

Summer 2009 Reading List
Bensalem Township School District Middle Schools

Adventure

Funke, The Thief Lord, Adventure/Suspense - Escaping the aunt who wants to adopt only one of them, two orphaned brothers run away from Hamburg to Venice, finding shelter with a gang of street children and their leader, the 13-year-old "Thief Lord," while also eluding the detective hired to return them to Germany.

Hesse, The Music of the Dolphins, Adventure - After rescuing an adolescent girl from the sea, researchers learn she has been raised by dolphins and attempt to rehabilitate her to the human world.

Hobbs, Jason's Gold, Adventure - When news of the discovery of gold in Canada's Yukon Territory in 1897 reaches 15-year-old Jason, he embarks on a 10,000-mile journey to strike it rich.

Hobbs, Leaving Protection, Adventure - 16-year-old Robbie Daniels, happy to get a job aboard a fishing vessel out for king salmon off southeastern Alaska, finds himself in danger when he discovers that his mysterious captain is searching for long-buried Russian plaques that lay claim to Alaska and the Northwest.

Horowitz, Eagle Strike, Adventure - After a chance encounter with assassin Yassen Gregorovich in the South of France, teenage spy Alex Rider investigates international pop star and philanthropist Damian Cray, whose new video game venture hides sinister motives involving Air Force One, nuclear missiles, and the international drug trade.

Voigt, Jackaroo, Action/Adventure - Hidden away in an old forgotten cupboard, Gwyn discovers a package - a cloak, a mask, a sword...Jackaroo?

Wrede, Dealing with Dragons, Adventure - Meet princess Cimorene - a princess who refuses to be proper.

Fantasy

Barron, T.A., The Lost Years of Merlin, Fantasy - A young boy who has no identity or memory of his past washes ashore on the coast of Wales and finds his true name after a series of fantastic adventures.

Bellairs, The House With a Clock in its Walls, Mystery-Fantasy - A boy goes to live with his magician uncle in a mansion that has a clock hidden in the walls which is ticking off the minutes until doomsday.

Colfer, Artemis Fowl, Fantasy - When a twelve-year-old evil genius tries to restore his family fortune by capturing a fairy and demanding a ransom in gold, the fairies fight back with magic, technology, and a particularly nasty troll.

Collins, Gregor the Overlander, Fantasy - When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving humans, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders while on a quest foretold by ancient prophecy.

Jacques, The Redwall Series, Fantasy - When the peaceful life of ancient Redwall Abbey is shattered by the arrival of the evil rat Cluny and his villainous hordes, Matthias, a young mouse, determines to find the legendary sword of Martin the Warrior which, he is convinced, will help Redwall's inhabitants destroy the enemy.

Nix, Garth, Mister Monday, Fantasy - Arthur Penhaligon, destined to die at a young age, is saved by a key shaped, but his survival invokes the wrath of Mister Monday who will stop at nothing to get the key back.

Pullman, The Golden Compass, Fantasy - Lyra Belacqua sets out to prevent her best friends and other kidnapped children from becoming the subject of gruesome experiments in the Far North.

Mystery

DeFelice, The Apprenticeship of Lucas Whittaker, Historical Fiction/Mystery - It's 1849 and 12 year old Lucas is all alone after his whole family dies of a disease called consumption which has swept through the community. Unable to manage the family farm, he becomes an apprentice to Doc Beecher, the local doctor, dentist, barber, and undertaker. Lucas joins others in the dark ritual they believe is their only hope for a cure for consumption, which Doc is unwilling to try.

Duncan, I Know What You Did Last Summer, Mystery - Four teenagers who have desperately tried to conceal their responsibility for a hit-and-run accident are pursued by a mystery figure seeking revenge.

Duncan, The Twisted Window, Mystery - Tracy, a high school junior, becomes embroiled in the problems of a strange boy who asked her assistance in "snatching" his half-sister from her father who has allegedly kidnapped her.

Masking, The Westing Game, Mystery - The mysterious death of an eccentric millionaire brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must uncover the circumstances of his death before they can claim their inheritance.

Science Fiction

Card, Orson Scott, Ender's Game, Science Fiction - Young Ender Wiggin may prove to be the military genius Earth needs to fight a desperate battle against a deadly alien race that will determine the future of the human race.

Card, Ender's Shadow, Science Fiction - Bean must overcome his past and prove to the recruiters at the Battle School that he can help save the planet from an alien invasion.

