

## **Ardsley Middle School Recommended Reading List**

Students are required to read two books over the summer; these are just suggestions.

More challenging books are indicated with an asterix \* Pay attention to the age of the main character-- he/she should be close (within a year) of the reader's age.

### **Science Fiction/Fantasy**

#### *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

An unexpected visitor changes the lives of Meg, her younger brother Charles and their scientist mother.

#### *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

Four children find their way to Narnia, where they defend a golden lion.

#### *The Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke

Prosper and Bo relish their new "family" and life of petty crime. But their cruel aunt and a bumbling detective are on their trail.

#### *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo

Despereaux Tilling is a mouse who is in love with music, stories and a princess named Pea.

#### *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* by Rick Riordan—Series

Percy Jackson is a good kid, but he can't seem to focus on his schoolwork or control his temper. Percy's mom knows what is happening, so she sends Percy to Camp Half Blood, a summer camp for demigods!

#### \**Insignia* by S.J. Kincaid

Tom, a fourteen-year-old genius at virtual reality games, is recruited by the United States Military to begin training at the Pentagon Spire as a Combatant in World War III, controlling the mechanized drones that do the actual fighting off-planet.

#### \**Defiance* by C.J. Redwine

When Rachel's father goes missing on a mission, her attempt to escape their walled city-state and find him brings danger, heartbreak, and a new romance with her father's apprentice.

#### *Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins

When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving men, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders on their quest.

#### *Hex Hall* by Rachel Hawkins

Witch, Sophie Mercer, having been sent to a reform school by her father after a prom night spell went horribly wrong, learns her roommate, who is the only vampire on campus, is the suspect in a series of attacks on students and sets out to find the real culprit. Also: *Spell Bound, Demonglass, Spellbound*

#### \**Pandemonium* by Lauren Oliver

After falling in love, Lena and Alex flee their oppressive society where love is outlawed and everyone must receive "the cure"--an operation that makes them immune to the delirium of love. Also: *Delirium, Requiem*

#### *A Confusion of Princes* by Garth Nix

Battling aliens, space pirates, and competitors, Prince Khemri meets a young woman, named Raine, and learns more than he expected about the hidden workings of a vast, intergalactic Empire, and about himself.

#### \**The Book of Dead Days* by Marcus Sedgwick

Boy has worked for the demanding and mysterious magician Valerian ever since he can remember. On the dead days between Christmas and New Year, Boy and Valerian are thrust into a race against time because of Valerian's pact with evil many years hence. Sequel: *The Dark Flight Down*

#### *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini

Eragon, a young farm boy, finds a marvelous blue stone in a mystical mountain place. Before he can trade it for food to get his family through the hard winter, it hatches a beautiful sapphire-blue dragon, a race thought to be extinct. Eragon bonds with the dragon. Also: *Eldest, Brisingr, Inheritance*

#### \**Enclave* by Ann Aguirre

In a post-apocalyptic future, Deuce, a loyal Huntress, brings back meat while avoiding the Freaks outside her enclave, but when she is partnered with the outsider, Fade, she begins to see that the ways of the elders may be wrong. Also: *Outpost*

#### *City of Bones (The Mortal Instruments)* by Cassandra Clare

Suddenly able to see demons and the Darkhunters who are dedicated to returning them to their own dimension, fifteen-year-old Clary Fray is drawn into this bizarre world when her mother disappears and Clary herself is almost killed by a monster. Also: *City of Ashes, City of Glass, City of Fallen Angels, City of Lost Souls,*

#### *Land of Stories* by Chris Colfer

This is the tale of twins Alex and Conner who through the mysterious powers of a cherished book of stories, leave their world behind and find themselves in a foreign land full of wonder and magic where they come face-to-face with the fairy tale characters they grew up reading about.

## Classics

### *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White

Fern spends her free time with Wilbur the pig whom she loves and the other barn animals who play a large part in the life of Wilbur.

### *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

All that happens after a little girl tumbles down the rabbit hole

### *Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster

For Milo, everything's a bore. When a tollbooth mysteriously appears in his room, he drives through only because he's got nothing better to do. But...

### *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson

A voyage for buried treasure spells trouble for cabin boy Jim Hawkins, who finds himself in the middle of a mutiny with some of the nastiest pirates to ever sail the seven seas.

### *Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

When spoiled child Mary Lennox loses her family to a cholera outbreak, she moves to her uncle's manor surrounded by a massive garden. Within, Mary discovers a whole new outlook on life thanks to a supportive household and the garden's power of healing.

