

7th GRADE SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENTS 2022

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This summer you will read two books.

One book will be a nonfiction book (such as an autobiography, memoir or biography) and the other will be a fiction book

(You could replace the nonfiction book with a historical fiction book, like Code Talkers, that is based on real events)

1. You will do a Digital Book Report (Google slideshow) on both books (You will present this to the class)

—and—

2. For one of the books, you will do a fun, creative and/or interactive project (You will also present this to the class).

You will present the slideshow and project when you return from the summer. This will be during the first two weeks of school.

Here is a schedule of dates for when you should have things completed and turned in to Google Classroom:

June 8-11 — Choose books (order books so they arrive by June 12)

June 12 — Begin reading your book (by this date or sooner)

July 3 —Finish book 1 & Start Slideshow for book 1

July 9 — Finish slideshow for book 1

July 10 — Start book 2

July 30 — Finish Book 2

July 31 — Create a Google Slideshow for book 2 (you can use the same slides as Book one and simply add additional slides to it.)

August 6 — Be completely finished with the slideshow

by Aug 7 — Begin Project

by Aug 28 — Finish project (turn into Google Classroom)

Criteria For the Digital Book Report (SLIDESHOW):

Use Google Slides

For each book Create 8+ slides (this means that the overall slideshow will be 16+ slides)

—The plus means that it can be longer than 16 slides—

Each slide must have a picture on it. Each slide must have at least one well-positioned photo or artwork that is relevant to the information on the slide. (Sometimes, Gifs, video clips, memes, and clip art can also work, but should always be relevant). Make sure the picture is large and clear enough to see when projected. More than one picture is good as well. The more visually interesting the slide, the better

- Font Should be large (18-24 is a good size)
- No more than 5 sentences or bullet points per slide.
- Your written information can be brief and to the point.
- Avoid writing paragraphs and long sentences! —I suggest using bullet points and not paragraphs except for the synopsis. You may use multiple slides for one paragraph. It is okay to break the paragraph up this way. It will be much better for us as we won't be able to see all the information on the projection if the font is too small. I rather you use multiple slides so that you can add more visuals and keep the visuals large rather than try to cram it all on one slide.
- Make sure you have a Title Slide: A Slide with the Title of the Book and Author (plus a picture or illustration)
- You may break your slides into multiple slides. You don't need to try to shove everything about one topic onto one slide, you may use multiple slides for it. For example, if you want to explain the Historical Context in three slides instead of one, that is acceptable too.
- You may do more than 8 slides
- Make your slides as visually appealing as possible. Add cool animations and effects, if you know how.
- When adding a photo, it is good to title it and explain what the picture represents and/or how it relates to the subject matter on your slide.
- Your slides should follow this format (or something similar):

Historical fiction Books

1. **Title Page:**
 - Title of the Book
 - Author's name
 - Genre (Science Fiction, Fantasy, Dystopian Fantasy, Memoir, etc.,)
 - Your Name
 - Add a picture or visual of some sort
2. **Author:** Information about this author, awards
3. **Synopsis:** Who and/or What is this book about?
4. **Setting:** When and where does it take place?
5. **Historical Context:** Background Information or anything else we should know about the time period this book takes place.

6. **Main Character:** Important Things we should know about the main character or the person this book is about.
7. Things you **enjoyed** about the book (including writing style), Things that **shocked/surprised** you, Things that you **learned**, or Things that **inspired** you.
8. **Review:** Review the book.: What was your response to the book or your overall impression? How many stars or points would you give it, etc., & **Recommendation:** Would you recommend this book to your classmates? Why or why not? You might even recommend other books similar to this one or other books that this author has written.

Autobiographies/ Biographies/ Memoirs

1. **Title Page:**
 - Title of the Book
 - Author's name
 - Genre (*Science Fiction, Fantasy, Dystopian Fantasy, Memoir, etc.,*)
 - Your Name
 - Add a picture or visual of some sort
2. **Author:** Introduce the topic of this book. Tell us who this book is about and what makes this person important or interesting. (Answer: Why does this person have a book written on them?)
3. **Setting:** When and where does it take place?
4. **Historical Context:** Background Information or anything else we should know about the time period this book takes place.
5. **Synopsis:** Summarize what happens in this book, what this person goes through.
6. Things you **enjoyed** about the book (including writing style), Things that **shocked/surprised** you, Things that you **learned**, or Things that **inspired** you.
7. **Review:** Review the book.: What was your response to the book or your overall impression? How many stars or points would you give it, etc., & **Recommendation:** Would you recommend this book to your classmates? Why or why not? You might even recommend other books similar to this one or other books that this author has written.