Clements, Andrew, Things Not Seen, Science Fiction - When 15 year old Bobby wakes up and finds himself invisible, he and his parents and his new blind friend Alicia try to find out what caused his condition and how to reverse it.

Colfer, The Supernaturalist, Science Fiction - In futuristic Satellite City, fourteen-year-old Cosmo Hill escapes from an abusive orphanage and teams up with three other people who share his unusual ability to see supernatural creatures, and together they determine the nature and purpose of the swarming blue Parasites that are invisible to most humans.

Stahler, David, Truesight, Science Fiction - In a distant frontier world, 13 year old Jacob is uncertain of his future in a community that considers blindness a virtue and "Seers" as aberrations.

Stewart, Trenton Lee, The Mysterious Benedict Society, Science Fiction - After passing a series of mind-bending tests, 4 children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.

Wells, The Time Machine, Science Fiction - This is a story of traveling one million years into the future.

Suspense

O'Dell, Black Star, Bright Dawn, Suspense - A thrilling adventure of a teenage girl's first running of the Iditarod and the challenges she faces along the trail. A good story that includes the Eskimo culture, and a young girl's respect for her father.

Paulsen, The River, Suspense - Brian is asked to return to the woods to teach Derek, a government psychologist, survival techniques. But when Derek is struck by lightning, Brian's survival skills are further tested as he must find a way to get the seriously injured Derek out of the woods.

Autobiography

Dahl, Going Solo, Autobiography - As a young man working in East Africa for the Shell Company, Roald Dahl recounts his adventures living in the jungle and later flying a fighter plane in WWII.

Hickam, Homer, Rocket Boys: A Memoir, Autobiography - Homer Hickam, a NASA engineer, recounts his childhood in Coalwood, a West Virginia mining town, and discusses his dreams of launching rockets into outer space, and how he made those dreams come true.

Parks, Rosa, My Story, Autobiography - Rosa park's life story reveals the deliberate choices she made that earned her the title "Mother to a movement."

Paulsen, Gary, Guts, Autobiography - The author relates incidents in his life and how they inspired parts of his books about the character, Brian Robeson.

Biography

Fleischman, John, Phineas Gage: A Gruesome But True Story about Brain Science, Biography - The true story of Phineas Gage, whose brain had been pierced by an iron rod in 1848 and who survived and became a case study in how the brain functions.

Freedman, The Life and Death of Crazy Horse, Biography - A biography of the Oglala leader who relentlessly resisted the white man's attempt to take over Indian lands.

Giblin, Charles A. Lindbergh: A Human Hero, Biography - This is a biography of the pilot whose life was full of controversy and tragedy. In addition, this book describes his achievements.

Non-Fiction

Freedman, Russell, Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade against Child Labor, Non-Fiction - Text and accompanying photographs show the use of children as industrial workers, interwoven with the story of Lewis W. Hine who took these photographs and whose life work made significant difference in the lives of others.

Fiction

Abrahams, Peter, Down the Rabbit Hole: an Echo Falls, Fiction - Like her idol Sherlock Holmes, 8th grader Ingrid Levin-Hill uses her intellect to solve a murder case in her home town of Echo Falls.

Blackwood, The Shakespeare Stealer, Fiction - A young orphaned boy is ordered by his master to infiltrate Shakespeare's acting troupe to steal the script of "Hamlet," but he discovers instead the meaning of friendship and loyalty.

Cheng, Terrence, Deep in the Mountains: An Encounter with Zhu Qizhan, Fiction - When Tony gets in trouble near his parent's restaurant in the Bronx, his parents send him to live with and work for his uncle in Shanghai for the summer. There he meets and takes lessons from the Chinese painter Zhu Qizhan.

Freeman, The Rookies, Fiction (Sports) - Follow the lives of high school friends and baseball teammates Dave Green, Roberto Ramirez, and Glen Mitchell, from their days on the Rosemont High School baseball team to the years thereafter as they pursue their dreams of being professional baseball players.

Funke, Cornelia Caroline, Inkheart, Fiction - 12 year old Maggie learns that her father, Mo a bookbinder, can "read" fictional characters to life when an evil ruler named Capricorn, freed from the novel "Inkheart" years earlier tries to force Mo to release an immortal monster from the story.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, Because of Anya, Fiction - While 10 year old Anya faces the difficulties of losing her hair to alopecia, her classmate Keely learns how to stand up for what she knows is right.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, Running out of Time, Fiction - When a diphtheria epidemic hits her 1840 village, 13 year old Jessie discovers it is actually a 1995 tourist site under unseen observation by heartless scientists, and it's up to Jessie to escape the village and save lives of the dying children.

