

Source: Pearson Prentice Hall educational publishing company;
http://www.phschool.com/curriculum_support/reading_list/middle_school.html

Suggested Reading for Middle School Students (Grades 6–8)

The following titles are recommended as summer reading both to maintain fluency and reading level and to encourage independent reading. Students may find these titles at libraries and bookstores. Note: not all titles listed here are available from Prentice Hall.

Alexander, Lloyd. *The Arkadians.*

Three Arkadians wander through a fantasy land from one misadventure to another. An out-of-work bean counter, a young woman of mysterious talents, and a poet try to escape the wicked King Bromios and his crooked soothsayers.

Armstrong, Jennifer. *Steal Away.*

Two women, one white and one black, tell the story of their escape from a southern farm during the 1850s and of their difficult journey north to freedom.

Banks, Lynne Reid. *Mystery of the Cupboard.*

After moving to a home his mother recently inherited, Omri uncovers the mystery of the house and its link to a magic cupboard. A sequel to *Indian in the Cupboard*.

Beller, Susan. *Cadets At War: The True Story of Teenage Heroism at the Battle of New Market.*

The story of 280 schoolboys who fought during the Civil War to stop the Union troops.

Bruchac, Joseph. *A Boy Called Slow: The True Story of Sitting Bull.*

The true story of a child so deliberate and methodical he was called Slow; he turns out to be Sitting Bull, the Lakota's greatest leader.

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Boy Who Lived with the Bears and Other Iroquois Stories.*

Six Iroquois stories illustrated with dramatic scratchboard.

Byars, Betsy. *The Moon and I.*

The author describes her hilarious adventures with a black snake and some comical stories about her first attempts at becoming a professional writer.

Collier, James L. and Christopher. *With Every Drop of Blood.*

Although Johnny promises his dying father he will not desert the family to fight for the rebel cause, the lure of adventure and financial gain are strong. The book realistically focuses on the reasons the Civil War was fought as well as the enormity of the suffering of soldiers and civilians.

Cooney, Caroline. *Among Friends.*

Six high school juniors discover surprising things about themselves and their friends in the diaries they are asked to keep as a three-month English assignment.

Cooney, Caroline. *Out of Time.*

In this sequel to *Both Sides of Time*, Anne Lockwood returns to New York City in the 1890s where she discovers her friends from her former trip are suffering through hard times. As a time traveler, she must learn nineteenth-century ways to help her friends.

Coville, Bruce. *Jennifer Murdley's Toad.*

Imagine owning a talking toad! Read about Jennifer's remarkable adventures after she purchases such a talented pet.

Coville, Bruce. *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher.*

When twelve-year-old Jeremy unwittingly buys a dragon's egg, his whole life changes.

Creech, Sharon. *Absolutely Normal Chaos.*

Mary Louis is keeping a journal as an English class assignment. Through the entries, the events of her summer come alive.

Cummings, Pat. *Talking with Artists: Volume Two.*

Thirteen renowned picture book illustrators describe their childhood, working methods, and sources of inspiration, as well as offer advice for budding artists.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963.*

A family story, both comic and moving, touches on the frightening times of the early civil rights movement.

Cushman, Karen. *The Midwife's Apprentice.*

A homeless girl in Medieval England finds a place when she becomes a midwife's apprentice.

Dubois, Muriel L. *Abenaki Captive.*

This historical narrative tells the story of the growth of hatred and fierce competition between a nineteen-year-old Abenaki warrior, Ogistin, and Vermont settler, John Stark.

Engel, Dean & Freedman, Florence B. *Jack Keats: A Biography with Illustrations.*

A biography with rich insights into the life of an internationally acclaimed author and illustrator, including full-color reproductions of his early work.

Filipovic, Zlata. *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo.*

This personal narrative of life, death, and the loss of childhood depicts Zlata's life before and during the war in Bosnia.

Freedman, Russell. *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery.*

A biography of one of this century's most outstanding, inspirational women.

Fritz, Jean. *You Want Women to Vote, Lizzie Stanton?*

This engaging historical biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton presents a lively look at her impatient, outspoken personality as she fought for women's suffrage.

George, Jean Craighead. *Julie.*

A terrific sequel to *Julie of the Wolves*. When Julie returns to her father's Eskimo village, she struggles to find a way to save her beloved wolves in a changing Arctic world.

Gray, Luli. *Falcon's Egg.*

Keeping a dragon in a New York City apartment can be challenging!

Haas, Jessie. *Uncle Daney's Way.*

Twelve-year-old Cole learns how to work with a logging horse as well as valuable lessons about life from his Uncle Daney.

Hesse, Karen. *Letters from Rifka.*

In a series of letters to her cousin, a young Jewish girl reveals the struggles of her family's flight from Russia in 1919.

Hite, Sid. *It's Nothing to a Mountain.*

After the death of their parents, Lisette and Riley go to live with their grandparents in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. There they experience a series of adventures that change their lives.

