

Eighth Grade Summer Reading

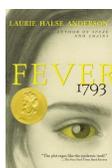
Students entering eighth grade will be required to read **at least one of the listed books**. Students are encouraged to consult when teachers and parents/guardians when selecting a title. Students are encouraged to consult when teachers and parents/guardians when selecting a title. **For summer reading to count towards 20+ book club, students must complete the required MPS book report form.**

-FICTION-



***Milkweed*, by Jerry Spinelli**

He's a boy called Jew. Gypsy. Stopthief. Runt. Happy. Fast. Filthy son of Abraham. He's a boy who lives in the streets of Warsaw. He's a boy who steals food for himself and the other orphans. He's a boy who believes in bread, and mothers, and angels. He's a boy who wants to be a Nazi some day, with tall shiny jackboots and a gleaming Eagle hat of his own. Until the day that suddenly makes him change his mind. And when the trains come to empty the Jews from the ghetto of the damned, he's a boy who realizes it's safest of all to be nobody...Spinelli takes us to one of the most devastating settings imaginable—Nazi-occupied Warsaw of World War II—and tells a tale of heartbreak, hope, and survival through the bright eyes of a young orphan. (goodreads.com)



***Fever 1793*, Laurie Halse Anderson**

It's late summer 1793, and the streets of Philadelphia are abuzz with mosquitoes and rumors of fever. Down near the docks, many have taken ill, and the fatalities are mounting. Now they include Polly, the serving girl at the Cook Coffeehouse. But fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook doesn't get a moment to mourn the passing of her childhood playmate. New customers have overrun her family's coffee shop, located far from the mosquito-infested river, and Mattie's concerns of fever are all but overshadowed by dreams of growing her family's small business into a thriving enterprise. But when the fever begins to strike closer to home, Mattie's struggle to build a new life must give way to a new fight—the fight to stay alive. (goodreads.com)



***The Call of the Wild*, by Jack London**

Life is good for Buck in Santa Clara Valley, where he spends his days eating and sleeping in the golden sunshine. But one day a treacherous act of betrayal leads to his kidnap, and he is forced into a life of toil and danger. Dragged away to be a sledge dog in the harsh and freezing cold Yukon, Buck must fight for his survival. Can he rise above his enemies and become the master of his realm once again? (goodreads.com)



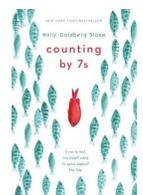
***So B. It*, by Sarah Weeks**

-a touching coming-of-age story about a young girl who goes on a cross-country journey to discover the truth about her parents, which the New York Times called "a remarkable novel." ... She doesn't know when her birthday is or who her father is. In fact, everything about Heidi and her mentally disabled mother's past is a mystery. When a strange word in her mother's vocabulary begins to haunt her, Heidi sets out on a cross-country journey in search of the secrets of her past. Far away from home, pieces of her puzzling history come together. But it isn't until she learns to accept not knowing that Heidi truly arrives. (goodreads.com)



***The Dreamer*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan**

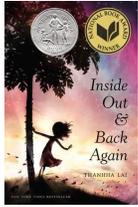
Neftali finds beauty and wonder everywhere: in the oily colors of mud puddles; a lost glove, sailing on the wind; the music of birds and language. He loves to collect treasures, daydream, and write--pastimes his authoritarian father thinks are for fools. Against all odds, Neftali prevails against his father's cruelty and his own crippling shyness to become one of the most widely read poets in the world, Pablo Neruda. This moving story about the birth of an artist is also a celebration of childhood, imagination, & the strength of the creative spirit. Sure to inspire young writers & artists. (goodreads.com)



***Counting By 7s*, by Holly Goldberg Sloan**

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life...until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is not a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing,

girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read. (goodreads.com)



***Inside Out and Back Again*, by Thanhha Lai**

For all the ten years of her life, Hà has only known Saigon: the thrills of its markets, the joy of its traditions, and the warmth of her friends close by. But now the Vietnam War has reached her home. Hà and her family are forced to flee as Saigon falls, and they board a ship headed toward hope. In America, Hà discovers the foreign world of Alabama: the coldness of its strangers, the dullness of its food . . . and the strength of her very own family. (goodreads.com)



***House Arrest*, by K.A. Holt - novel in verse**

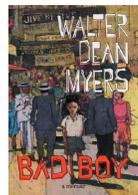
Timothy is a good kid who did a bad thing. Now he's under house arrest for a whole year. He has to check in weekly with a probation officer and a therapist, keep a journal, and stay out of trouble. But when he must take drastic measures to help his struggling family, staying out of trouble proves more difficult than Timothy ever thought it would be. Touching, funny, and always original, House Arrest is a novel in verse about a good boy's hard-won path to redemption. (Amazon)



