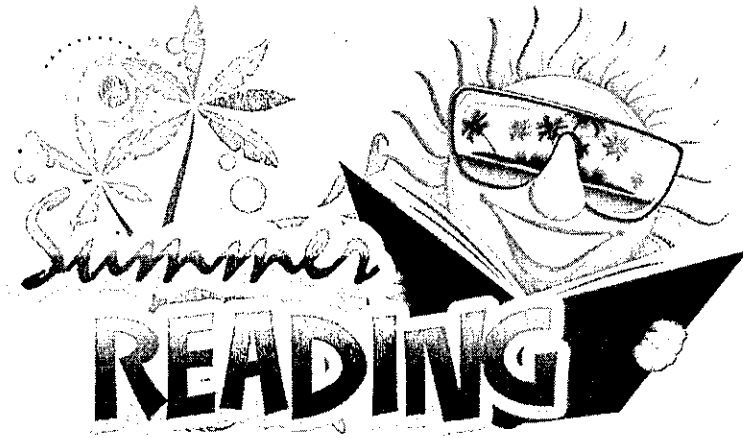


PEARL RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

SUMMER READING

2020



Grade 7

INCOMING GRADE 7 SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Select and read **two** books from the list.
- 2) Complete **two** of the attached graphic organizers (one for *each* book). There are several graphic organizers (handouts) to choose from. Be specific and thoughtful in your responses.
- 3) Make sure to only use the organizers labeled “informational texts” **if** you chose a non-fiction book.
- 4) Be prepared to discuss your book and hand in the graphic organizers in September.

Happy Reading!

Required Reading (Choose Two)

Fiction Choices:

Baseball in April – Gary Soto

The small events of daily life reveal big themes -- youth and age, love and friendship, success and failure -- in this unique collection of short stories. Calling on his own experience of growing up in California's Central Valley, Gary Soto paints the everyday experiences of contemporary young people. The smart, tough, and vulnerable kids in these short stories are Latino; their dreams and desires belong to all of us.

The Fifth Wave – Rick Yancey

After the 1st wave, only darkness remains. After the 2nd, only the lucky escape. And after the 3rd, only the unlucky survive. After the 4th wave, only one rule applies: trust no one. Now, it's the dawn of the 5th wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them. The beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see. Who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive, Cassie believes, until she meets Evan Walker. Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's only hope for rescuing her brother—or even saving herself. But Cassie must choose: between trust and despair, between defiance and surrender, between life and death. To give up or to get up.

The Lie Tree – Frances Hardinge

Faith Sunderly is intensely curious about her famous father's scientific research. When he is suddenly found dead, she is convinced that he was murdered, and pieces together clues and uncovered secrets, like the reverend's prized specimen—a tree that thrives on lies and bears a fruit that, when eaten, reveals a hidden truth. A dark and haunting mystery. The time is nineteenth-century England; the setting is an island; the main character is a fourteen-year-old girl caught between society's expectations and her fierce desire to be a scientist. Mystery, magic, science, feminism. Top 10 Best Fiction for Young Adults 2017.

Divergent (or sequels Insurgent and Allegiant) – Veronica Roth

The novel is the first of the Divergent trilogy, a series of young-adult dystopian novels set in the Divergent Universe. The novel *Divergent* features a post-apocalyptic version of Chicago and follows Beatrice "Tris" Prior as she explores her identity within a society that defines its citizens by their social and personality-related affiliation with five factions, which removes the threat of anyone exercising independent will and re-threatening the population's safety. Underlying the action and dystopian focused main plot is a romantic subplot between Tris and one of her instructors in the Dauntless faction, nicknamed Four.

Variant - Robinson Wells

Benson Fisher thought that a scholarship to Maxfield Academy would be the ticket out of his dead-end life. He was wrong. Now he's trapped in a school that's surrounded by a razor-wire fence. A school where video cameras monitor his every move. Where there are no adults. Where the kids have split into groups in order to survive. Where breaking the rules equals death. But when Benson stumbles upon the school's real secret, he realizes that playing by the rules could spell a fate worse than death, and that escape—his only real hope for survival—may be impossible.

My Brother Sam Is Dead - James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier

All his life, Tim Meeker has looked up to his brother Sam. Sam's smart and brave -- and is now a part of the American Revolution. Not everyone in town wants to be a part of the rebellion. Most are supporters of the British -- including Tim and Sam's father. With the war soon raging, Tim know he'll have to make a choice -- between the Revolutionaries and the Redcoats . . . and between his brother and his father.

