

## Reading List Grade 8



Below are examples of books 8<sup>th</sup> graders can read over the summer break. It is suggested that students entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade read 3 or more books from differing genres, but the books need not be chosen from this list exclusively, as it is by no means exhaustive.

### Classics

Cather, W. *My Antonia*

A patient and determined pioneer woman experiences the hardships of life on a Nebraska prairie.

Cooper, J. *The Last of the Mohicans*

A frontier scout raised by Delaware Indians, assists British forces in hostile territory during the French-Indian War.

Dickens, C. *The Tale of Two Cities*

A story of romance, intrigue and sacrifice, this novel is set during the turbulent years of the French Revolution.

Doyle, A. C. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

Sherlock Holmes and his companion, Watson, solve unsolvable mysteries in nineteenth century England.

Dumas, A. *The Three Musketeers*

This story vividly describes the swashbuckling adventures of three friends who fight their way through seventeenth century France.

DuMaurier, D. *Rebecca*

A new bride suddenly realizes that her husband's first wife died under mysterious circumstances.

Eliot, G. *Silas Marner*

Silas Marner, a recluse whose life had been ruined by a false accusation of theft, finds a young child who changes his life.

Hugo, V. *Les Miserables*

Jean Valjean's theft of bread to feed a starving family leads to years of imprisonment and a past that haunts him even when he becomes prosperous.

London, J. *The Call of the Wild*

Stolen from his comfortable existence as watchdog on a California ranch, Buck has to survive harsh owners, cruel conditions and the lure of his wild nature during the Yukon gold rush.

Orwell, G. *Animal Farm*

Led by the pigs, the animals on Mr. Jones' farm revolt and drive out the humans. A farm run by animals would be the perfect world. Or would it?

Pyle, H. *Robin Hood*

The classic tales of Robin Hood and his band of "outlaws" who fight for the poor against the unjust Sheriff of Nottingham.

Twain, M. *The Prince and the Pauper*

A prince and a poor boy switch identities. Their similarity of age and appearance creates confusion and frustration for all involved.

## Historical Fiction

### L'Amour, L. *Daybreakers*

One of the numerous western novels by L'Amour, this is the first in a series about the Sackett family and their exploits.

### Kerr, M. *Gentle Hands*

Buddy Boyle finds his world turned upside down when his rich German grandfather's secret becomes a topic of concern in their Long Island community.

### MacLean, A. *The Guns of Navarone*

An entire navy failed to silence the massive guns on Navarone, a small island off the coast of Turkey; now five men must try in this World War II story.

### Mazzio, J. *Leaving Eldorado*

During the gold rush, fourteen-year-old Maude grows tired of moving from town to town with her father and decides to strike out on her own in hopes of eventually becoming an established artist.

## Nonfiction

### Catton, B. *This Hallowed Ground*

From the Pulitzer Prize winning author on the Civil War, this abridged and illustrated edition expertly details the War from the causes that led to Fort Sumter to the final surrender at Appomattox.

### Curie, E. *Marie Curie*

A turn of the century biography of the pioneering scientist who, along with her husband, researched and discovered radium (which led to x-ray technology).

### Delaney, S. H. & A. E. *Having Our Say*

After living together for one hundred years, two sisters finally get to have their say. The true and riveting account recounts the life of a well educated African American family that spans the time period from the days of slavery through the past - Reconstruction South, the Civil Rights Movement, to the present.

### Griffin, J. *Black Like Me*

The personal experiences of a man who darkened his skin and traveled through the South as a black man.

### Haley, A. *Autobiography of Malcolm X. as Told to Alex Haley*

Story of a black American who overcame crime and poverty to encourage all Americans to move beyond racism. Personal courage and determination in spite of danger mark the life of this contemporary black leader.

### Hersey, J. *Hiroshima*

The vivid experiences of six people who witnessed and survived the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima during World War II are described in this compelling work.

