

RCPS Eighth Grade Summer Reading List

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	LEXILE	GENRE
<i>Golden Boy</i>	Tara Sullivan	Thirteen-year-old Habo has always been different - light eyes, yellow hair and white skin. Not the good brown skin his family has and not the white skin of tourists. Habo is strange and alone. His father, unable to accept Habo, abandons the family; his mother can scarcely look at him. His brothers are cruel and the other children never invite him to play. Only his sister Asu loves him well. But even Asu can't take the sting away when the family is forced from their small Tanzanian village, and Habo knows he is to blame. Seeking refuge in Mwanza, Habo and his family journey across the Serengeti. His aunt is glad to open her home until she sees Habo for the first time, and then she is only afraid. Suddenly, Habo has a new word for himself: Albino. But they hunt Albinos in Mwanza because Albino body parts are thought to bring good luck. And soon Habo is being hunted by a fearsome man with a machete. To survive, Habo must not only run, but find a way to love and accept himself.	820L	Fiction
<i>This Journal Belongs to Ratchet</i>	Nancy J. Cavanaugh	It's the first day of school for all the kids in the neighborhood. But not for Ratchet; she's homeschooled. That means nothing new. No new book bag, no new clothes, and no friends, old or new. The best she's got is her notebook. She's supposed to use it for her writing assignments, but her dad never checks. Here's what she's really going to use it for: a top-secret plan to turn her old, recycled, freakish, friendless, motherless life into something shiny and new.	830L	Fiction
<i>Revolution</i>	Deborah Wiles	Readers are given two viewpoints from very different worlds during the tumultuous Freedom Summer of 1964 in Greenwood, Mississippi. Sunny, a 12 year old white girl, is worried about reports of "invaders" descending upon the sleepy Southern town and causing trouble. Meanwhile, Raymond, a black youth, is becoming increasingly aware of all the places, especially the public pool and Leflore's theater, he is barred from due to Jim Crow laws. As their worldviews expand and they begin to learn more about the sinister side of a seemingly perfect town, Sunny's and Raymond's stories intersect.	840L	Fiction
<i>Discovering Wes Moore</i>	Wes Moore	Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart and within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods. Both ran into trouble with the police. How did one grow up to be a Rhodes scholar and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? When Wes Moore wrote to his namesake in prison, they began a remarkable friendship. This story looks at the challenges of growing up and the power of the choices that people make in their lives.	840L	Non-Fiction
<i>Everything in the Universe</i>	Tracy Holczer	Lucy Rossi likes her routines and lists, and she approaches life with a practicality, so when her father comes home from the Vietnam war with his arm amputated, Lucy is committed to fixing him back up. But her intense focus on his recovery is too much, and Lucy is sent to stay with her father's family for the summer. Lucy mopes around, hurt that she's been basically kicked out of her house, but she eventually makes a friend named Milo, who has his own peculiarities. While working on a shared garden, Lucy and Milo find a buried treasure: a helmet and a purple heart and mysterious photos. The mystery is afoot, and Milo and Lucy begin a mission to find the owner of these items. Encouraged by Lucy's uncle, their search takes them to the local veterans organizations, where they discover mixed feelings from the vets towards the Vietnam War, to which both Lucy and Milo have painful personal connections. Their discoveries lead to the revealing of secrets, not just regarding the soldier behind the buried helmet, but also with Milo.	860L	Historical Fiction
<i>With Their Eyes: September 11th-The View from a High School at Ground Zero</i>	Edited by Annie Thoms, Taresh Batra	I could have died that day. September 11, 2001 Monologues from Stuyvesant High School Tuesday, September 11, started off like any other day at Stuyvesant High School, located only a few blocks away from the World Trade Center. The semester was just beginning, and the students, faculty, and staff were ready to begin a new year. But within a few hours on that Tuesday morning, they would all share an experience that transformed their lives. Now, on the tenth anniversary of September 11th, we remember those who were lost and those who were forced to witness this tragedy. Here, in their own words, are the firsthand stories of a day we will never forget.	1000L	Non-Fiction
<i>Elijah of Buxton</i>	Christopher Paul Curtis	Eleven-year-old Elijah is the first child born into freedom in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves just over the border from Detroit. He's best known for having made a memorable impression on Frederick Douglass, but that changes when a former slave steals money from Elijah's friend, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the South. Elijah embarks on a dangerous journey to America in pursuit of the thief and discovers firsthand the unimaginable horrors of the life his parents fled--a life from which he'll always be free, if he can find the courage to get back home.	1070L	Historical Fiction
<i>The Beekeeper's Apprentice</i>	Laurie R. King	What would happen if Sherlock Holmes, a perfect man of the Victorian age--pompous, smug, and misogynistic--were to come face to face with a twentieth-century female? If she grew to be a partner worthy of his great talents? Laurie R. King, whose very different first novel, <i>A Grave Talent</i> (SMP, 1993), drew rave reviews, read the Conan Doyle stories and wondered about such an imaginary encounter. And following through, she has written <i>The Beekeeper's Apprentice</i> . 1914, a young woman named Mary Russell meets a retired beekeeper on the Sussex Downs. His	1100	Fiction

		name is Sherlock Holmes. And although he may have all the Victorian "flaws" listed above, the Great Detective is no fool, and can spot a fellow intellect even in a fifteen-year-old woman. So, at first informally, then consciously, he takes Mary Russell as his apprentice.		
<i>The Winter Room</i>	Gary Paulsen	The winter room is where Eldon, his brother Wayne, old Uncle David, and the rest of the family gather on icy cold nights, sitting in front of the stove. There the boys listen eagerly to all of Uncle David's tales of superheroes. Then one night Uncle David tells the story, "The Woodcutter," and what happens next is terrible--then wonderful.	1170L	Fiction