, she is determined to create a family time capsule. With a heartrending surprise twist, Everett masterfully, and realistically, explores grief.

J FIC Everett, J Pop Now Everett, e-audiobook

Gallegos, Maddie. “Match Point!” 2023

Rosie Vo hates racquetball. Her hatred for the sport comes from the pressure she feels from her racquetball-obsessed dad, Miles. Despite her feelings, Rosie really wants to beat Erica Garcia, the girl she ends up battling for last place with every year! Thankfully, new kid Hayden Blair moves to town and becomes fast friends with Rosie. Even better, she’s amazing at racquetball. Could Blair be the answer?

YA GN Gallegos, J GN Pop Now Gallegos, e-book

Gratz, Alan. “Captain America: The Ghost Army” 2023

In this thrilling historical adventure, 18-year-old Steve Rogers (AKA Captain America) and his sidekick, Bucky Barnes are fighting in WWII when they encounter a threat like none they've ever seen – a Ghost Army. The dead of this war and wars past are coming back to life, impervious to bullets, flames, or anything else the Allies can throw at them. How can Cap and Buck fight something that's already dead?

J GN Marvel, J GN Pop Now Marvel, e-book

Graves, Byron. “Rez Ball” 2023

These days, Tre Brun is happiest when he is playing basketball on the Red Lake Reservation high school team – even though he can't help but be constantly gut-punched with memories of his big brother, Jaxon, who died in an accident. When Jaxon's former teammates on the varsity team offer to take Tre under their wing, he sees this as his shot to represent his Ojibwe rez all the way to their first state championship. This is the first step toward his dream of playing in the NBA, no matter how much the odds are stacked against him. But stepping into his brother's shoes as a star player means that Tre can't mess up. Not on the court, not at school, and not with his new friend, gamer Khiana, who he is definitely not falling in love with. After decades of rez teams almost making it, Tre needs to take his team to state. Because if he can live up to Jaxon's dreams, their story isn't over yet. **American Indian Youth Literature Award Winner *William C. Morris Award Winner*

YA FIC Graves, YA Pop Now Graves, e-book

Jordan, Anna E. “Shira & Esther’s Double Dream Debut” 2023

When Shira and Esther first meet, they can hardly believe their eyes. It's like looking in a mirror! But even though they may look identical, the two girls couldn't be more different. Shira dreams of singing and dancing onstage, but her father, a stern and pious rabbi, thinks Shira should be reading prayers, not plays. Esther dreams of studying Torah, but her mother, a glamorous stage performer, wishes Esther would spend more time rehearsing and less time sneaking off to read books. Oy vey! If only the two could switch places ...

J FIC Jordan

Kuyatt, Meg Eden. “Good Different” 2023

Selah knows her rules for being normal. She always, always sticks to them. This means keeping her feelings locked tightly inside, despite the way they build up inside her as each school day goes on, so that she has to run to the bathroom and hide in the stall until she can calm down. So that she has to tear off her normal-person mask the second she gets home from school, and listen to her favorite pop song

on repeat, trying to recharge. Until the day she explodes and hits a fellow student. Selah's friends pull away from her, her school threatens expulsion, and her comfortable, familiar world starts to crumble. But as Selah starts to figure out more about who she is, she comes to understand that different doesn't mean damaged. Can she get her school to understand that, too, before it's too late?

J FIC Kuyatt, e-book, e-audiobook

Lapointe, Stephanie. "Franny Cloutier: The Year My Life Turned Upside Down" 2023

Franny is a feisty 14-year-old with a gift for turning her thoughts and feelings into drawings. She lives in Montreal with her father, a sewing machine repairman by day and inventor by night. When he's invited to pursue his research in Japan, Franny is sent to a small town far away from Montreal and all her friends. She will meet a part of her family she has never heard of before and will have to adapt to a new school and a new life. Soon, she will discover that this is the town where her mother lived before she died, when Franny was very young. This leads Franny to investigate the mystery behind her mother's death and discovers a terrible truth.