### *Anne of Green Gables* by L.M. Montgomery

Anne, a young orphan from Bolingbroke, Nova Scotia, is sent to Prince Edward Island after a childhood spent in strangers' homes and orphanages. Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert, siblings in their fifties and sixties, had decided to adopt a boy from the orphanage to help Matthew run their farm. They live at Green Gables, their Avonlea farmhouse on Prince Edward Island. Through a misunderstanding, the orphanage sends Anne Shirley.

### *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott

Following the lives of four sisters on a journey out of adolescence, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* explores the difficulties associated with gender roles in a Post-Civil War America.

## Sports Fiction

### *Curveball: The Year I Lost My Grip* by Jordan Sonnenblick

After an injury ends former star pitcher Peter Friedman's athletic dreams, he concentrates on photography, and his life changes!

### *Cover-up: Mystery at the Super Bowl* by John Feinstein

The third outing for precocious teen reporters Steve Thomas and Susan Carol Anderson finds the intrepid pair transformed into TV personalities, stars of a cable talk show called Kid Sports. Also try *Last Shot*, *Vanishing Act*, *Change-up: Mystery at the World Series*

### *The Contract* by Derek Jeter

As a young boy, Derek Jeter dreams of being shortstop for the New York Yankees. So when Derek is chosen for the Little League Tigers, he hopes to play shortstop. But on the day of the assignments, Derek starts at second base. Still, he tries his best while he wishes and dreams of that shortstop spot. And to help him stay focused on school, his parents make him a contract: keep up the his best game—on and off the baseball field!

### *Miracle on 49th Street* by Mike Lupica

After her mother's death, twelve-year-old Molly learns that her father is a basketball star for the Boston Celtics. Also: *Travel Team*, *Summer Ball* and others

### *The Lucky Baseball Bat* by Matt Christopher

Martin is new to the neighborhood, and wants to make a good impression on his new teammates. But when he loses his lucky baseball bat, Martin fears that he has also lost his ability to play baseball. Also try: *The Kid Who Only Hit Homers*, *Catch that Pass!*, *The Basket Counts* and more.

### *Lost Boy* by Tim Green

It's always been just Ryder and his mom. But on the way home from Ryder's baseball practice, everything comes to a halt. An accident sends his mom to the hospital, and now she is fighting for her life. Also try: *Perfect Season*, *First Team* and others.

## **Mystery/Adventure**

### *The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin

The heirs of an eccentric millionaire must solve a crime and claim their inheritance.

### *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George

A journal account of the dangerous year Sam spends in the mountains with his falcon.

### *Holes* by Louis Sachar

Stanley is sent to a terrible camp where they dig holes to build character.

### *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman

Bod is an unusual boy who inhabits an unusual place—he's the only living resident of a graveyard. You might also like *Coraline*

### *The Kid Who Ran for President* by Dan Gutman

Judson Moon is twelve years old and he is running for President of the United States of America! You might also like *The Kid who Became President*, *The Homework Machine*

### *On the Run: Chasing the Falconers* by Gordon Korman

Also try: *On the Run: Chasing the Falconers*, *The Fugitive Factor*, *Titanic*, *Everest*

### *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen

Three middle school kids are plunged into an ecological mystery and take on a quest to save endangered owls. Also try *Flush*, *Scat*, *Chomp*

### *Navigating Early* by Clare Vanderpool

Is an odyssey-like adventure of two boys' incredible quest on the Appalachian Trail where they deal with pirates, buried secrets, and extraordinary encounters.

### *The Vengekeep Prophecies* by Brian Farrey

When his clumsiness causes his clever thieving family to be imprisoned, Jaxter Grimjinx is charged with fulfilling a doomsday prophecy that forces him to combat flaming monsters, a bazaar of thieves and a renegade sorcerer.

### *Three Times Lucky* by Sheila Turnage

Washed ashore as a baby in tiny Tupelo Landing, North Carolina, Mo LoBeau, now eleven, and her best friend Dale turn detective when the amnesiac Colonel, owner of a café and co-parent of Mo with his cook, Miss Lana, seems implicated in a murder.

### *\*Break My Heart 1,000 Times* by Daniel Waters

In the aftermath of the Event, which made seeing the dead a part of life, Veronica and Kirk investigate why the ghosts seem to be gaining power and stumble upon the sinister plot of a teacher who is seeking a replacement for his dead daughter.

### *Eagle Strike* –Alex Rider series by Anthony Horowitz

Alex Rider is at it again. As a teen spy, he survives a bullfight, a high-speed bicycle chase, and even being the target in a human video game only to face his most disturbing challenge yet.

Also: *Ark Angel*, *Crocodile Tears*, *Point Blank*, *Scorpia*, *Skeleton Key*, *Snakehead*, *Stormbreaker*

### *\*And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie

Ten people who have something to hide and something to fear are invited to a lonely mansion on Indian Island by a host who surprisingly fails to appear.