The Westing Game – Ellen Raskin

One fateful day, sixteen people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. To their surprise, the will turns out to be a contest, challenging the heirs to find out who among them is Westing's murderer. Forging ahead, through blizzards, burglaries, and bombings, the game is on. Only two people hold all the clues. One of them is a Westing heir. The other is you!

Piecing Me Together – Renee Watson

Sixteen-year-old Jade dreams of success beyond her neighborhood despite the prejudices that surround her. For two years, Jade has been a scholarship student at a predominantly white private high school where she is one of few African-American students—the only one from her “bad” neighborhood in Portland, Oregon. Jade's mom struggles to make ends meet. At school, Jade has many opportunities, steppingstones to move beyond her neighborhood someday, maybe even travel the world. But sometimes these opportunities and her white guidance counselor make Jade feel like a charity case. Junior year brings yet another opportunity that leaves Jade feeling judged and pitied: the Woman to Woman mentorship program, which promises a full college scholarship to mentees. Jade's mentor, Maxine, is both well-intentioned and also black, but she's from a wealthy family. Jade chafes against the way Maxine treats her as though she needs to be saved. Through Jade's insightful and fresh narration, Watson presents a powerful story that challenges stereotypes about girls with “coal skin and hula-hoop hips” who must contend with the realities of racial profiling and police brutality. Jade's passion for collage and photography help her to find her voice and advocate not only for herself, but for her community.

The Face on the Milk Carton – Caroline B. Cooney

Fifteen-year-old Janie Johnson's life is turned upside down when she notices the picture of a missing girl on the back of a milk carton. A girl named Jennie Spring, with red hair much like her own, was kidnapped twelve years ago. Janie wonders if she could be this face on the milk carton when other questions about her own past begin to arise. Why has she never seen her own birth certificate? Are her parents not really her parents? Janie tries to ignore these persistent thoughts, until she starts having strange memories. She remembers being left alone in a shopping mall, sitting on a stool when a woman came up to her and offered her ice cream. She remembers spilling milk in a kitchen that was definitely not her own, surrounded by unfamiliar faces. She remembers a dog, and a prayer, and a family that is not the one she has known for most of her life. Janie investigates her theory and uncovers more evidence that she might be the face on the milk carton.

Travel Team – Mike Lupica

Twelve-year-old Danny Walker may be the smallest kid on the basketball court — but don't tell him that. Because no one plays with more heart or court sense. But none of that matters when he is cut from his local travel team, the very same team his father led to national prominence as a boy. Danny's father, still smarting from his own troubles, knows Danny isn't the only kid who was cut for the wrong reason, and together, this washed-up former player and a bunch of never-say-die kids prove that the heart simply cannot be measured. *Travel Team* is an inspirational tale in the tradition of *The Bad News Bears* and *Hoosiers*. It will leave readers of all ages cheering.

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children- Ransom Riggs

A mysterious island. An abandoned orphanage. A strange collection of very curious photographs. It all waits to be discovered in *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*, an unforgettable novel that mixes fiction and photography in a thrilling reading experience. As our story opens, a horrific family tragedy sets sixteen-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*. As Jacob explores its abandoned bedrooms and hallways, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. They may have been dangerous. They may have been quarantined on a deserted island for good reason. And somehow-impossible though it seems-they may still be alive. A spine-tingling fantasy illustrated with haunting vintage photography, An adventure in the shadows.

Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue - Julius Lester

This powerful and engaging historical novel is told in dialogue and through monologues. It begins with a factual event—the largest slave auction in United States history that took place in 1859 on Pierce Butler's plantation in Georgia. The book introduces Butler, his abolitionist ex-wife Fanny Kemble, their two daughters, the auctioneer, and a number of slaves sold to pay off Butler's gambling debts. Emma, a fictional house slave, is the centerpiece of the novel. She cares for the master's daughters and has been promised that she will never be sold. On the last day of the auction, Butler impulsively sells her to a woman from Kentucky. There she marries, runs away, and eventually gains her freedom in Canada. Lester has done an admirable job of portraying the simmering anger and aching sadness that the slaves must have felt. Each character is well drawn and believable. This novel does a superb job of showing the inhumanity of slavery.

Chains-Laurie Halse Anderson

Slaves Isabel and her five year-old sister Ruth are sold and shipped to New York City in May 1776. Isabel, overhearing her Loyalist master's scheme to kill George Washington, helps foil the plot. Her role forgotten by the Patriots, Isabel realizes it's up to her alone to find freedom. At first, Isabel isn't keen to help: "I'm just fighting for me and Ruth. You can keep your rebellion." But when she overhears her master's scheme to kill George Washington, Isabel reports it to a Patriot colonel. The rebels foil the plot; Isabel, however, is forgotten. Finally, Isabel realizes that it's up to her -- and her alone -- to find freedom. A portrait of slavery and of New York City during the Revolutionary War.