J FIC Lapointe

Li, Christina. "Ruby Lost and Found" 2023

It's the summer after seventh grade, and Ruby Chu is feeling more lost than ever. Her best friends aren't speaking to her. She ended the year in detention. Her sister's about to leave for college. Ruby's still grieving her grandfather, Ye-Ye, when it seems like no one else is. And without Ye-Ye and his annual scavenger hunts across their hometown of San Francisco, their hometown doesn't really feel like home anymore. Though Ruby feels out of place, maybe this summer of forming unexpected friendships and fighting to save the bakery will help Ruby reconnect with the world — and discover what it means to find home again. **Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature Winner*

J FIC Li, J Pop Now Li, Hoopla e-audiobook

Lincoln, Beth. "The Swifts: A Dictionary of Scoundrels" 2023

On the day they are born, every Swift child is brought before the sacred Family Dictionary. They are given a name, and a definition. A definition it is assumed they will grow up to match. Meet Shenanigan Swift: Little sister. Risk-taker. Mischief-maker. Shenanigan is getting ready for the big Swift Family Reunion and plotting her next great scheme: hunting for Grand-Uncle Vile's long-lost treasure. She's excited to finally meet her arriving relatives — until one of them gives Arch-Aunt Schadenfreude a deadly shove down the stairs. So what if everyone thinks she'll never be more than a troublemaker, just because of her name? Shenanigan knows she can become whatever she wants, even a detective. And she's determined to follow the twisty clues and catch the killer.

J FIC Lincoln, J Pop Now Lincoln, e-book, e-audiobook

Lowe, Mari. “The Dubious Pranks of Shaindy Goodman” 2023

Shaindy is a 12-year-old Orthodox Jewish girl who struggles in school and has no good friends. She watches with envy as her next-door neighbor, Gayil, excels socially and academically. They have little to do with each other, and it comes as a surprise when Shaindy looks out her window one September evening and sees Gayil staring out at her from her own window with a sign reading, “Want to know a secret?” The secret (at first) is that Gayil has a key fob that will allow them to break into their school after hours. Together, they set up a harmless prank in their classroom. But under Gayil's instigation the mischief becomes malice, and Shaindy sees that the pranks and humiliations are targeted only at certain girls. But what could they have in common? With the fear of Gayil's fury and her own reluctance growing, Shaindy comes to the terrifying conclusion that if she can't figure out how to stop it, the next target could be her.

J FIC Lowe

Marshall, Kate Alice. “Extra Normal” 2023

Twelve-year-old Charlie Greer is part of a unique family — her parents are paranormal investigators, and only she and her father are “normal.” As the ordinary one, Charlie has taken on the responsibility of caring for her adoptive younger siblings: Matty, a Deaf werewolf; Gideon, a genetically engineered telekinetic; and Opal, a nervous young ghost. She even cares for her parents, refusing to call them back from their desperately needed vacation even when a family of mind-controlling monsters moves in across the street.

J FIC Marshall, J Pop Now Marshall

McBride, Amber. “Gone Wolf” 2023

In the future, a Black girl known only as Inmate Eleven is kept confined – to be used as a biological match for the president's son, should he fall ill. She is called a Blue – the color of sadness. She lives in a small-small room with her dog, who is going wolf more often – he’s pacing and imagining he’s free. Inmate Eleven wants to go wolf too – she wants to know why she feels so Blue and what is beyond her small-small room. In the present, Imogen lives outside of Washington, D.C. The pandemic has distanced her from everyone but her mother and her therapist. Imogen has intense phobias and nightmares of confinement. Her two older brothers used to help her, but now she’s on her own, until a college student helps her see the difference between being Blue and sad, and Black and empowered.

J FIC McBride

Monsef, Kiyash. “Once There Was” 2023

Once was, once wasn't. So began the stories Marjan's father told her as a little girl — fables like the story of the girl who sprung a unicorn from a hunter's snare, or the nomad boy who rescued a baby shirdal. But Marjan's not a little girl anymore. In the wake of her father's sudden death, she is trying to hold it all together: her schoolwork, friendships, and keeping her dad's shoestring veterinary practice from going under. Then, one day, she receives a visitor who reveals something stunning: Marjan's father was no ordinary veterinarian. The creatures out of the stories he told her were real — and he traveled the world to care for them. And now that he's gone, she must take his place.

