

Summer Reading Book List for students entering grade 8  
Annotations from Amazon.com (\*challenging title)

\*Consider by Kristy Acevedo

As if 17-year-old Alexandra Lucas' anxiety disorder isn't enough, mysterious holograms suddenly appear, heralding the end of the world. They bring an ultimatum: heed the warning and step through a portal-like vertex to safety, or stay and be destroyed by a comet that is on a collision course with Earth. The holograms, claiming to be humans from the future, bring the promise of safety. But without the ability to verify their story, Alex is forced to consider what is best for her friends, her family, and herself. To stay or to go. A decision must be made. With the deadline of the holograms' prophecy fast approaching, Alex feels as though she is living on a ticking time bomb, until she discovers it is much, much worse.

The Greatest: Muhammad Ali by Walter Dean Myers

An introduction to Ali's life from his childhood to the present day, focusing on his career and the controversies surrounding him. Both his talent in the boxing ring and his showmanship earned him international fame, while his refusal to accept the stereotypical role of a black athletic star in the 1960s and his membership in the Nation of Islam brought him notoriety. Myers interweaves fight sequences with the boxer's life story and the political events and issues of the day. He doesn't shy away from reporting on the brutality of the sport and documents the toll it has taken on its many stars. Ample black-and-white photographs of the subject in and out of the ring illustrate the book.

Son by Lois Lowry

They called her Water Claire. When she washed up on their shore, no one knew that she came from a society where emotions and colors didn't exist. That she had become a Vessel at age thirteen. That she had carried a Product at age fourteen. That it had been stolen from her body. Claire had a son. But what became of him she never knew. What was his name? Was he even alive? She was supposed to forget him, but that was impossible. Now Claire will stop at nothing to find her child, even if it means making an unimaginable sacrifice.

Avalon High by Meg Cabot

Avalon High, I was starting to think, might not be so bad after all. Maybe it's not where Ellie wants to be, but if you have to start at a new school, Avalon High is typical enough: There's Lance, the jock. Jennifer, the cheerleader. And Will, senior class president, quarterback, and all-around good guy. But not everyone at Avalon High is who they appear to be . . . not even, as Ellie is about to discover, herself. As a bizarre drama begins to unfold, Ellie has to wonder, what part does she play in all this? Do the coincidences she's piecing together really mean—as in King Arthur's court—that tragedy is fast approaching for her new friends? Ellie doesn't know if she can do anything to stop the coming trouble. But somehow, she knows she has to try.

\*Eragon by Christopher Paolini

Fifteen-year-old Eragon believes that he is merely a poor farm boy—until his destiny as a Dragon Rider is revealed. Gifted with only an ancient sword, a loyal dragon, and sage advice from an old storyteller, Eragon is soon swept into a dangerous tapestry of magic, glory, and power. Now his choices could save—or destroy—the Empire.

Gathering Blue by Lois Lowry

Lois Lowry won her first Newbery Medal in 1994 for *The Giver*. Six years later, she ushered readers back into its mysterious but plausible future world in *Gathering Blue* to tell the story of Kira, orphaned, physically flawed, and left with an uncertain future. This second book in the Giver Quartet has been stunningly redesigned in paperback. As she did in *The Giver* and later *Messenger*, in *Gathering Blue* Lois Lowry challenges readers to imagine what our world could become, how people could evolve, and what could be considered valuable.

The Girl Who Threw Butterflies by Mick Cochrane

For an eighth grader, Molly Williams has more than her fair share of problems. Her father has just died in a car accident, and her mother has become a withdrawn, quiet version of herself. Molly doesn't want to be seen as "Miss Difficulty Overcome"; she wants to make herself known to the kids at school for something other

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than her father's death. So she decides to join the baseball team. The *boys'* baseball team. Her father taught her how to throw a knuckleball, and Molly hopes it's enough to impress her coaches as well as her new teammates.

The Face on the Milk Carton by Caroline B. Cooney

No one ever really paid close attention to the faces of the missing children on the milk cartons. But as Janie Johnson glanced at the face of the ordinary little girl with her hair in tight pigtails, wearing a dress with a narrow white collar—a three-year-old who had been kidnapped twelve years before from a shopping mall in New Jersey—she felt overcome with shock. She recognized that little girl—it was she. How could it possibly be true?

Janie can't believe that her loving parents kidnapped her, but as she begins to piece things together, nothing makes sense. Something is terribly wrong. Are Mr. and Mrs. Johnson really her parents? And if not, who is Janie Johnson, and what really happened?

Incantation by Alice Hoffman

Estrella is a Marrano: During the time of the Spanish Inquisition, she is one of a community of Spanish Jews living double lives as Catholics. And she is living in a house of secrets, raised by a family who practices underground the ancient and mysterious way of wisdom known as kabbalah. When Estrella discovers her family's true identity--and her family's secrets are made public--she confronts a world she's never imagined, where new love burns and where friendship ends in flame and ash, where trust is all but vanquished and betrayal has tragic and bitter consequences.

\*In My hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer by Irene Gut Opdyke

IRENE GUT WAS just 17 in 1939, when the Germans and Russians devoured her native Poland. Just a girl, really. But a girl who saw evil and chose to defy it.

Unwind by Neal Shusterman

In America after the Second Civil War, the Pro-Choice and Pro-Life armies came to an agreement: The Bill of Life states that human life may not be touched from the moment of conception until a child reaches the age of thirteen. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, however, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called "unwinding." Unwinding ensures that the child's life doesn't "technically" end by transplanting all the organs in the child's body to various recipients. Now a common and accepted practice in society, troublesome or unwanted teens are able to easily be unwound.

The Diaries of Adam and Eve by Mark Twain

Long before the arrival of the serpent, conflict enters the Garden of Eden as Adam and Eve discover in each other a source of continual irritation. Through the light of their diaries, we learn of their halting progression from grudging adversaries to eventual partners. The Diaries of Adam and Eve is one of Mark Twain's finest displays of wit and wisdom. A must-read for couples both young and old, it is a penetrating insight into the complex nature of the relationship between man and woman and of the forces which both repel and draw them together.

If I Stay by Gayle Foreman

In the blink of an eye everything changes. Seventeen year-old Mia has no memory of the accident; she can only recall what happened afterwards, watching her own damaged body being taken from the wreck. Little by little she struggles to put together the pieces- to figure out what she has lost, what she has left, and the very difficult choice she must make. Heartwrenchingly beautiful, this will change the way you look at life, love, and family. Now a major motion picture starring Chloe Grace Moretz, Mia's story will stay with you for a long, long time.

Seraphina and the Black Cloak by Robert Beatty

An exciting new mystery-thriller about an unusual girl who lives secretly in the basement of the grand Biltmore Estate and must solve a dark and dangerous mystery. This Disney Hyperion novel became a New York Times Bestseller in the first week of its release, and has been a smash hit ever since.

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*"Never go into the forest, for there are many dangers there, and they will ensnare your soul."*