Fever 1793- Laurie Halse Anderson

Yellow fever is sweeping through Philadelphia. For fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook, the epidemic begins with the news of the sudden and unexpected death of her childhood friend Polly. It is summer 1793. The death toll will reach five thousand (ten percent of the city's population) before the frost. Mattie, her mother, and grandfather run a coffeehouse on High Street, and when others flee the city, they choose to stay-until Mattie's mother is stricken. Sent away by her mother to escape contagion, Mattie tries to leave, is turned back by quarantine officers, falls ill herself, and is taken to Bush Hill, a city hospital run by the celebrated French doctor Steven Girard. Mattie is tenacious and likable. She wonders if her mother has survived the fever and whether they will be reunited.

Prisoner B-3087- Alan Gratz

If Anne Frank had been a boy, this is the story her male counterpart might have told. At least, the very beginning of this historical novel reads as such. It is 1939 and Yanek Gruener is a 10-year old Jew in Krakow when the Nazis invade Poland. His family is forced to live with multiple other families in a tiny apartment as his beloved neighborhood of Podgrze changes from haven to ghetto in a matter of weeks. Readers will be quickly drawn into this first-person account of dwindling freedoms, daily humiliations and heart-wrenching separations from loved ones. Yet as the story darkens, it begs the age-old question of when and how to introduce children to the extremes of human brutality. Based on the true story of the life of Jack Gruener, who remarkably survived not just one, but 10 different concentration camps, this is an extraordinary, memorable and hopeful saga. A bone-chilling tale not to be ignored by the universe.

Five Feet Apart - Rachel Lippincott

Stella Grant has control issues. She also has breathing issues because of cystic fibrosis, and she must remain six feet away from anyone who could give her an infection. She has spent years in and out of the hospital, and now, instead of joining her friends on their senior trip, she's fighting a simple sore throat that could ruin her chances for a lung transplant. Nevertheless, she hosts YouTube videos about CF and works diligently on her medicine-treatment reminder app. When CF patient and rich kid Will Newman arrives as part of a clinical trial for a drug, Stella knows there will be trouble. He doesn't care about the trial or his regimen, so she forces him to help test her app. Eventually, Stella decides moving one foot closer to Will is worth the risk, and both find their worlds expanding as a result. The characters' backstories are complex and moving, and the unpredictability of the disease will break readers' hearts. Teens will clamor to read this before the film version releases in March 2019.

Summer Bird Blue- Akemi Dawn Bowman

Music helps a Washington state teenager overcome guilt and grief after the death of her beloved younger sister. After a car accident that takes the life of Rumi Seto's younger sister, Lea, Rumi feels guilt about surviving and is certain that her mother wishes Rumi had died instead. With her mother checked out and

blank with sorrow, an angry, hardened Rumi is sent to stay with her Aunty Ani in Hawaii, where she meets a host of local characters, including Kai, a charismatic half-Korean/half-Japanese boy. Rumi also spends some time with Mr. Watanabe, her aunt's gruff elderly neighbor, who has dealt with his own tragedy. Eventually, as Rumi is able to find her way back to the music she and Lea had shared and write the song that she believes she owes her sister, she becomes able to fully grieve. She also makes a discovery that helps reconcile her with her mother. Convincing local details and dialogue, masterful writing, and an emotionally cathartic climax make this book shine. A strikingly moving book about teenage grief.

Make Lemonade- Virginia Euwer Wolff

This word COLLEGE is in my house,/ and you have to walk around it in the rooms/ like furniture." So LaVaughn, an urban 14-year-old, tries to earn the money she needs to make college a reality. Wolff's novel is a spare, beautifully crafted depiction of a 14-year-old whose goal of escaping poverty is challenged by friendship with a single teenage mother. With the support of her widowed mom, who's always made ends meet, LaVaughn sets her sights on college but knows she'll have to come up with the money herself. Taking a job caring for Jolly's babies while Jolly works, she's soon enmeshed in the young woman's problems--especially after Jolly is fired. Deeply concerned for the near-illiterate 17-year-old's welfare, LaVaughn is tempted to give her the money she's saved; yet she makes the tough decision that "That won't help...I feel very mixed but my eyes stay steady." With difficulty (Jolly's too proud to ask for welfare and fears losing her children), she persuades her to enter a high-school program for young mothers. LaVaughn's narrative--brief, sometimes ungrammatical sentences in uneven lines, (*Make Lemonade cont.*) like verse--is in a credible teenage voice suited to readers like Jolly herself; yet it has the economy and subtlety of poetry. These girls could be from almost any inner city--the setting is deliberately vague; but their troubles--explored in exquisite specificity--are universal. Hopeful--and powerfully moving.