### *Absolute Pressure* by Sigmund Brouwer

Ian, spending the summer on Key West with his Uncle Gord, a dive shop owner, is drawn into a dangerous adventure when he sets out to learn why someone is trying to harm his uncle.

### *The Always War* by Margaret Peterson Haddix

In a war-torn future United States, fifteen-year-old Tessa, her childhood friend Gideon, now a traumatized military hero, and Dek, a streetwise orphan, enter enemy territory and discover the shocking truth about a war that began more than seventy-five years earlier.

### *\*Crown of Embers* by Rae Carson

Elisa, struggling to master the power of the Godstone, takes a leap of faith and crosses an ocean accompanied by a one-eyed warrior, an enemy defector, and the man she is falling in love with in search of the source of its power. Also: *Girl of Fire and Thorns*

## Historical Fiction

### *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan

Esperanza thought she'd always live with her family in Mexico. Then a tragedy changed everything.

### *The Lions of Little Rock* by Kristin Levine

Marlee and Liz are willing to take on segregation and the danger their friendship could bring to their families.

### *The Last Mission* by Harry Mazer

In 1944, a fifteen-year-old Jewish boy tells his family he will travel in the West but instead enlists in the United States Air Corps and is subsequently taken prisoner by the Germans.

### *My Brother Abe: Sally Lincoln's Story* by Harry Mazer

After being forced off their land in Kentucky in 1816, nine-year-old Sarah Lincoln, known as Sally, and her family, including younger brother Abe, move to the Indiana frontier.

### *Shadows on the Sea* by Joan Harlow

Based on startling historical events that took place in the harbors of Maine during World War II, this fast paced historical mystery will keep readers guessing from beginning to end.

### *The Daring Ladies of Lowell* by Kate Alcott

Free from the farm at last! What do young women experience as they take jobs in a textile mill in Lowell, MA in 1832?

### *Caleb's Crossing* by Geraldine Brooks

What is it like to go from a Native American tribe in Martha's Vineyard, MA to Harvard in 1665?

### *The Boy Who Dared* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

In October 1942, seventeen-year-old Helmuth Hubener, imprisoned for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets, recalls his past life and how he came to dedicate himself to bring the truth about Hitler and the war to the German people.

### *Ransom of Mercy Carter* by Caroline Cooney

In 1704, in the English settlement of Deerfield, Massachusetts, eleven-year-old Mercy and her family and neighbors are captured by Mohawk Indians and their French allies and forced to march through bitter cold to French Canada.

### *The Berlin Boxing Club* by Robert Sharenow

In 1936 Berlin, fourteen-year-old Karl Stern, considered Jewish despite a non-religious upbringing, learns to box from the legendary Max Schmeling while struggling with the realities of the Holocaust.

### *Hattie Ever After* by Kirby Larson

In 1919, seventeen-year-old Hattie leaves the Montana prairie--and her sweetheart Charlie--to become a female reporter in San Francisco.

### *\*The Last Runaway* by Tracy Chevalier

Imagine the terror of running away from captivity...and the fear experienced by those who help.

## Realistic Fiction

### *The Penderwicks* by Jeanne Birdsall

Four motherless sister, and their absent minded professor dad, and the family dog share a summer retreat on the Massachusetts estate of Arundel. Also try: *The Penderwicks on Gardam Street*

### *Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt

Holling meets a teacher who makes every dream seem possible.

### *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio

Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade.

### *The Report Card* by Andrew Clements

Nora Rose Rowley is a genius, but don't tell anyone, she wants to be just an ordinary kid. Also try: *Frindle*,

### *Judy Moody was in a Bad Mood* by Megan McDonald

Judy Moody is a spunky kid with a brother and lots of adventure. Also try others in the series.

### *Amazing Days of Abby Hayes* by Anne Mazer

Twelve-year-old Abby Hayes struggles with identity and moral issues in these books. Also try the others in this series

### *I Represent Sean Rosen* by Jeff Baron

With the help of his "manager," a thirteen-year-old boy sells a movie idea to a major Hollywood Studio.

### *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo

Opal spends her first summer in a new town with a stray dog and a lot of difficult memories.

### *Rules* by Cynthia Lord

Catherine just wants a normal life, which seems almost impossible when your brother has autism.

### *Click Here* by Denise Vega

Find out what happens when Erin's personal blog is downloaded to her school's popular website for everyone to read! Coping with her living nightmare launches Erin on a surprising journey of self-discovery.

### *33 Minutes* by Todd Hasak-Lowy

An epic lunch period leads to a fateful showdown as small, skinny seventh-grader Sam's former best friend--now a popular athlete--promises to beat Sam up at recess in exactly thirty-three minutes.

