



Katrina's Picks for Grades 6-8 Summer Reading 2020

New Kid by Jerry Craft (Graphic Novel/Realistic)

This story follows 7th grader Jordan Banks, who is starting the year at a prestigious new school. Jordan quickly realizes that he is one of the very few students of color at this new school and just being himself presents new challenges. A compassionate and beautifully illustrated novel of a young teen navigating new waters.

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds (Nonfiction)

Incredibly important and timely, Reynolds remixes Dr. Kendi's original work on the devastating history of racism in America in a very accessible way. Recommended for all readers, regardless of what color you are or what you think you know.

Redwood and Ponytail by K.A Holt (Verse/Romance)

This novel in verse follows two very different 7th grade girls who are learning more about themselves and who they want to be. Recommended for readers looking for a short and sweet story of first love, friendships, and navigating middle school.

This One Summer by Mariko Tamaki (Graphic Novel/Coming of Age)

A graphic novel that tells the story of a very transformative summer for young teen Rose and her friend Windy. Returning to the same family vacation home as she has every summer, Rose begins to see the world through new eyes that are adjusting to a more adult world view. Recommended for readers ready for more mature topics.

March by John Lewis (Graphic Memoir)

This trilogy tells the story of John Lewis, a civil rights activist and politician. Through illustration, Lewis recounts his life on the front lines of fighting for civil rights. From his childhood in Alabama to watching President Obama being sworn into office, these books tell a nuanced story of one man's instrumental experience in the fight for civil rights.

Maybe He Just Likes You by Barbara Dee (Realistic Fiction)

7th grader Mila notices that the boys at school have started paying her some unwanted attention. This story follows Mila's experience of having her personal boundaries crossed, how that makes her feel, and how she finds the courage to combat harassment. An important and timely story that explores the meaning of consent.

Look Both Ways by Jason Reynolds (Short Stories/Realistic Fiction)

This series of interlaced vignettes highlights the experiences of ten different kids after school lets out. Each story has realistic dialogue, determined characters, humor, and truth. This book shows all the different paths we can walk to our homes, and what that can mean for different people.

Pet by Akwaeke Emezi (Fantasy)

An intense and beautifully written story of teens speaking out against injustices. Jam befriends Pet, a creature who appears out of her mother's painting to hunt a monster in her town. Jam's best friend may be in danger, so they work together to find the monster that everyone denies exists. Recommended for readers ready for more mature topics.

Deeplight by Frances Hardinge (Fantasy/Adventure)

This scary adventure fantasy follows 15-year-old Hark on a mission to save his friend. Ancient relics, smugglers, sea monsters, and mad scientists are all in his way! Teaming up with some unlikely friends, Hark must face the deep and find out what he's made of once and for all. An island fantasy world, lots of action, and interesting characters make this a great read.

Clean Getaway by Nic Stone (Realistic Fiction)

11-year-old Scoob finds himself on an unplanned road trip with his G'ma, who is determined to finish the trip she started long ago. While G'Ma seems to be acting a bit strange, she is also telling Scoob all about the grandfather he never knew and the Green Book that dictated their travels all those years ago. Thoughtful, realistic, and eye-opening.

Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga (Verse/Realistic Fiction)

Jude and her mother travel from an unstable Syria to stay with family in Cincinnati. Swept up in the move and missing her home, Jude tries to navigate her new reality, learn English, and keep from worrying about her older brother and father back in Syria. Compassionate and hopeful without shying away from tough topics like Islamophobia.