Far From the Tree Robin Benway

Placing her daughter for adoption left a hole in Grace's heart; her adoptive parents can't fill it, and her birth mother's unreachable—then Grace learns she has siblings. Maya, 15, a year younger than Grace, was adopted by wealthy parents 13 months before their biological daughter, Lauren, arrived. Joaquin, nearly 18, a survivor of 17 failed foster-care placements and one failed adoption, is troubled when his current foster parents express a wish to adopt him. Grace reaches out, and the siblings soon bond. All—Maya especially, standing out in a family of redheads—are grateful to meet others with dark hair (only Joaquin identifies not as white but Latino) and weird food preferences (French fries with mayo). Still, each keeps secrets. It hurts that her siblings have zero interest in tracking down the mom who gave them away, yet Grace persists. From the first page to the last, this compassionate, funny, moving, compulsively readable novel about what makes a family gets it right.

Solo- Kwame Alexander

Blade Morrison is on shaky ground. The death of his mother years ago still haunts him, and he's continually disappointed by his father Rutherford, a rock legend who has long grappled with addiction. Rutherford's humiliating behavior at Blade's high school graduation, Blade's older sister Storm's revelation of a devastating family secret, and his girlfriend Chapel's betrayal send the teenager reeling. Looking for answers, he heads to Ghana, where he begins to heal. This novel in verse reverberates with the energy of spoken word poetry. The narrative is conveyed through dialogue, text messages, and news reports.

Mike- Andrew Norriss

Fifteen-year-old Floyd's whole life revolves around tennis. Since he was a toddler, his father has been preparing him to be one of the youngest U.K. tennis champions ever, and to compete at Wimbledon at a record age. But when a mysterious guy named Mike starts showing up at his practices, Floyd begins to get more than a little annoyed—especially when he finds out no one else can see the young guy wandering onto the court. So begins Floyd's sessions with Dr. Pinner, who helps him realize just exactly who Mike might be, and why Floyd is the only one bothered by it. This is an enchanting coming-of-age tale, with a young man struggling to come to terms with his future and what he really wants out of life. Anyone who has tried to live up to their parents' desires and expectations will be able to connect with Floyd as he begins his journey of self-discovery.

This is Just a Test- Madelyn Rosenberg

In the months leading up to his bar mitzvah, David Da-Wei Horowitz deals with a host of middle school crises, from bickering grandmas and trouble talking to his crush to fearing the possibility of nuclear fallout. It's autumn 1983 in northern Virginia, and seventh-grader David Horowitz, who is Chinese and Jewish, is busy preparing for Jan. 21, 1984: when he's "being bar mitzvahed in front of about a zillion people." But that's only if he lives that long, considering that after watching *The Day After*, he's worried about what will happen if there's a nuclear holocaust. David's growing friendship with cool-kid Scott, revolves around their school trivia team and their secret project: digging a fallout shelter. Meanwhile, at home, David's grandmothers—Wai Po, who lives with them, and Granny M, who lives next door—seem constantly on the verge of starting World War III themselves, bickering over whose culture should take precedence in David's and his younger sister's lives.

One of Us Is Lying- Karen McManus

When the creator of a high school gossip app mysteriously dies in front of four high-profile students, all four become suspects. It's up to them to solve the case. Five students from different social spheres walk into detention. Only four walk out. *The Brain*, *The Beauty*, *The Criminal*, *The Athlete*, *The Outcast*. According to investigators, his death wasn't an accident. Everyone has secrets, right? What really matters is how far you would go to protect them.

Non-fiction choices:

Undefeated : Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team - Sheinkin, Steve

Young readers of this biography may be surprised that Jim Thorpe, an athlete they may never have heard of, was once considered "the best athlete on the planet." Proclaimed "the greatest all-around athlete in the world" by legendary football coach Glenn "Pop" Warner, Jim Thorpe dominated sports in the early 1900s. His natural athleticism, in tandem with Warner's innovative coaching style, helped establish the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's football program as one of the nation's best, eclipsing perennial gridiron powerhouses Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Despite the fame and attention Carlisle received because of its winning team, a stark reality existed: the cultures of these same young men were being systematically eradicated by the school (e.g., prohibiting students from speaking Native languages, forcing them to cut their hair). Operating under the premise that the "Indian problem" could be solved by stripping students of their cultural identities, Carlisle founder and superintendent Richard Henry Pratt, a U.S. Army captain, vowed to "Kill the Indian; Save the Man" through any means necessary. Sheinkin has created a rich, complex narrative that balances the institutionalized bigotry and racism of the times with the human-interest stories that are often overshadowed by or lost to history.