J FIC Monsef, J FIC Pop Now Monsef

Nayeri, Daniel. “The Many Assassinations of Samir, the Seller of Dreams” 2023

A 12-year-old boy named Omar (now called Monkey) escapes being murdered by monks only to find himself indebted to Samir, the Seller of Dreams, and traveling down the 11th-century Silk Road trying to find freedom. This masterly tale is packed with legends, high jinks, and humor alongside deep ponderings on life and love.

J FIC Nayeri, e-book Hoopla, e-audiobook

Paige, Danielle. “Wish of the Wicked” 2023

Everyone knows a fairy godmother helped Cinderella get to the ball. But no one knows why. For centuries, Farrow's family – the Entente – have been magical advisors to the Queen. Their wisdom and foresight kept the Thirteen Queendoms in harmony. Until a new queen, Magrit, takes power, outlaws magic, and executes the Entente. Only Farrow survives, with her magic warped beyond repair. She can now use it only to fulfill the feeble wishes of commoners. Since that day, Farrow has dreamed of revenge. All it will take is a young woman named Cinderella who dreams of true love. With one night, one chance to reclaim her magic and destroy the queen, Farrow will stop at nothing.

YA FIC Paige, YA Pop Now Paige

Pla, Sally J. “The Fire, the Water, and Maudie McGinn” 2023

Maudie always looks forward to the summers she spends in California with her dad. But this year, she must keep a troubling secret about her home life. Maudie wants to confide in her dad about her stepdad's anger, but she's scared. When a wildfire strikes, Maudie and her dad are forced to evacuate. It's another turbulent wave of change. But now, every morning, from their camper, Maudie can see surfers bobbing in the water. She desperately wants to learn, but could she ever be brave enough? Will Maudie find the strength to reveal the awful truth? * *Schneider Family Book Award Winner*

J FIC Pla

Riordan, Rick and Oshiro, Mark. "The Sun and The Star: A Nico Di Angelo Adventure" 2023

As the son of Hades, Nico di Angelo has been through so much, from the premature deaths of his mother and sister, to being outed against his will, to losing his friend Jason during the trials of Apollo. But there is a ray of sunshine in his life – literally: his boyfriend, Will Solace, the son of Apollo. Together the two demigods can overcome any obstacle or foe. At least, that’s been the case so far... Now Nico is being plagued by a voice calling out to him from Tartarus, the lowest part of the Underworld. He thinks he knows who it is: a reformed Titan named Bob whom Percy and Annabeth had to leave behind when they escaped Hades’s realm. Nico’s dreams and Rachel Dare’s latest prophecy leave little doubt in Nico’s mind that Bob is in some kind of trouble. Nico has to go on this quest, whether Mr. D and Chiron like it or not. And of course, Will insists on coming with. But can a being made of light survive in the darkest part of the world? And what does the prophecy mean that Nico will have to “leave something of equal value behind?”

J FIC Riordan, J FIC Pop Now Riordan, e-book, e-book Hoopla, e-audiobook

Rundberg, Johan and Prime, A.A. "The Night Raven" 2023

It’s 1880, and in the frigid city of Stockholm, death lurks around every corner. Twelve-year-old Mika knows that everyone in her orphanage will struggle to survive this winter. But at least the notorious serial killer the Night Raven is finally off the streets ... or is he? Drawn in by Mika’s unique ability to notice small details — a skill Mika has always used to survive — the gruff Detective Hoff unwittingly recruits her to help him with his investigation into a gruesome murder. Mika knows she should stay far, far away, and yet ... with such little hope for her future, could this be an opportunity?

J FIC Rundberg, J Pop Now Rundberg

Tang, Betty C. "Parachute Kids" 2023

Feng-Li can’t wait to discover America with her family! But after an action-packed vacation, her parents deliver shocking news. They are returning to Taiwan and leaving Feng-Li and her older siblings in California on their own. Suddenly, the three kids must fend for themselves in a strange new world — and get along. Starting a new school, learning a new language, and trying to make new friends while managing a household is hard enough, but Bro and Sis’s constant bickering makes everything worse. Thankfully, there are some hilarious moments to balance the stress and loneliness. But as tensions escalate — and all three kids get tangled in a web of bad choices — can Feng-Li keep her family together?