Hentoff, Nat, The Day They Came to Arrest the Book: a Novel, Fiction - Students and faculty at the fictional George Mason High School became embroiled in a censorship case over the novel "Huckleberry Finn."

Hinton, S. E., Tex, (Teen) Fiction - Tex, a 15-year-old boy, loves everyone and everything, especially his horse and Johnny Collins's sister, Jaime. When things turn bad, Tex's life could be in danger.

Hobbs, Will, The Big Wander, Fiction - As he searches for his uncle through the rugged Southwest canyon country, 14 year old Clay becomes involved with a group of Navajo Indians who are trying to save some of the last wild mustangs.

Horowitz, Anthony, Point Blank, Fiction - Alex, a 14 year old spy, has been assigned by the British MI6 to investigate a series of mysterious deaths. He ends up in a boarding school in the Swiss Alps, and finds many strange things are happening to the students.

Kadohata, Cynthia, Cracker: The Best Dog in Vietnam, Fiction - A young soldier in Vietnam bonds with his bomb-sniffing dog.

Konigsburg, E.L., Silent to the Bone, Fiction - When he is wrongly accused of gravely injuring his baby half-sister, Nikki, 13 year old Branwell loses his power of speech, and his only friend Connor is able to reach him and uncover the truth about what really happened.

Konigsburg, The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place, Fiction - Not only does 12 year old Margaret Rose Kane refuse to bend to the will of her manipulative cabin mates at Camp Talequa, she stands up to and inadvertently insults the camp director and Queen-in-residence, Mrs. Kaplan. The intimidating and cruel confrontations that threaten to break Margaret's spirit only serve to strengthen her resolve, and everyone is happy when Margaret is finally banished from Camp Talequa. With her parents out of the country, she can spend the rest of the summer with her delightfully eccentric Hungarian great-uncles, Alexander and Morris Rose. Margaret adores her great-uncles, and loves the house at 19 Schuyler Place, especially the three peculiar clock towers (tall painted structures covered in pendants made from broken china, crystal, bottles, jars, and clock parts) that the Rose brothers have been building for as long as she can remember. But people in town are complaining the unfinished towers must come down.

Lawrence, Iain, The Wreckers, Fiction - Shipwrecked after a vicious storm, 14 year old John Spencer attempts to save his father, and himself while also dealing with an evil secret about the Cornish coastal town where they are stranded.

Lipsyte, The Contender, Contemporary Fiction - This is a story of Alfred Brooks, a 17-year-old African-American high school dropout who is torn between the street life of his Harlem neighborhood and his dreams of becoming a champion fighter.

Lupica, Mike, Heat, Fiction - Baseball is young Michael Arroyo's only salvation, but his dream of playing in the Little League World Series is soon threatened.

Mass, Wendy, Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life, Fiction - Just before his 13th birthday, Jeremy Fink receives a keyless locked box, set aside by his father before his death 5 years earlier, that purportedly contains the meaning of life.

McKinty, Adrian, The Lighthouse Land, Fiction - Shortly after moving with his mother from Harlem to Ireland, teen cancer survivor Jamie O'Neil discovers a portal in a lighthouse that brings him to a distant planet, where he helps a community of aliens fight against invading warriors.

Nimmo, Jenny, Midnight for Charlie Bone, Fiction - The fabulous powers of the Red King were passed down through his descendants, after turning up quite unexpectedly, in someone.

Nixon, Joan Lowery, A Deadly Game of Magic, Fiction - Lisa and her 3 friends find themselves unwilling players in a cat and mouse game with a murderous magician whose identity and motivation baffle them.

Nixon, Joan Lowery, The Stalker, Fiction - When Jennifer Lee Wilcox returns home from the beach, she finds that Stella Trax, her best friend's mother, has just been murdered. The police think Stella's daughter Bobbie did it. Jennifer sets out to prove Bobbie's innocence, but as she uncovers clues, she realizes she's only leading herself to danger!

Paterson, Katherine, Jip: His Story, Fiction - Orphaned Jip, believing he to be a gypsy, grows up on a poor farm in Vermont. When a lunatic is brought to the farm and kept in a cage during his lunatic rages, a deep friendship develops between the two.

Perkins, Lynne Rae, All Alone in the Universe, Fiction - Debbie is dismayed when her best friend Maureen starts spending time with ordinary, boring Glenna.