The War to End All Wars: World War I - Russell Freedman

In August 1914, European countries "armed to the teeth" and bursting with exuberant nationalism entered what they believed would be a short, glorious affair. What emerged on battlefields such as the Somme, Verdun, and Gallipoli were nightmarish scenes played out on desolate barbed-wire "no man's lands" of machine-gun fire and poison gas. From the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 to the controversial Treaty of Versailles in 1918, Freedman lucidly recounts the origins, meaning, and legacy of history's first "total" war that spanned the globe and was characterized by the horrors and brutality of trench warfare. The author's excellent narrative skillfully encompasses all facets of the conflict including battles, leaders, and the new technologies that made it so destructive. Elegantly written and filled with vivid, powerful photographs.

Truce: The Day the Soldiers Stopped Fighting- Jim Murphy

On July 29th 1914, the world's peace was shattered as the artillery of the Austria-Hungary Empire began shelling the troops of the country to its south. What followed was like a row of falling dominoes as one European country after another rushed into war. Soon most of Europe was fighting in this calamitous war that could have been avoided. This was, of course, the First World War. But who could have guessed that on December 25th the troops would openly defy their commanding officers by stopping the fighting and having a spontaneous celebration of Christmas with their "enemies"? Two-time Newbery Honor Book author Jim Murphy writes a stunning nonfiction masterpiece about a Christmas miracle on the Western Front during World War I.

The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals (Young Reader's Edition) –Michael Pollan

In the book, Pollan asks the seemingly straightforward question of what we should have for dinner. As omnivores, the most unselective eaters, humans (as well as other omnivores) are faced with a wide variety of food choices, resulting in a dilemma. Pollan suggests that, prior to modern food preservation and transportation technologies, this particular dilemma was largely resolved, primarily through cultural influences. These technologies have recreated the dilemma, by making available foods that were previously seasonal or regional. The relationship between food and society, once moderated by culture, now finds itself confused. To learn more about those choices, Pollan follows each of the food chains that sustain us; industrial food, organic food, and food we forage ourselves; from the source to a final meal, and in the process writes a critique of the American way of eating.

The Boys in the Boat the True Story of an American team's Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics Young Reader's Edition by Gregory Mone

Adapted from the adult best-seller *The Boys in the Boat*, this quietly compelling story tells of the University of Washington rowing team that competed in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Overcoming a difficult childhood—his mother passed away, his father abandoned him, and the Great Depression made it even harder for a teenager to survive on his own—Joe Rantz not only managed to go to college, he made the freshman crew team at the University of Washington. There, he met boys equally determined to succeed and a coach who was driven not only to best West Coast rival University of California and the storied programs on the East Coast, but also to take the gold medal at the 1936 Olympics, in Hitler's Germany.

The President Has Been Shot –James L. Swanson

Swanson presents the assassination of President John F. Kennedy to young readers in this 2014 Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults finalist a way that is accessible but never condescending. The first part of the book is called, Introduction to John F. Kennedy, and that is exactly what it provides a brief outline of Kennedy's life, the circumstances of his election, and his major accomplishments in office. This section portrays Kennedy in a mostly positive light, perhaps glossing over some of his personal flaws, but in this particular book, I think that decision works. It is not a biography, and readers do not necessarily need to know all the lurid details of Kennedy's personal life to understand the kind of leader he was and what he represented to the American people. The other thing the book does exceptionally well in those initial chapters is to build a historical context for the events. Swanson condenses the complex climate of world affairs in the early sixties into a few succinct pages, helping readers understand the times without bogging down the narrative in a glut of unnecessary information.

Imperfect: An Improbable Life – Jim Abbott and Tim Brown

Born without a right hand, Jim Abbott dreamed of someday being a great athlete. Raised in Flint, Michigan, by parents who encouraged him to compete, Jim would become an ace pitcher for the University of Michigan. But his journey was only beginning: By twenty-one, he'd won the gold medal game at the 1988 Olympics and—without spending a day in the minor leagues—cracked the starting rotation of the California Angels. In 1991, he would finish third in the voting for the Cy Young Award. Two years later, he would don Yankee pinstripes and pitch one of the most dramatic no-hitters in major-league history.

In this honest and insightful book, Jim Abbott reveals the challenges he faced in becoming an elite pitcher, the insecurities he dealt with in a life spent as the different one, and the intense emotion generated by his encounters with disabled children from around the country. With a riveting pitch-by-pitch account of his no-hitter providing the ideal frame for his story, this unique athlete offers readers an extraordinary and unforgettable memoir.