Fiction Books

1. **Title Page:**
 - Title of the Book
 - Author's name
 - Genre (*Science Fiction, Fantasy, Dystopian Fantasy, Memoir, etc.,*)
 - Your Name
 - Add a picture or visual of some sort
2. **Setting:** Explain where and when this story takes place.
 - If it is a fantasy or science fiction story, describe the world in which this story takes place and the unique/interesting things about this fantastical world. You might need more than one slide to really explain and describe all the cool aspects of this fantasy or sci-fi world.
 - If it is a historical fiction novel, you would want to explain the time period in which this takes place. Make sure to include any historical context we should know (meaning describe the things that are going on in this time period that have an effect on the main character and events in the book). **You might want**

additional slides that go into more detail about the Historical Context of the book.

- **You might also need additional slides that explain various other settings in the book or important landmarks where key events take place.**
3. **Synopsis:** A short summary of the plot. Tell us who and what this story is about and **Conflict/Theme:** Explain the major issues, problems or themes in this book? All stories have conflict. Think about what the main problem of this book is and/or the major themes in this book. Themes might include resilience, self-acceptance, perseverance, family, love, growth, good overcoming evil, etc.,
 4. **Main Character(s):** Describe this character, their personality, their situation, and other important things we should know about them
 5. **Other Important Characters or figures we should know about:** If there are a number of important characters, you might want to introduce them and give them each their own slide.,
 6. **Anything that is interesting about the book, the characters, the setting, or anything else the reader should know or might want to know.** Anything that makes this story unique or makes the world the author has created unique. For example, in Keeper of the Lost Cities, the characters all have certain powers. You could devote a number of slides explaining the special powers of the characters. Other important or interesting things would be that the main character was a genetically engineered elf who has brown eyes when all other elves have blue eyes, or that she was raised by adopted parents in the human world and had no idea she was an elf, or that when an elf dies their DNA is mixed in with a seed, which turns into a tree that represents their unique features and qualities. These are all curious things that make this world and this story unique. The audience might be intrigued.
 7. Things you **enjoyed** about the book (including writing style), Things that **shocked/surprised** you, Things that you **learned**, or Things that **inspired** you.
 8. **Review:** Review the book.: What was your response to the book or your overall impression? How many stars or points would you give it, etc.,& **Recommendation:** Would you recommend this book to your classmates? Why or why not? You might even recommend other books similar to this one or other books that this author has written.
 9. **Optional: Author and/or Information on this book:**
 - **Author:** Information about this author. (Who they are, when and where they were born, types of books they write, what they might be famous for or known for, things that have influenced them, Any awards or best-selling novels, and any background information about them that might be interesting to the audience).
 - **Info on this book:** This is where you tell us any background information we should know about. Things such as the history of the book, any controversy surrounding this book, or any accolades it has received would be interesting. For instance, is it a banned book? Has it won any awards? Is it a best seller? etc.,) If it was banned or controversial, explain why and what you think about this.

REMEMBER: Make sure that EVERY slide has a picture or at least one visual on them.

Try to fill up at least half of each slide with a picture or visual of some sort. Colorful backgrounds (that don't interfere with our ability to read the words on the slide) are good. Design elements, special layout, and other visual details are fun too. Try to make the slides as visually appealing as possible. Add background, animations, pictures, etc., to each slide

PROJECTS

Remember that you will be presenting these projects to the class. This means that if you write a story, you will have to read the story out loud to us (and project it on the screen). If you create illustrations or a cartoon, you will need to put photos of that on a slideshow and show it to the class that way, so we can all see it. If you make a video, we can play it on the big screen in our room. Let me know if you have questions about how you might present your project. One thing to also remember is that you will need to explain how this project relates to or was inspired by the book you read.

Here are some project ideas:

Animation or Stop Motion Video

Summarize the book using an animation program. You will create an animated cartoon or use stop motion to create a video that showcases the plot and main events of the book or that showcases an interesting chapter in the book.