### Meltzer, M. *Rescue: The Story of How Gentiles Saved Jews in the Holocaust*

These inspiring true stories tell of individuals and groups who risked their lives to help Jewish friends and/or strangers escape the Holocaust.

### Mowat, F. *Never Cry Wolf*

This work is the true account of an author who lives among wolves to investigate their slaughter of caribou in the Arctic tundra, only to discover that wolves are not the senseless killers we imagine.

### Read, P. *Alive: The Story of the Andes Survivors*

Air crash victims stranded in the Andes must seek desperate means to survive.

### Ten Boom, C. *The Hiding Place*

Living in Nazi-occupied Holland, the author describes her experiences hiding Jews in a secret room, despite the threat to her own safety.

White, R. *Ryan White: My Own Story*

A teenager relates the true story of what it was like to battle AIDS while living in a community that is fearful of contracting the disease from him.

## Imaginative & Science Fiction

Anthony, P. *Split Infinity*

Stile, serf and master Gamesman, is stuck between two worlds: one of advanced technology, one of magic. This is the first book in the series.

Bradbury, R. *Fahrenheit 451*

In this science fiction thriller, a future society is described in which books are illegal, and a fireman's job is not to prevent fires but to burn books.

Crichton, M. *The Andromeda Strain*

A worldwide epidemic threatens when an unmanned satellite returns to earth contaminated with a deadly virus.

Kinsella, W. P. *Shoeless Joe*

A fan builds a baseball stadium in order to bring back the legendary game played by Shoeless Joe Jackson and other baseball immortals.

Lewis, C. S. *Out of the Silent Planet*

A Cambridge University professor is kidnapped and taken to Mars where he runs away from his captors.

Lowry, L. *The Giver*

All but one member of this ideal community is sheltered from the past by having no memory of it. Twelve year old Jonas is selected to be that exception.

## Realistic

Anonymous *Go Ask Alice*

Powerful diary entries based on those of a fifteen-year-old drug user detail her struggle to escape the drug world.

Boule, P. *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*

The story of imprisoned British soldiers during World War II that are forced to build a railroad bridge in Southeast Asia for their Japanese captors.

Bunting, E. *Such Nice Kids*

Jason is pressured into loaning his mother's car to his friend Pedge when his mother is out of town. Pedge gets into an accident and Jason then finds himself in the biggest mess of his life.

Cormier, R. *The Chocolate War*

Freshman Jerry Renault refuses to be bullied into selling chocolates at his New England private school and angers the administration as well as a secret society of students known as the Vigils. This book provides a tough lesson in standing up for what you believe.

Gee, M. *Fire-Raiser*

When Kitty is knocked down in the vicinity of a suspicious fire, she and her friends begin to investigate the arsonist's trail.

Knowles, J. *A Separate Peace*

Two friends, one intellectual and introverted, the other athletic and daring, experience friendship and sorrow at a private school in the early days of World War II.

Lipsyte, R. *The Contender*

Alfred Brooks, brutally beaten by his "friends," decides he needs to learn to box in order to survive the tough Harlem streets.

**Paton, A. *Cry, The Beloved Country***

A Zulu minister enters into the Johannesburg, South African underworld to search for his son, who is accused of a crime against a white man.

**Potok, C. *The Chosen***

After World War II, two friends are linked by their love of baseball and their Jewish religion.

**Shange, N. *Betsey Brown***

Betsey, a thirteen year old African-American student growing up during the late 1950's in St. Louis, Missouri, encounters major responsibilities that she doesn't wish to deal with. The schools are desegregating and she wants no part of it, even though her physician father insists that she attend a new school.

**Swarthout, G *Bless the Beasts and Children***

Six teenage misfits in an Arizona boys' camp set out to save themselves from a society that has a narrow definition of the meaning of success.

**Zindel, P. *The Pigman***

Two unhappy high school students befriend a lonely old man in this story told from the viewpoint of the two teenagers.