### *Rogue* by Lyn Miller-Lachmann

An eighth-grade girl with Asperger's syndrome tries to befriend her new neighbor, facing many challenges along the way.

### *Hope Was Here* by Joan Bauer

Sixteen-year-old Hope and the aunt who raised her move from Brooklyn to Mulhoney, Wisconsin to work as a waitress and a cook in the Welcome Stairways Diner. Also try: *Rules of the Road*, *Stand Tall*

### *\*If I Stay* Gayle Forman

Mia, a teenage music prodigy and concert cellist, from a loving family, has her whole life taken away from her in an instant when her family is in a tragic car accident. Also try: *Just One Day*, *Just One Year*

### *So B. It* by Sarah Weeks

Heidi, age 12, and her mother, who is mentally changed, have lived in an apartment that adjoins with their neighbor, Bernadette, since Heidi was probably no more than a week old.

### *Flipped* by Wendelin Van Draanen

In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.

### *Blubber* by Judy Blume

What happens when teasing goes too far? This classic middle grade novel addresses the timeless topic of bullying.

### *That Was Then, This Is Now* by S.E. Hinton

Sixteen-year-old Mark and Bryon have been like brothers since childhood, but now, as their involvement with girls, gangs, and drugs increases, their relationship seems to gradually disintegrate.

### *\*The Dust of 100 Dogs* by A.S. King

Reincarnated as a teenager, Saffron Adams was a pirate in another life. Should she listen to her mother and become a doctor...or search for the treasure she buried in Jamaica so many lifetimes ago?

## **Non Fiction**

### *Bomb: The Race to Build—And Steal – The World’s Most Dangerous Weapon* by Steve Sheinkin

Recounts the scientific discoveries that enabled atom splitting, the military intelligence operations that occurred in rival countries, and the work of brilliant scientists hidden at Los Alamos.

### *The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery* by Steve Sheinkin

Provides a biography of America’s first traitor--Benedict Arnold--that reads like an adventure tale, full of heroism, treachery, battle scenes, and surprising twists.

### *Soul Surfer* by Bethany Hamilton

This autobiography is a moving account of Bethany’s life as a young surfer, her recovery in the wake of a shark attack, the adjustments she’s made to her unique surfing style, and her unprecedented bid for a top showing in the World Surfing Championships.

### *Mission: Mars* by Pascal Lee

An in-depth examination of a manned mission to Mars.

### *Blizzard!* By Jim Murphy

What caused the historic blizzard of 1888?

### *Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones* by David L. Harrison

A scientist tracks North America’s First People

### *Freedom Walkers* by Russell Freedman

The story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956.

### *Restless Spirit* By Elizabeth Partridge

The life and work of photojournalist Dorothea Lange, best known for her portraits of the Great Depression

### *Years of Dust* by Albert Marrin

The story of the Dust Bowl

### *A Black Hole Is Not a Hole* by Carolyn Cinami DeCristofano

What is a black hole? Can you visit one? Where do they come from?

### *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy

Chicago’s Great Fire of 1871 was one of the most colossal disasters of American History.

## **Recent Award Winners**

### *The War that Saved my Life* by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Nine-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada’s twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn’t waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him.

### *Roller Girl* by Victoria Jamieson

In this graphic novel, read about twelve year old Astrid, who has done everything with her best friend Nicole. But after Astrid falls in love with roller derby and signs up for derby camp, Nicole decides to go to dance camp instead. And so begins the most difficult summer of Astrid's life.

### *Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan

Lost and alone in a forbidden forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and suddenly finds himself entwined in a puzzling quest involving a prophecy, a promise, and a harmonica. Decades later, Friedrich in Germany, Mike in Pennsylvania, and Ivy in California each, in turn, become interwoven when the very same harmonica lands in their lives.

### *Paperboy* by Vince Vawter

Little Man throws the meanest fastball in town. But talking is a whole different ball game. He can barely say a word without stuttering—not even his own name.

### *El Deafo* by Cece Bell

A graphic novel memoir of a young girl grappling with her deafness. Enjoy this story of a girl making and keeping friends as she copes with impairment.

### *Wolf Hollow* by Lauren Wolk

Set in rural Pennsylvania during World War II, this compelling story of consequences addresses complex issues of bullying, PTSD, and discrimination. At the center of this atmospheric novel, articulating themes of self-reliance, hope, and justice, is our heroine Annabelle who struggles to confront her tormentor and her own conscience.

### *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill

Once a year in the Protectorate there is a Day of Sacrifice. The youngest baby is taken by the Elders and left in the forest to die, thus appeasing the witch who threatens to destroy the village if not obeyed.