You should have 10+ scenes (no limit) showing these things:

1. Title of the Book written by Author's name & Animated by Your Name
2. Character & scene introduction
3. Inciting incident (show the thing that starts the story moving towards the climax. This is where the problem begins)
4. Rising Action 1 —This is one of the major events that leads to the Climax
5. Rising Action 2 —This is one of the major events that leads to the Climax
6. Rising Action 3 —This is one of the major events that leads to the Climax
7. Rising Action 4 —This is one of the major events that leads to the Climax
8. Climax —This is where the problem comes to light or gets worse. This is the exciting/most tense part of the story.
9. Falling Action — This shows how the problem gets resolved
10. Conclusion/Resolution —The ending

Creative Writing

Write a 5+ page story inspired by the book you just read

1. *First, create a **cover page** with:*

Title of your story
by Your name
inspired by the novel *Title of Book*
by Author's name

2. *Then, include a page with a short paragraph that briefly explains how this story was inspired by the book you read.*

3. *Finally, include your story.*

4. *You might want to add illustrations to your story (optional) or an illustrated cover page (optional).*

** Remember, you will be projecting your story on the big screen and reading it to us out loud in class.*

Types of writing ideas for your creative story:

- Create an additional chapter or a short sequel for the novel. You will continue writing the novel as though you were the author writing an additional chapter or as though you were starting the second book in a series. The story would be a continuation of where the novel left off.
- Write a spin-off of this story. Using the same world that the author of the novel created, you will write your own story. You will have different characters and different events, but the world will be the same —or— You will use the same characters from the novel you read but these characters go through something different and new. Perhaps you will even introduce new characters to this story.
- Rewrite a portion of the story from the voice or perspective of a different character. You can choose a particular scene in the story to rewrite.
- Write a prequel to the story.

Turn the nonfiction book into a 5+ page historical fiction story:

- Bring to life a particular event or real person that you read about. Choose the setting, historical figures, time period, problems, and themes found in the nonfiction book you read to create a fictional book that incorporates elements mainly found in fiction books such as the thoughts, motivations and emotional responses of the characters, detailed imagery that evokes the senses, dialogue, non-historical characters that interact with historical ones (like you could place yourself in this story), etc.,

Interview the Author of the book or One of the Characters in the book:

You will need to **write out the interview** and then **film yourself acting this out**. You can have yourself play both parts (but this will take quite a bit of editing) or enlist a friend to play the other part. You will be presenting the recording to the class as your presentation. Don't forget props and costumes.

- During the interview, you will introduce the author, Genre and Title of the book and a wee bit of background information on the person/character being interviewed as though you were writing this interview for a magazine or talk show.
- Then you will ask them questions about the important incidents in the book and/or about writing the book, which your character or author will then answer.
- Create a 2-page interview (or longer) and then actually record the interview. If you play both roles, please get into character by changing your costume and voice so we can distinguish between the interviewer and the interviewee.

Example:

"It is June 21, 1970, and I am sitting here today with Sgt. Bryant, author of the critically acclaimed war memoir *To Save One's Soul*. He has recently returned from his call of duty in Vietnam and graciously agreed to an interview in spite of extensive injuries he is still recovering from.

Interviewer: Sgt. Bryant, I am thrilled you could make it here today, especially considering that you have just recently recovered from surgery as a result of your encounter with an exploding grenade upon which you threw yourself in order to save your fellow soldiers. It is a miracle you are alive to tell your tale. How has your recuperation been?

Sgt. Bryant: Yes, thank you Nick for asking and for having me here today. I am doing well, but the recovery is slow and it has been hard for me to overcome the changes it has caused. As you know, I lost both legs and an arm. At first I was extremely depressed and wasn't certain if I would ever feel normal again.

Interviewer: But now you seem to be very upbeat. What has helped you with recovering your sense of self?

Sgt. Bryant: I am glad you asked me this question because many of our young men have come back with similar injuries and are too trying to cope with the same and I hope my story can be an inspiration for others. I was able to find purpose in life through...

Interviewer: On page 25 of your memoir, you mention ...how did this ...

Graphic Novel or Illustrated Summary

Only choose to do these artistic options if you plan to spend time on the artwork and produce quality pictures. I will be grading you on the quality of the artwork and the effort you put into it. I also expect this to be colored. You may use paper or do this digitally. Whatever format you choose, make sure you are able to present these via a slideshow presentation or something similar that we can project from the computer to the screen in the classroom. If you do this by hand, you will need to take photos of the finished product and upload them to a slide presentation.

Turn the entire book or a chapter of the book into a graphic novel.