Strong Inside (Young Readers Edition): The True Story of How Perry Wallace Broke College Basketball's Color Line- Andrew Maraniss

The inspirational true story of the first African American to play college basketball in the deeply segregated Southeastern Conference--a powerful moment in Black history. Perry Wallace was born at an historic crossroads in U.S. history. He entered kindergarten the year that the Brown v. Board of Education decision led to integrated schools, allowing blacks and whites to learn side by side. A week after Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, Wallace enrolled in high school and his sensational jumping, dunking, and rebounding abilities quickly earned him the attention of college basketball recruiters from top schools across the nation. In his senior year his Pearl High School basketball team won Tennessee's first racially-integrated state tournament. The world seemed to be opening up at just the right time, and when Vanderbilt University recruited Wallace to play basketball, he courageously accepted the assignment to desegregate the Southeastern Conference. The hateful experiences he would endure on campus and in the hostile gymnasiums of the Deep South turned out to be the stuff of nightmares. Yet Wallace persisted, endured, and met this unthinkable challenge head on. This insightful biography digs deep beneath the surface to reveal a complicated, profound, and inspiring story of an athlete turned civil rights trailblazer.

Warrior's Heart: Becoming a Man of Compassion and Courage- Eric Greiten

In his memoir adapted for teens, Navy SEAL Greitens details his experiences as a teenager and as a young adult. The story focuses on his overseas humanitarian efforts as well as his arduous SEAL training. Engaging and inspiring, Greitens's tales encourage readers to push themselves to become mentally, emotionally, and physically stronger in order to serve others.

Notorious RBG: the Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg- Irin Carmon

A tribute to the indefatigable Supreme Court justice—the only member of that esteemed bench ever to become a meme. Admiringly observing that “you don’t want to mess with her,” the authors open with Ginsburg’s devastating dissent following the court’s 2013 “gutting” of the Voting Rights Act, then look back over her childhood, education, and stellar legal career. This last is done with particular reference to the obstacles she had to overcome as a woman in the profession and to her work promoting women’s rights. Not only are her professional triumphs lauded, and our justice system explained, the authors do an excellent job of rounding out her rich life: wife in an egalitarian marriage, mother, and close friends with her polar opposite on the bench, Justice Scalia.

Code Girls: The True Story of the American Women Who Secretly Broke Codes in World War II (Young Readers Edition)- Liz Mundy

When the United States entered World War II, it quickly became clear that, in order to win the war, the military must break enemy code. With so many men serving as soldiers, smart women were called upon to join this secret effort. Initially, upper-level female college students were invited to apply. As the need for codebreakers grew, schoolteachers, especially those skilled in mathematics and sciences, were also called upon. The work was top secret. For many participants, these jobs offered opportunities that far surpassed their culturally circumscribed expectations, since young white women were, at the time, mostly viewed as destined for lifelong roles of wives and mothers.

March Book I (graphic novel) John Lewis

Congressman John Lewis--the last surviving member of the "Big Six" civil rights leaders--recounts his formative years in this first volume of a planned trilogy. The book opens on "Bloody Sunday," as troopers assail activists (including Lewis) marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. From this violently chaotic event the narrative fast-forwards to the early morning of Barack Obama's January 2009 inauguration, where Lewis shares his memories with young visitors to his congressional office. Lewis's path to nonviolence was shaped by two key events: the Montgomery Bus Boycott and a 1955 radio broadcast of Martin Luther King Jr.. A powerful tale of courage and principle igniting sweeping social change, told by a strong-minded, uniquely qualified eyewitness.

D-Day Invasion Normandy Rick Atkinson

This version of the much-admired *The Guns at Last Light* (2013) for younger audiences focuses on the drama and the astonishing scale of one of World War II's pivotal operations: the D-Day invasion. Having plainly done his research, Atkinson seats readers at secret meetings of the Allied commanders, ejects them with paratroopers over the foggy French countryside, puts them into landing craft to hear soldiers barf and exclaim, and sends them out to die bloodily on beaches wracked with enemy fire.

Finding Gobi: A Little Dog with a Big Heart Dion Leonard

Leonard, a marathon runner, narrates the heartwarming story of Gobi, a stray dog he found on a race across the eponymous desert: how they formed their bond, her subsequent disappearance, and the global effort to reunite her with her owner. The race, a 155-mile ultramarathon, brings Leonard to Urumqi, China, where he battles high altitudes, excessive heat, and a sandstorm to come in second place. This feat is even more remarkable given that he repeatedly doubles back to help the charming stray that has become his shadow. After Gobi's story goes viral, she disappears in suspicious circumstances from her caretaker's home in China. What follows is a suspenseful mission to find Gobi conducted by Leonard and a loyal team of dog lovers. They are forced to contend with Chinese government operatives and shady potential dognappers looking for a payout, among others, to find and rescue the "little ball of sandy-brown fluff." Leonard also recounts (somewhat extraneously) his difficult childhood in order to explain his struggle with building close bonds and to demonstrate the significance of his relationship with Gobi. Leonard and Gobi's story represents the power of people working together and the profound depth of feeling possible between a man and his dog.

Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team Steve Sheinkin

Young readers of this biography may be surprised that Jim Thorpe, an athlete they may never have heard of, was once considered "the best athlete on the planet." Proclaimed "the greatest all-around athlete in the world" by legendary football coach Glenn "Pop" Warner, Jim Thorpe dominated sports in the early 1900s. His natural athleticism, in tandem with Warner's innovative coaching style, helped establish the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's football program as one of the nation's best, eclipsing perennial gridiron powerhouses Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Despite the fame and attention Carlisle received because of its winning team, a stark reality existed: the cultures of these same young men were being systematically eradicated by the school (e.g., prohibiting students from speaking Native languages, forcing them to cut their hair). Operating under the premise that the "Indian problem" could be solved by stripping students of their cultural identities, Carlisle founder and superintendent Richard Henry Pratt, a U.S. Army captain, vowed to "Kill the Indian; Save the Man" through any means necessary. Sheinkin has created a rich, complex narrative that balances the institutionalized bigotry and racism of the times with the human-interest stories that are often overshadowed by or lost to history.

Grand Escape Greatest Prison Breakout of the 20th Century- Neal Bascomb

Allied prisoners of war stage a series of intrepid escapes from German captors in this young readers' version of a true story from World War I. The camp at Holzminden, a "land-locked Alcatraz," was 150 miles from the Dutch border and bristling with guards. Many of the inmates, though, were stimulated rather than discouraged by these obstacles and, from its foundation, made tries at freedom—most notably on the night of July 23, 1918, when 29 men crawled out through a narrow tunnel dug over the previous months. Only 10 eluded the ensuing manhunt, but the exploit made headlines in Great Britain and was "the greatest escape of the Great War." Bascomb introduces a cast of colorful characters like RAF Lt. Harold Medlicott, "Britain's answer to Harry Houdini," who had already broken out of nine other camps. The tales of the digging of the cramped tunnel and of the escape itself make suspenseful reading, enhanced by diagrams and photographs. A fine escapade related with proper drama and likely to be news even to well-read young historians.

Attucks! Oscar Robertson and the Basketball Team that Awakened a City- Phillip Hoose

At one time, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar stated that NBA Hall of Famer Oscar Robertson was "the greatest player to ever play the game of basketball." In this well-researched and skillfully written account, Hoose discusses the high school career of Robertson and how his all-black high school overcame tremendous odds in winning the state championship in 1955 and 1956. These wins were historic because it was the

first all-black school in the country to win a statewide basketball championship-and it was the first time a team from Indianapolis had ever won. With sharp insight and an engaging writing style, the author relates how high school basketball engulfed the way of life in different Indiana communities and was instrumental in dismantling parts of segregation.

Boys Who Challenged Hitler- Philip Hoose

A handful of Danish teens takes on the occupying Nazis in this inspiring true story of courageous resistance. Unlike Norway, which was also invaded on April 9, 1940, the Danish government did little to resist German occupation. Some teenagers, like 15-year-old Knud Pedersen, were ashamed of their nation's leaders and the adult citizens who passively accepted and even collaborated with the occupiers. With his older brother and a handful of schoolmates, Knud resolved to take action. Naming themselves the Churchill Club in honor of the fiery British prime minister, the young patriots began their resistance efforts with vandalism and quickly graduated to countless acts of sabotage. Despite the lack of formal organization and planning, this small band of teenagers managed to collect an impressive cache of weapons and execute raids that would impress professionally trained commandos. The Churchill Club was eventually captured and imprisoned by the Germans, but their heroic exploits helped spark a nationwide resistance movement. A superbly told, remarkable true story and an excellent addition to stories of civilian resistance in World War II.

The Distance Between Us- Reyna Grande

Reyna's parents have moved to El Otro Lado (The Other Side) and have left her behind. In this young readers edition of her memoir, Grande writes about a difficult time in her childhood when her parents moved to the U.S. and she stayed behind in Iguala, Mexico, with her older siblings. Grande shares a timely story of a transnational family and the economic and emotional hardships she endured—such as not being adequately taken care of by her grandmother and being called an “orphan” by other children. While her parents have left in search of work, Reyna just wants her family back together and does not entirely understand why they had to leave in the first place. Readers will be captivated by Grande's beautiful and heart-wrenching story, from her detailed inner thoughts to the descriptions of the environment around her. Her longing to reconnect with her father, whom she refers to as the “man behind the glass,” because she only knows him through an old framed photograph, is one readers will avidly follow. Grande's memoir offers an important account of the many ways immigration impacts children.