J GN Tang, e-book

Winans, Justine Pucella. "The Otherwoods" 2023

Some would call River Rydell a "chosen one." Born with the ability to see monsters and travel to a terrifying spirit world called The Otherwoods, they have all the makings of a hero. But River just calls themselves unlucky. So, the way River sees it, it's better to keep their head down and ignore anything Otherwoods related. But The Otherwoods won't be ignored any longer. When River's only friend (and crush) Avery is kidnapped and dragged into The Otherwoods by monsters, River has no choice but to confront the world they've seen only in their nightmares.

J FIC Winans

Woodson, Jacqueline. "Remember Us" 2023

It seems like Sage's whole world is on fire the summer before she starts seventh grade. As her house burns down, her Bushwick neighborhood gets referred to as "The Matchbox" in the local newspaper. And while Sage prefers to spend her time shooting hoops with the guys, she's also still trying to figure out her place inside the circle of girls she's known since childhood. A group that each day, feels further and further away from her. But it's also the summer of Freddy, a new kid who truly gets Sage. Together, they reckon with the pain of missing the things that get left behind as time moves on, savor what's good in the present, and buoy each other up in the face of destruction.

J FIC Woodson, e-book, e-audiobook

Wyman, Christina. "Jawbreaker" 2023

Max Plink's life is complicated. Her parents aren't getting along. The school bullies are relentless, and her own sister is the cruelest of them. Worst of all, her mouth is a mess. A USA Today bestseller perfect for fans of Raina Telgemeier's "Smile," this refreshingly honest debut novel is about toxic sibling rivalry, socioeconomic disparity, and dental drama. A hugely relatable must-read: witty, intensely emotional, and full of heart.

J FIC Wyman

Yang, Kelly. "Finally Seen" 2023

When Lina's family immigrated to the United States from China, Lina stayed behind with her grandmother. Now it's Lina's turn to join her family, but she's shocked to discover how hard her new life is. This novel deftly deals with big, timely topics.

J FIC Yang, e-book, e-audiobook

Nonfiction

Brown, Daniel James. "Facing the Mountain: A True Story of Japanese American Heroes in World War II (Adapted for Young Readers)" 2023

A gripping World War II saga of patriotism and courage: the special Japanese-American Army unit that overcame brutal odds in Europe; their families, incarcerated in camps back home; and a young man who refused to surrender his constitutional rights, even if it meant imprisonment.

J 940.5412 Brown, J Pop Now 940.5412 Brown

Chu, Amy. "Fighting to Belong! Vol 1: Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander History from the 1700s through the 1800s" 2023

Asian American and Pacific Islander history is American history. The unique experiences, challenges, and contributions of AAPIs are an integral part of our country's development, but they are rarely taught in American schools. In this book, our middle school protagonists Padmini, Sammy, Joe, and Tiana and their guide, Kenji, embark on an amazing journey through time to witness key events in AAPI history.

YA GN Chu

Day, Nicholas. "The Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, a Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity" 2023

On a hot August day in Paris, just over a century ago, a desperate guard burst into the office of the director of the Louvre and shouted, *La Joconde, c'est partie!* The Mona Lisa, she's gone! Travel back to an extraordinary period of revolutionary turn-of-the-century Paris. Walk its backstreets. Meet the infamous thieves — and detectives — of the era. And then slip back further in time and follow Leonardo da Vinci, painter of the Mona Lisa, through his dazzling, wondrously weird life.

J 364.1628 Day, J Pop Now 364.1628 Day, J PLAYAWAY 364.1628 Day, e-book, e-audiobook

Florio, John and Shapiro, Ouisie. "Doomed: Sacco, Vanzetti & the End of the American Dream" 2023

In the early 1920s, a Red Scare gripped America. Many of those targeted were Italians, Eastern Europeans, and other immigrants. When an armed robbery resulting in the death of two people broke headlines in Massachusetts, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti — both Italian immigrants — were quick to be accused. A heated trial ensued, but through it all, the two men maintained their innocence. The controversial case quickly rippled past borders as it became increasingly clear that Sacco and Vanzetti were fated for a death sentence. Protests sprang up around the world to fight for their lives. Learn the tragic history we dare not repeat.