1. Create an illustrated cover page with the title of the book and author. Followed by "Adapted into a graphic novel by Your Name). Make sure you add an illustration.
2. Turn the entire book or an entire chapter into a graphic novel:
 - a. If you do the **entire book**, then make sure to also **include a paragraph review on the book** (explaining what you thought of the book and why). Add this paragraph to the end of the graphic novel you created.
 - b. If you do only a **chapter**, then **add a summary and review of the book**. Briefly summarize the part of the story before the chapter you turned into a graphic novel, and then summarize the part after it. Place the illustrations between your two summaries. Then you will also have to add a review at the end.
 - c. Your illustrations should take up at least 6 pages and a total of at least 36 different boxes.

Create an Illustrated Book Review and Summary

1. Create an illustrated cover page:
 - Title it: *An Illustrated Book Review and Summary of Title of the book by Author's Name.*
 - Then add an Illustration
 - Followed by *Written & Illustrated by Your Name*
2. For the project, **summarize each chapter** (a short paragraph each) **and then add an illustration to each summary** (or to every other summary depending on how many chapters there are).
3. You should have at least 10 detailed illustrations for this project (perhaps one every chapter or two).
4. Make sure to title the illustrations and explain briefly what each is depicting.

Turn the Story or a Chapter of the Book into a script/play that you act out or a movie that you animate.

- Turn the story into script format and then act it out with friends or animate it with puppets, animation drawings, or stop motion as a movie.
- Turn in both the script and the video of your performance

Create a game or fun activity based on this book that we must play (no Kahoots).

This should be a game that you come up with yourself. You will have to teach us the game and then have us play it. Some students have created games with actual game pieces and cards, others have created computer games that we could play, it is up to you. One student had us “choose our own ending” type of game. Some students do codebreaking activities or CIA sort of forensic science activities. It all depends on the book.

Before we play the game, make sure to explain which book this game relates to and then explain how your activity relates to the book.

An Art Project.

You might create your own art project and/or have us do an art project based on the book. Make sure to explain the directions and expectations clearly (bringing in an example of what you want us to do is always a good idea) and then also, make sure to explain what book you based this project on and how it is inspired by the book. that you have us do. Make sure your directions are clear and that you explain which book this art project was inspired by and how it relates to that book.

For each project, make it clear to us during the presentation which book the project relates to and in what way it relates to the book.

Recommended Books to Choose From

Choose 2 books (1 Nonfiction & 1 Fiction)

Some of these books I have in the classroom library and you may borrow them over the summer.

You may read a book that is not on this list, but it must be at an appropriate reading level (and I prefer books more than 250 pages long). Please ask me for approval if you are unsure.

Recommended NONFICTION Books

(those in bold type come highly recommended by past students)

- ***I am Malala*** —Malala Yousafzai (highly recommended, though I am deliberating on adding this to our class reading list cause it is a favorite of so many)
 - ***Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*** —Anne Frank (highly recommended, though I might add this as an optional book to read during part of our Holocaust unit this year. It is a favorite book of many students).
 - ***Becoming Kareem: Growing up on and Off the Court***—Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
 - ***The Keeper: The Unguarded Story of Tim Howard (Young Reader Edition*** —geared towards middle school & Upper Elementary students) –Tim Howard
- or-
- ***The Keeper: A life of Saving Goals and Achieving Them*** (the same book as the above but a bit longer and geared to those with a little higher reading and maturity level) —Tim Howard
 - ***The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives***—Dashka Slater
 - ***A Long Way Gone*** —Ishmael Beah (The story of a child soldier)
 - ***Red Scarf Girl*** —Ji-Li Jiang
 - ***Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter*** —Adeline Yen Mah
 - ***Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen*** — Jazz Jennings
 - ***I Will Always Write Back***— Martin Ganda and Caitlin Alifirenka

- *Glimmer of Hope: How Tragedy Sparked a Movement* — The founders of March for Our Lives (Teen led movement against gun violence)
- *Claudette Colvin Twice Toward Justice* —Phillip M. Hoose (*Civil Rights Movement*)
- *We Are Displaced* —Malala Yousafzai
- *Just Mercy* (Adapted for Young Adults): A True Story of the Fight for Justice—Bryan Stevenson (Racial Biases in the Criminal Justice System)
- *I've Lived a Thousand Years* — Livia Bitton Jackson (Holocaust Memoir)
- *Weedflower*—Cynthia Kadohata (*Japanese Internment*)
- ***Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg & the Secret History of the Vietnam War***—Steve Sheinkin
- *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club* —Phillip Hoose
- *We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement that Defied Adolf Hitler* —Russell Freedman
- ***The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny and the Fight for Civil Rights***—Steve Sheinkin
- ***Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team***—Steve Sheinkin
- ***The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery***—Steve Sheinkin
- ***Bomb: The Race to Build and Steal the World's Deadliest Weapon***—Steve Sheinkin
- *Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith*—Deborah Helligman
- ***Night***—**Eli Weisel** (best for a mature student as this is a memoir about the Holocaust)
- ***Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass***—Frederick Douglass (for an advanced reader)