Temple Grandin : How the Girl who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World- Sy Montgomery

It isn't easy to describe how the mind of someone with autism works, but Montgomery's biography effectively breaks the disorder down for a younger audience while introducing the extraordinary life of activist Temple Grandin. When Grandin was a child, she was withdrawn and unable to communicate. In 1950, at the age of three, she received an unheard-of diagnosis: autism. Grandin's mind thinks visually, in pictures, much the way it is believed that animals think. As such, she is empathetic to their needs and has advocated for the humane treatment of livestock by redesigning cattle facilities to be cruelty-free. In the early chapters, Montgomery's narrative jumps back and forth in time with disjointed results, but it smooths out as the book progresses. Grandin's story presents autism as a gift, and her I like the way I think attitude will be inspiring to many.

Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution- Ji Li Jiang

Ji-li Jiang was a model little Communist. Devoted to Chairman Mao, firm in her desire to be the best possible student so that she could further the aims of China, Ji-li was secure in her place as one of the foremost students in a Shanghai school, and just as happy as the eldest daughter of a theatrical family.

Then in 1966, when Ji-li was 12, her world turned upside down. Chairman Mao launched the Cultural Revolution and suddenly everything formerly good was bad--including excellent students, such as Ji-li. To make matters worse, Ji-li's grandfather was a landowner, another black mark against her family. Jiang's simple narrative voice is always true to the girl she was as events in China swirled into chaos. She captures both the confusion she felt as the ground under her feet constantly shifted and her sincerity in trying to do the right thing for her ostracized family and her country. The book's climax, in which Ji-li is forced to choose between her future and her father, whom the government wanted her to denounce, will affect readers.

Taking Flight: from War Orphan to Star Ballerina- Michaela DePrince

This inspirational memoir traces Michaela's journey from an orphanage in war-ravaged Sierra Leone through her adoption by an American couple to her rising ballet stardom (appearing in the documentary *First Position*; joining the Dutch National Ballet). Throughout, the daughter-and-mom writing team emphasizes how important optimism, love, and perseverance were to Michaela's success. She is born Mabinty Bangura in Sierra Leone during the Harmattan, a season of Saharan winds. Despite her vitiligo, a skin condition causing spotting, her parents love and nurture her. In 1991, civil war destroys that life, as "debil" (rebel + devil) soldiers bring destruction and the deaths of her parents. A white couple from America adopts her from an orphanage, and Mabinty, now Michaela, leaves starvation and atrocities behind--but not the nightmares. A magazine cover of a ballerina gives her a dream of dancing on stage in tutus and toe shoes, and her American family encourages that dream with classes and attendance at performances. Unfortunately, American racism also becomes part of her life in shopping malls and at ballet schools. With incredible perseverance, family support and talent, Michaela succeeds: She is now dancing with the Dutch National Ballet. She has been a media star and was one of six dancers featured in the 2012 documentary *First Position*. Readers will find her life story gripping whether or not they are dance fans.

Tuning In to a Character's Personality

A Problem Faced and How It Was Solved:

Decisions Made:

Two or Three Things the Character Said or Thought or Did:

Other's View of the Character:

Conclusions I Draw About the Character's Personality: To do this, reread and think about the details in each section. Use these to draw conclusions about the character's personality:

Why is that Character Changing?

Changes in character

Reasons for these changes

Making Inferences with Informational Texts

Summary of

Inference

Headings

Pictures

Captions

Actions

Information

Problems/Actions Taken/Outcomes

THIS STRATEGY HELPS YOU ... identify and follow an important problem and gain insights into how a character was able to solve it.

Directions:

1. In the first column, list three major problems the character faced.
2. In the second column, jot down the actions the character took to solve each problem.
3. In the third column, write the outcomes. Was the problem solved? Explain why or why not.

Title and Author of the Book: _____

PROBLEMS	ACTIONS TAKEN	OUTCOMES

Now on the back, write down what you learned about the character's personality and problem-solving abilities.

Story Notes

Name _____ Topic _____

Main characters (Tip: Before listing them, determine what makes someone a “main character.”)

Setting (Tip: Setting Includes not just time, but place and atmosphere.)

Primary Conflicts/Central Problems

Main Events (Tip: Before listing them, determine the criteria for the “main event.”)

Climax

Resolution

Observations/Conclusions (Tip: Consider important themes, surprises and connections to your life, other books or classes.)