

SUMMER READING → PLEASE READ TWO BOOKS FROM THE SELECTIONS BELOW

You will be asked to complete an RRJ on one of your choices at the start of the 2016-2017 school year.

<p>A Summer Life by Gary Soto From Amazon.com:</p> <p>Gary Soto writes that when he was five what I knew best was at ground level. In this lively collection of short essays, Soto takes his listener to a ground-level perspective, recreating in vivid detail the sights, sounds, smells, and textures he knew growing up in his Fresno, California, neighborhood. A respected poet and an innovator of the short essay form, Soto offers nearly snapshot-like glimpses of moments unique in form yet universal in content. Teachers and students of writing will find inspiration in these tightly knit and highly imaginative stories. Soto offers much more than humorous and poignant recollections; he wraps each memory in a poetry that lingers pleasantly in the reader's mind.</p>	<p>A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness From Amazon.com:</p> <p>An unflinching, darkly funny, and deeply moving story of a boy, his seriously ill mother, and an unexpected monstrous visitor. At seven minutes past midnight, thirteen-year-old Conor wakes to find a monster outside his bedroom window. But it isn't the monster Conor's been expecting— he's been expecting the one from his nightmare, the nightmare he's had nearly every night since his mother started her treatments. The monster in his backyard is different. It's ancient. And wild. And it wants something from Conor. Something terrible and dangerous. It wants the truth.</p>
<p>I Am Malala by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb From Amazon.com:</p> <p>"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 became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize. <i>I Am Malala</i> 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.</p>	<p>The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club by Phillip Hoose From Amazon.com:</p> <p>At the outset of World War II, Denmark did not resist German occupation. Deeply ashamed of his nation's leaders, fifteen-year-old Knud Pedersen resolved with his brother and a handful of schoolmates to take action against the Nazis if the adults would not. Naming their secret club after the fiery British leader, the young patriots in the Churchill Club committed countless acts of sabotage, infuriating the Germans, who eventually had the boys tracked down and arrested. But their efforts were not in vain: the boys' exploits and eventual imprisonment helped spark a full-blown Danish resistance. Interweaving his own narrative with the recollections of Knud himself, here is Phillip Hoose's inspiring story of these young war heroes.</p>
<p>Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs From Amazon.com:</p> <p>An abandoned orphanage. A strange collection of very curious photographs. It all waits to be discovered in <i>Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children</i>, 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, <i>Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children</i> will delight adults, teens, and anyone who relishes an adventure in the shadows.</p>	<p>Return to Sender by Julia Alvarez From Amazon.com:</p> <p>After Tyler's father is injured in a tractor accident, his family is forced to hire migrant Mexican workers to help save their Vermont farm from foreclosure. Tyler isn't sure what to make of these workers. Are they undocumented? And what about the three daughters, particularly Mari, the oldest, who is proud of her Mexican heritage but also increasingly connected to her American life. Her family lives in constant fear of being discovered by the authorities and sent back to the poverty they left behind in Mexico. Can Tyler and Mari find a way to be friends despite their differences? In a novel full of hope, but with no easy answers, Julia Alvarez weaves a beautiful and timely story that will stay with readers long after they finish it.</p>
<p>Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson From Amazon.com:</p> <p>Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.</p>	<p>The Crossover by Kwame Alexander From Amazon.com:</p> <p>"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood from Kwame Alexander. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family.</p>
<p>El Deafo by Cece Bell From Amazon.com:</p> <p>Going to school and making new friends can be tough. But going to school and making new friends while wearing a bulky hearing aid strapped to your chest? That requires superpowers! In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful—and very awkward—hearing aid. The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear—sometimes things she shouldn't—but also isolates her from her classmates. She really just wants to fit in and find a true friend, someone who appreciates her as she is. After some trouble, she is finally able to harness the power of the Phonic Ear and become "El Deafo, Listener for All." And more importantly, declare a place for herself in the world and find the friend she's longed for.</p>	<p>The Wednesday Wars by Gary D. Schmidt From Amazon.com:</p> <p><i>The Wednesday Wars</i> is a wonderfully witty and compelling story about a teenage boy's mishaps and adventures over the course of the 1967–68 school year in Long Island, New York. Meet Holling Hoodhood, a seventh-grader at Camillo Junior High, who must spend Wednesday afternoons with his teacher, Mrs. Baker, while the rest of the class has religious instruction. Mrs. Baker doesn't like Holling—he's sure of it. Why else would she make him read the plays of William Shakespeare outside class? But everyone has bigger things to worry about, like Vietnam. His father wants Holling and his sister to be on their best behavior: the success of his business depends on it. But how can Holling stay out of trouble when he has so much to contend with? A bully demanding cream puffs; angry rats; and a baseball hero signing autographs the very same night Holling has to appear in a play in yellow tights! As fate sneaks up on him again and again, Holling finds Motivation—the Big M—in the most unexpected places and musters up the courage to embrace his destiny, in spite of himself.</p>
<p>Dead End in Norvelt by Jack Gantos From Amazon.com:</p> <p>Melding the entirely true and the wildly fictional, <i>Dead End in Norvelt</i> is a novel about an incredible two months for a kid named Jack Gantos, whose plans for vacation excitement are shot down when he is "grounded for life" by his feuding parents, and whose nose spews bad blood at every little shock he gets. But plenty of excitement (and shocks) are coming Jack's way once his mom loans him out to help a feisty old neighbor with a most unusual chore—typewriting obituaries filled with stories about the people who founded his utopian town. As one obituary leads to another, Jack is launched on a strange adventure involving molten wax, Eleanor Roosevelt, twisted promises, a homemade airplane, Girl Scout cookies, a man on a trike, a dancing plague, voices from the past, Hells Angels . . . and possibly murder. Endlessly surprising, this sly, sharp-edged narrative is the author at his very best, making readers laugh out loud at the most unexpected things in a dead-funny depiction of growing up in a slightly off-kilter place where the past is present, the present is confusing, and the future is completely up in the air.</p>	<p>Caminar by Skila Brown From Amazon.com:</p> <p>Set in 1981 Guatemala, a lyrical debut novel tells the powerful tale of a boy who must decide what it means to be a man during a time of war. Carlos knows that when the soldiers arrive with warnings about the Communist rebels, it is time to be a man and defend the village, keep everyone safe. But Mama tells him not yet — he's still her quiet moon faced boy. The soldiers laugh at the villagers, and before they move on, a neighbor is found dangling from a tree, a sign on his neck: Communist. Mama tells Carlos to run and hide, then try to find her. . . . Numb and alone, he must join a band of guerillas as they trek to the top of the mountain where Carlos's <i>abuela</i> lives. Will he be in time, and brave enough, to warn them about the soldiers? What will he do then? A novel in verse inspired by actual events during Guatemala's civil war, <i>Caminar</i> is the moving story of a boy who loses nearly everything before discovering who he really is.</p>

The books above represent a variety of Lexile Levels, please consult with your child in selecting books that are appropriate to him/her.

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE: Any student who reads EIGHT (or more) books from the above list will be invited to a pizza party at the beginning of the year!
Parents will verify student completion of Summer Reading Challenge.

<http://exploris7th.weebly.com>