Historical Fiction

- ***Resistance*** — Jennifer A. Nielsen (*historical fiction*)
- ***Code Talker***—Joseph Bruchac (*historical fiction*)
- ***The Seeds of America Trilogy: Chains; Forge; Ashes*** —Laurie Halse Anderson
- ***Alan Gratz books*** (like *Refugee*, *Prisoner B-3087*, *Grenade*, *Samurai Sword Shop*, *Ground Zero*, etc.,)
<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/authorpage/alan-gratz.html>

- *Once* — Moritz Gleitzman (historical fiction)
- *Jefferson's Sons* — Sally Hemming
 - *This story of Thomas Jefferson's children by one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, tells a darker piece of America's history from an often unseen perspective—that of three of Jefferson's slaves—including two of his own children. As each child grows up and tells his story, the contradiction between slavery and freedom becomes starker, calling into question the real meaning of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This poignant story sheds light on what life was like as one of Jefferson's invisible offspring.*
- *Johnny Tremain* — Esther Forbes
- *The Hired Girl* — Laura Amy Schlitz (historical fiction)
- *A Night Divided* — Jennifer A. Nielsen (historical fiction)
- *Shooting Kabul* — N.H. Senzai
- *Under the Persimmon Tree* — Suzanne Fisher Staple
- *Words in the Dust* — Trent Reedy

Fiction Books

(The ones in bold have been class favorites)

Mystery — Adventure — Intrigue — Espionage

- ***The Mysterious Benedict Society***
- ***The Wig in the Window* — Kristen Kittscher**
- ***Spy School Series* — Stuart Gibbs**
- ***Charlie Thorne* — Stuart Gibbs**
- ***One of Us is Lying* — Karen McManus**
- *Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* — A Flavia de Luce Mystery — Alan Bradley
- *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library* — Chris Grabenstein (middle school)

Fantasy

- ***Scythe* — Neal Shusterman (fantasy)**
- ***Eragon* — Christopher Paolini (fantasy)**
- ***Keeper of the Lost City* — Shannon Messenger (fantasy)**
- ***Cinder (or other books in the Lunar Chronicles series)* — Marissa Meyer (fantasy/SciFi)**
- ***Ember in the Ashes* (fantasy)**
- ***Children of Blood and Bone* — Toni Adeyemi (fantasy)**
- ***The Red Queen* — Victoria Aveyard (fantasy)**
- ***Ink Iron and Glass* — Gwendolyn Clare (fantasy)**
- ***A Wrinkle in Time* — Madeleine L'Engle (fantasy)**
- ***Harry Potter* — JK Rowling (fantasy/middle school)**

- **Shadow & Bone** —Leigh Bardugo (fantasy)
- **The Princess Bride** — William Goldman (humor/fantasy)
- *Unwanted*s —Lisa McMann (fantasy/middle school)
- *Graceling* —Kristin Cashne (fantasy/middle school)
- *The Golden Compass* —Philip Pullman (fantasy/middle school)
- *The Great Hunt* (*Wheel of Time* book 1)—Robert Jordan (Fantasy)
- *Ages of Oz: A Fiery Friendship*— Gabriel Gale (Fantasy)
- *Dragonsong* —Anne McCaffrey (fantasy)
- *Summer and Bird* —Katherine Catmull (fantasy)
- *Jasmine Throne* —Tasha Suri
- *City of Bones* —Cassandra Clare
- *Wizard of Earthsea* —Ursula Le Guin (fantasy)
- *The Princess Academy* —Shannon Hale
- *Rick Riordan books*

I have a number of other fantasy books in my library students can borrow

Dystopian Fiction

- **Divergent** —Veronica Roth (dystopian)
- **Matched** — Ally Condie (dystopian)
- **The Hunger Games** —Suzanne Collins (dystopian)
- **The Red Queen** — (fantasy+dystopian)
- **The Maze Runner** —Debra Bogart (dystopian —Violence Alert)
- **Legend** —Mary Liu (dystopian)