***The Mysterious Benedict Society*, by Trenton Lee Stewart**

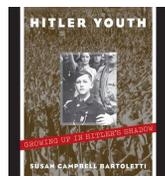
"Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" Dozens of children respond to this peculiar ad in the newspaper and are then put through a series of mind-bending tests, which readers take along with them. Only four children—two boys and two girls—succeed. Their challenge: to go on a secret mission that only the most intelligent and inventive children could complete. To accomplish it they will have to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. But what they'll find in the hidden underground tunnels of the school is more than your average school supplies. So, if you're gifted, creative, or happen to know Morse Code, they could probably use your help. (goodreads.com)

-NONFICTION-



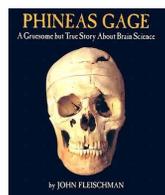
***Bad Boy*, by Walter Dean Myers**

In a memoir that is gripping, funny, and ultimately unforgettable, New York Times bestselling author Walter Dean Myers travels back to his roots in the magical world of Harlem during the 1940s and 1950s. Here is the story of one of the most distinguished writers of young people's literature today. As a boy, Myers was quick-tempered and physically strong, always ready for a fight. He also read voraciously—he would check out books from the library and carry them home, hidden in brown paper bags in order to avoid other boys' teasing. He aspired to be a writer. But while growing up in a poor family in Harlem, his hope for a successful future diminished as he came to realize fully the class and racial struggles that surrounded him. He began to doubt himself and the values that he had always relied on, attending high school less and less, turning to the streets and to his books for comfort. (goodreads.com)



***Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*, by Susan Campbell Bartoletti**

"I begin with the young. We older ones are used up . . . But my magnificent youngsters! Look at these men and boys! What material! With them, I can create a new world." --Adolf Hitler, Nuremberg 1933. By the time Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, 3.5 million children belonged to the Hitler Youth. It would become the largest youth group in history. Susan Campbell Bartoletti explores how Hitler gained the loyalty, trust, and passion of so many of Germany's young people. Her research includes telling interviews with surviving Hitler Youth members. (goodreads.com)



***Phineas Gage: A Gruesome But True Story About Brain Science*, by John Fleischman**

Phineas Gage was truly a man with a hole in his head. Phineas, a railroad construction foreman, was blasting rock near Cavendish, Vermont, in 1848 when a thirteen-pound iron rod was shot through his brain. Miraculously, he survived to live another eleven years and become a textbook case in brain science. At the time, Phineas Gage seemed to completely recover from his accident. He could walk, talk, work, and travel, but he was changed. Gage "was no longer Gage," said his Vermont doctor, meaning that the old Phineas was dependable and well liked, and the new Phineas was crude and unpredictable. His case astonished doctors in his day and still fascinates doctors today. What happened and what didn't happen inside the brain of Phineas Gage will tell you a lot about how your brain works and how you act human. (goodreads.com)

I am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World, by Malala Yousafzai

I come from a country that was created at midnight. When I almost died it was just after midday. When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize laureate. *I Am Malala* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons. (goodreads.com)

Traitor: The Case of Benedict Arnold, by Jean Fritz

Benedict Arnold always carried things too far. As a boy he did crazy things like climbing atop a burning roof and picking a fight with the town constable. As a soldier, he was even more reckless. He was obsessed with being the leader and the hero in every battle, and he never wanted to surrender. He even killed his own horse once rather than give it to the enemy. Where did the extremism lead Arnold? To treason. America's most notorious traitor is brought to life as Jean Fritz relays the engrossing story of Benedict Arnold -- a man whose pride, ambition, and self-righteousness drove him to commit the heinous crime of treason against the United States during the American Revolution. (goodreads.com)

Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850, by Susan Campbell Bartollett

In 1845, a disaster struck Ireland. Overnight, a mysterious blight attacked the potato crops, turning the potatoes black and destroying the only real food of nearly six million people. Over the next five years, the blight attacked again and again. These years are known today as the Great Irish Famine, a time when one million people died from starvation and disease and two million more fled their homeland. *Black Potatoes* is the compelling story of men, women, and children who defied landlords and searched empty fields for scraps of harvested vegetables and edible weeds to eat, who walked several miles each day to hard-labor jobs for meager wages and to reach soup kitchens, and who committed crimes just to be sent to jail, where they were assured of a meal. It's the story of children and adults who suffered from starvation, disease, and the loss of family and friends, as well as those who died. Illustrated with black and white engravings, it's also the story of the heroes among the Irish people and how they held on to hope. (goodreads.com)