Hobbs, Will. *The Big Wander.*

Searching for his uncle in rugged Southwest canyon country, Clay becomes involved with a group of Navajo Indians who are trying to save some of the last wild mustangs.

Hoestlandt, Jo. *Star of Fear, Star of Hope.*

During the German occupation of Paris, Helen becomes distraught when her best friend, a Jewish girl, disappears after they have quarreled.

Klass, David. *Danger Zone.*

In this thriller, Jimmy is recruited for an all-star basketball team scheduled to represent the U.S. in an international tournament. When they travel to Rome, the all-star teens are trapped in events beyond their understanding.

Lewin, Ted. *I Was a Teenage Professional Wrestler.*

The true-story account of how a children's illustrator earned his way through college.

Lowry, Lois. *All About Sam and Attaboy Sam.*

Anastasia Krupnik describes the adventures of her brother, from his first day as a newborn through his mischievous early years.

McKay, Hilary. *Dog Friday.*

A boy finds himself in a series of often hilarious, occasionally dangerous scrapes when a wild and eccentric family moves next door.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Shadow of the Red Moon.*

Terrorists are about to attack Crystal City. In order to protect their children, parents send them to search for the Ancient Land.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Alice the Brave.*

For Alice, spending the summer around the pool should be ideal, but instead her secret fear of drowning is revealed when a group of boys try to throw her into the pool. Her brother helps her to conquer her fears.

Olaleye, Isaac. *The Distant Talking Drum: Poems from Nigeria.*

Fifteen original poems illustrated with folk art paintings.

Paterson, Katherine. *Lyddie.*

In an effort to gain independence, a poor girl from a Vermont farm leaves home and becomes a factory worker in Lowell, Massachusetts during the 1840s.

Paulsen, Gary. *Brian's Winter.*

What would have happened if Brian Robeson, the subject of *Hatchet*, had not been rescued when

he had? Brian must confront the Canadian winter; he scrambles to reinforce his shelter and make animal skin clothing and arrowhead tools to help him improve hunting techniques.

Paulsen, Gary. *Call Me Francis Tucket.*

In this sequel to Mr. Tucket, Francis feels he can handle himself in the wild. The story relates his many mishaps as he attempts to conquer the wilderness.

Peck, Robert Newton. *A Part of the Sky.*

A sequel to *A Day No Pigs Would Die*. Robert's coming-of-age story continues as the Peck family struggles to keep the family farm during the Depression.

Plummer, Louise. *The Unlikely Romance of Kate Bjorkman.*

Kate, seventeen, is writing a romance novel based on her real romance with her brother's friend, Richard. As time goes by Kate is able to reflect upon her relationship and her writing.

Powell, Randy. *Dean Duffy.*

Dean is assured of a scholarship until his pitching arm gives out and he bats only .052 in his last season. His future is questionable until he receives an offer from a small private college for a one-semester scholarship.

Rawls, Wilson. *Where The Red Fern Grows.*

A young boy living in the Ozarks works hard to fulfill his dream of purchasing two redbone hound dogs and training them to be champions.

Rosen, Michael J. *A School for Pompey Walker.*

A true narrative of an escaped slave who returned to the South to raise money for a school by selling himself back into slavery again and again.

Rostkowski, Margaret. *Moon Dancer.*

Sixteen year old Miranda and her 21-year-old cousin Emily take part in a summer excursion into a southern Utah canyon to explore cliff dwellings of the Hopi people.

Rylant, Cynthia. *The Van Gogh Cafe.*

Magic seems to occur at a cafe in Kansas where Clara and her father witness a series of unusual happenings.

Stevenson, James. *Sweet Corn.*

Twenty-eight short poems accompanied by creative designs that complement the text.

Taylor, Mildred. *The Well: David's Story.*

Despite the racial prejudice and injustice of the South in the early 1900s, the Logans share their well water.

Taylor, Theodore. *The Bomb.*

In 1946, sixteen-year-old Sorry and his family are confronted by U.S. military personnel who tell them their home will be used as a testing site for atomic bombs and that they may return in a few years!

Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay* (and its prequel *Timothy Of The Cay*).

When the ship Phillip is traveling on is torpedoed during WWII, the twelve-year-old boy becomes stranded on a small island in the Caribbean, where he must rely on Timothy, an elderly island man.

Van Laan, Nancy. *In a Circle Long Ago: A Treasury of Native Lore from North America.*
A collection of stories, songs, and poems from Native American tribal traditions.

Wallace, Bill. *Buffalo Gal.*

Fifteen-year-old Amanda finds herself leaving her refined life to accompany her mother to the Oklahoma Territory on a crusade to save the buffalo.

Watkins, Yoko Kawashima. *My Brother, My Sister, and I.*

This is a sequel to *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*. Living as refugees in Japan in 1947, thirteen-year-old Yoko and her brother and sister search for their missing father.

Yolen, Jane. *The Ballad of the Pirate Queens.*

A renowned storyteller weaves the legends of history's proudest and most fearless pirates, Anne Bonney and Mary Read, into a celebration in verse.