SciFi

- *Ender's Game* —Orson Scott Card (Sci fi)
- **War of the Worlds** —(modern classic)
- **Cinder (and other books in the Lunar Chronicles)** —Marissa Meyer

Books that take place in historical settings:

<https://bookriot.com/historical-fiction-books-for-middle-school-readers/>

<https://readingmiddlegrade.com/middle-grade-historical-fiction-books/>

Fiction

- **The Thing About Jellyfish** —Ali Benjamin
- **Tangerine** — Edward Bloor
- **The Fault in Our Stars** —John Greene
- **Little Women** —Louisa May Alcott (a classic)
- **Black Beauty** —Anna Sewell (a classic)
- **Hatchet** —Gary Paulsen (Newbery Medal/adventure)

- ***Lord of the Flies* —William Golding (a classic)**
- ***Flowers for Algernon* —Daniel Keyes (a classic)**
- ***On the Come Up* —(language alert! Lots of bad words)**
- *All the Stars Denied*—Guadalupe Garcia McCall
- *One Crazy Summer*—Rita Williams Garcia
- *Finding Langston* —Lesa Cline Ransom
- *Out of Left Field* —Elen Klages
- *The Night Diary* — Veera Hiranandani
- *Stella by Starlight* —Shannon M. Draper
- *The Length of a String* —Elissa Brent Weissman
- *Mapping the Bones*—Jane Yolan
- *Code of Honor* —Alan Gratz
- *Internment*— Samira Ahmed
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* —Mark Haddon (dark humor)
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* —Sherman Alexie (middle school)
- *The False Prince*—Jennifer A. Nielsen (middle school)
- *Al Capone Does My Shirts* —Gennifer Choldenko (middle school)
- *Out of Left Field* —Ellen Kages (middle school)—Golden Poppy book Award
- *Color Me In* —Natasha Diaz
- *Tradition* —Brendan Kiely (mature themes alert!)
- *Maybe he just likes you* — Barabara Dee
- *The Things She’s Seen* —Ambelin Kwaymullina
- *Far From the Tree* —Robin Benway (National Book Award)
- *White Fang AND Call of the Wild (read both)* —Jack London (classic/adventure)
- *A Separate Peace* —John Knowles (a classic)
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* —Betty Smith (a classic)
- *Bless Me, Ultima* —Rudolfo Anaya (a classic)
- *My Ántonia*—Willa Cather (a classic)
- *The Devil’s Arithmetic* —Jane Yolen (Holocaust theme/fantasy)
- *The Book Thief* —Markus Zusak (Holocaust theme/magical realism)
- *Number the Stars* — (Holocaust)
- *Girl Used Up* —April Henry
- *Turtles All the Way Down* —John Greene
- *Scars Like Wings* — Erin Stewart
- *Wonder* —R.J. Palacio (and other books in this series are good)
- *Song for a Whale* —Lynn Kelly
- *The Mighty Miss Malone* —Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Crow* —Barbara Wright
- *Esperanza Rising* —Pam Muñoz Ryan
 - *Esperanza thought she’d always live with her family on their ranch in Mexico—she’d always have fancy dresses, a beautiful home, and servants. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California during the Great Depression, and to settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers.*

Esperanza isn't ready for the hard labor, financial struggles, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When their new life is threatened, Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances—Mama's life, and her own, depend on it.

Newbery Award Winning books: (recommended for grades 4-8)

- *The Graveyard Book* —Neil Gaiman
- *Hattie Big Sky* —Kirby Larson
- *Rules* —Cynthia Lord
- *The Princess Academy* —Shannon Hale
- *Al Capone Does My Shirts* —Gennifer Choldenko (and California Young Reader Award)
- *Piecing Me Together* —Renee Watson
- *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* —Kelly Barnhill
- *Wolf Hollow* —Lauren Wolk
- *Echo* —Pam Muñoz Ryan
- *One Came Home* —Amy Timberlake
- *Paper Boy* —Vince Vawter
- *The Crossover* —Kwame Alexander (book in verse/poetry)
- *Dead End in Norvelt* —Jack Gantos
- *Savvy* —Ingrid Law
- *Brown Girl Dreaming*— Jacqueline Woodson (also a National Book Award Winner) (book in verse/poetry)
- *The Chocolate War* —Robert Cormier
- *Kira Kira* —Cynthia Kadohata
- *The Thing About Luck* —Cynthia Kadohata
- ***Hatchet* —Gary Paulsen (Newbery Medal/adventure)**