YA 345.73 Florio, YA Pop Now 345.73 Florio

Hood, Susan. "Harboring Hope: The True Story of How Henny Sinding Helped Denmark's Jews Escape the Nazis" 2023

In 1943, Henny Sinding, only 22 years old, and the crew of Gerda III, a lighthouse supply boat, risked everything to smuggle their Jewish compatriots across the Øresund strait to safety in Sweden during World War II. In Henny's words, "It was the right thing to do so we did it. Simple as that." But what happened when their operation's cover was blown and it was Henny's turn to escape?

J 940.54 Hood, J Pop Now 940.54 Hood

Martín, Pedro. "Mexikid" 2023

Pedro Martín has grown up hearing stories about his abuelito — his legendary crime-fighting, grandfather who was once a part of the Mexican Revolution. But that doesn't mean Pedro is excited at the news that Abuelito is coming to live with their family. Pedro has eight brothers and sisters, and the house is crowded enough. Still, Pedro piles into the Winnebago with his family for a road trip to Mexico to bring Abuelito home, and what follows is the trip of a lifetime. Pedro connects with his abuelito and learns what it means to grow up and find his grito. **Pura Belpré Author and Illustrator Award Winner*

J GN Martin, J Pop Now GN Martin, e-book

McAnulty, Stacy and Miles, Nicole. "Where Are the Aliens? The Search for Life Beyond Earth" 2023

Scientists haven't discovered life beyond Earth, not even a single teeny-tiny organism. But there's a whole lot of outer space, and humans have searched only a fraction of a fraction of it. So, do you believe in the possibility of life out there? Or do you think Earth is perfectly unique in its ability to grow organisms? Packed with playful illustrations and fascinating factoids, this is the perfect book for anyone who has ever looked up and asked, "What's out there?"

J 576.839 McAnulty, J Pop Now 576.839 McAnulty

Rusch, Elizabeth. "The 21: The True Story of the Youth Who Sued the U.S. Government Over Climate Change" (2023)

The Twenty-One is a gripping legal and environmental thriller that tells the story of 21 young people and their ongoing case against the U.S. government for denying their constitutional right to life and liberty. A rich, informative read, "The Twenty-One" stars the young plaintiffs and their attorneys; illuminates the workings of the United States' judicial system and the relationship between government, citizens' rights, and the environment; and asks readers to think deeply about the future of our planet.

YA 363.7387 Rusch, YA Pop Now 363.7387 Rusch

Santat, Dan. "A First Time for Everything" 2023

Dan's always been a good kid. The kind of kid who listens to his teachers, helps his mom with grocery shopping, and stays out of trouble. But being a good kid doesn't stop him from being bullied and feeling like he's invisible, which is why Dan has low expectations when his parents send him on a class trip to Europe. At first, he's right. He's stuck with the same girls from his middle school who love to make fun of him, and he doesn't know why his teacher insisted he come on this trip. But as he travels through France, Germany, Switzerland, and England, a series of first experiences begin to change him — first Fanta, first fondue, first time stealing a bike from German punk rockers ... and first love. An ode to all middle schoolers. **National Book Award Winner*

J GN Santat, J GN Pop Now Santat, e-book

Slater, Dashka. "Accountable: The True Story of a Racist Social Media Account and the Teenagers Whose Lives It Changed" 2023

When a high school student started a private Instagram account that used racist and sexist memes to make his friends laugh, he thought of it as "edgy" humor. Over time, the edge got sharper. Then a few other kids found out about the account, and pretty soon, everyone knew. Ultimately, no one in the small town of Albany, California, was safe from the repercussions of the account's discovery. Not the girls targeted by the posts. Not the boy who created the account. Not the group of kids who followed it. Not the adults — educators and parents — whose attempts to fix things too often made them worse. In the end, no one was laughing, and everyone was left wondering: What does it mean to be held accountable for harm that takes place behind a screen? **YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction Winner*

YA 371.829 Slater, YA Pop Now 371.829 Slater, e-book, e-audiobook