Shahan, Sherry, Death Mountain, Fiction - While traveling to visit the mother she has not heard from in almost a year, Erin and another teenage girl become lost in the rugged Sierra Nevada mountains and must struggle for six days to survive.

Siebold, Jan, Doing Time Alone, Fiction - After he is involved in a prank that led to an elderly.

Sonnenblick, Jordan, Drums, Girls, & Dangerous Pie, Fiction - When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, 13 year old Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, his school life, and his desire to support his family.

Realistic Fiction

Byars, Betsy, Cracker Jackson, Realistic Fiction - After attempting to save his ex-babysitter from wife abuse, Cracker Jackson gains an adult insight into sadness of failed heroics.

Cooney, Burning Up, Realistic Fiction - When a girl she had met at an inner-city church is murdered, fifteen-year-old Macey channels her grief into a school project that leads her to uncover prejudice she had not imagined in her grandparents and their wealthy Connecticut community.

Creech, The Wanderer, Realistic Fiction - Thirteen-year-old Sophie and her cousin Cody record their transatlantic crossing aboard "The Wanderer," a 45-foot sailboat, which is en route to visit their grandfather in England.

Deaver, Julie, Say Goodnight, Gracie, Realistic Fiction - When a car accident kills her best friend Jimmy, 17-year-old Morgan must find her own way to cope with his death.

Draper, Sharon, Double Dutch, Realistic Fiction - Three 8th grade friends preparing for the International Double Dutch Championship jump rope competition in their hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio, cope with Randy's missing father, Delia's inability to read, and YoYo's encounter with the class bullies.

Fleischman, Whirligig, Realistic Fiction - While traveling to each corner of the country to build a whirligig in memory of the girl whose death he caused, 16-year-old Ryan finds forgiveness and atonement.

Fox, Paula, Monkey Island, Realistic Fiction - Forced to live on the streets of New York after his mother disappears from his hotel room, 11-year-old Clay is befriended by two men who help him survive.

Hahn, Mary Downing, December Stillness, Realistic Fiction - 14-year-old Kelly tries to befriend Mr. Weems, a disturbed, homeless Vietnam War veteran. He spends his days in her suburban library and makes it very clear that he wants to be left alone.

Hesse, Karen, Phoenix Rising, Realistic Fiction - 13-year-old Nyle learns about relationships and death from Ezra when he stays at her grandmother's Vermont farmhouse. 15-year-old Ezra was exposed to radiation which leaked from a nearby nuclear plant.

Mikaelsen, Ben, Countdown, Realistic Fiction - In two parallel stories, a 14-year-old boy who is NASA's first Junior Astronaut and a 14-year-old Masai herder in Kenya both edge into maturity while questioning their family traditions.

Myers, The Outside Shot, Realistic Fiction - Recruited by a small Midwestern college to play basketball, a Harlem boy has many new experiences, including working with a child who needs physical therapy and dealing with corruption in college sports.

Myers, Hoops, Realistic Fiction - A teenage basketball player from Harlem is befriended by a former professional player who, after being forced to quit because of a point shaving scandal, hopes to prevent other young athletes from repeating his mistake.

Historical Fiction

Avi, Midnight Magic, Historical Fiction - Italy, 1491, Mangus the Magician, and his apprentice are summoned to the castle of Duke Claudio, to determine if his daughter is indeed being haunted by a ghost.

Avi, The Fighting Ground, Historical Fiction - Thirteen-year-old Jonathan goes off to fight in the Revolutionary War and discovers the real war is being fought within him.

Berry, Ajeemah and His Son, Historical Fiction - A father and his 18-year-old son are each affected differently by their experiences as slaves in Jamaica in the early 19th century.

Bruchac, Geronimo, Historical Fiction - A fictional retelling of the story of Native American leader Geronimo's life after his last surrender, told from the point of view of his grandson.

Bunting, Eve, Spying on Miss Muller, Realistic/Historical Fiction - At Alveara Boarding School in Belfast at the start of World War II, thirteen-year-old Jessie must deal with her suspicions about a teacher whose father was German and with her worries about her own father's drinking problem.

Carbone, Elisa Lynn, Blood on the River: James Town, Historical Fiction - Traveling to the New World in 1606 as the page to Captain John Smith, twelve year old orphan Samuel Collier settles in the new colony of James Town, where he must quickly learn to distinguish between friend and foe.

Cushman, The Ballad of Lucy Whipple, Historical Fiction - In 1849 12-year-old California Morning Whipple, who renames herself Lucy, is distraught when her mother moves her family from Massachusetts to a California mining town.

