

## EIGHTH GRADE BOOK LIST

Summer provides a very important time for students of all ages to continue reading books of their own choosing. We know that the more a student is read to and reads independently, the more likely that student will become a lifelong reader. Start the summer off right by setting aside a consistent time of at least one-half hour each day for an enjoyable reading time for your child.

Choosing a “just right” book is important. Students should be encouraged to choose books that are interesting to them and that are not too difficult for them to read. The books below are merely suggestions to begin a search for books that will “hook” your child onto reading.

### ***The Cay* by Theodore Taylor**

When the freighter on which they are traveling is torpedoed by a German submarine during World War II, an adolescent white boy, blinded by a blow on the head, and an old black man are stranded on a tiny Caribbean island where the boy acquires a new kind of vision, courage, and love from his old companion.

***Children of the River* by Linda Crew** Having fled Cambodia four years earlier to escape the Khmer Rouge army, 17-year-old Sundara is torn between remaining faithful to her own people and enjoying life in her Oregon high school as a "regular" American. Although she is forbidden to speak to any white boys, Sundara falls in love with Jonathan. Is her new life disloyal to her past?

***The Chosen* by Chaim Potok** In 1940s Brooklyn, two boys who have grown up within a few blocks of each other, but in entirely different worlds, meet for the first time in a bizarre encounter -- a baseball game between two Jewish parochial schools that turns into a holy war. With dramatic force and simplicity that seizes the heart, *The Chosen* depicts the powerful bonds of love and pain that join father and son, the communions and quarrels of friendship, the true religionist's love of God, and the tumults by which the heart is made human.

***Cold Sassy Tree* by Olive Ann Burns** The one thing you can depend on in *Cold Sassy*, Georgia, is that word gets around -- fast. When Grandpa E. Rucker Blakeslee announces one July morning in 1906 that he's aiming to marry the young and freckly milliner, Mill Love Simpson -- a bare three weeks after Granny Blakeslee has gone to her reward -- the news is served up all over town with that afternoon's dinner. And young Will Tweedy suddenly finds himself eyewitness to a major scandal. Boggled by the sheer audacity of it all, and not a little jealous of his grandpa's new wife, Will nevertheless approves of this May-December match and follows its progress with just a smidgen of youthful prurience

***Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe* by Fannie Flagg** Folksy and fresh, endearing and enduring, this bestselling book tells the tale of two women and the cafe they ran in Whistle Stop, Alabama, offering barbecue, coffee, love, laughter -- and an occasional murder.

***Ironman* by Chris Crutcher** Bo Brewster has been at war with his father for as long as he can remember. Following angry outbursts at school which cost Bo his spot on the football team and move him dangerously close to expulsion, Bo is sent to Mr. Nak's Anger Management Group (which he initially believes to be populated with future serial killers and freeway snipers). There he meets a hard-edged pack of survivors whose own defenses are rigged as high as his. It is here he meets and falls in love with Shelly, a future American Gladiator, whose passion for physical challenge more than matches his.

***Johnny Tremain* by Esther Forbes, Lynn Ward (illus.)** A story filled with danger and excitement, *Johnny Tremain* tells of the turbulent, passionate times in Boston just before the Revolutionary War. Johnny, a young apprentice silversmith, is caught up in a dramatic involvement with Otis, Hancock, and John and Samuel Adams in the exciting currents and undercurrents that were to lead to the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Lexington -- and finally, a touching resolution of Johnny's personal life. *Johnny Tremain* is historical fiction at its best, portraying Revolutionary Boston as a living drama through the shrewd eyes of an observant boy.

***The Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara** In the four most bloody and courageous days of our nation's history, two armies fought for two dreams. One dreamed of freedom, the other of a way of life. Far more than rifles and bullets were carried into battle. There were memories. There were promises. There was love. And far more than men fell on those Pennsylvania fields. Shattered futures, forgotten innocence, and crippled beauty were also the casualties of war. A Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Killer Angels* is unique, sweeping, unforgettable -- a dramatic re-creation of the Battle of Gettysburg.

***Lone Wolf* by Kristine L. Franklin, Joe Baker (illus.)** When a large family moves into the house near where he and his father live in the woods, Perry's friendship with the oldest girl helps him come to terms with his sister's death and his parents' divorce.

***Lyddie* by Katherine Paterson** Her parents are gone, and her brother and sisters sent to live with other people. Lyddie Worthen is on her own. When Lyddie hears about the mill jobs in Lowell, Massachusetts, she heads there with the goal of earning enough money to reunite her family. Six days a week, from dawn to dusk, Lyddie and the other girls run weaving looms in the murky dust- and lint-filled factory. Lyddie learns to read -- and to handle the menacing overseer. But when the working conditions begin to affect her friends' health, she has to make a choice. Will she speak up for better working conditions and risk her job -- and her dream? Or will she stay quiet until it is perhaps too late?

***Midget* by Tim Bowler** Subject to strange fits, physically abnormal, and psychologically disturbed from the constant torment and abuse of his older brother, 15-year-old Midget finds himself in control of his life for the first time when he gets his own sailboat and discovers untapped mental powers.

***The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi** It's the summer of 1832, and the Seahawk looms against a darkening sky. Manned by an angry, motley crew at the mercy of a ruthless captain, the ship reeks of despair and mutiny! It is no place for the lone passenger, 13-year-old Charlotte Doyle, yet for her there is no turning back. But from her seemingly powerless position, Charlotte dares to become the center of a deadly voyage that will challenge her courage, her loyalties, and her very will to survive. This gripping Newbery Honor Book details her terrifying account of that fateful voyage.

***The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum** Here is the original book that started the wonderful series and inspired the famous movie! After being transported by a cyclone to the magical land of Oz, Dorothy and her dog, Toto, are befriended by a scarecrow, a tin man, and a cowardly lion who accompany her to the Emerald City in search of a wizard who can help Dorothy return home to Kansas.