

Summer Reading Suggestions 2007 – Palo Alto Middle Schools

Note: (YA) = Young Adult title for more mature readers

Any books by these authors:

Ray Bradbury, Andrew Clements, Caroline Cooney, Michael Crichton, Madeline L'Engle, Paul Fleischman, Cornelia Funke, Lucy M. Montgomery (Avonlea series), Will Hobbs, Ben Mikaelson, Phyllis Naylor, Katherine Paterson, Gary Paulsen, and Phillip Pullman.

California Young Reader Medal 2007 Nominees

Dowell, Frances O'Roark Chicken Boy

Since the death of his mother, Tobin's family and school life have been in disarray, but after he starts raising chickens with his seventh-grade classmate, Henry, everything starts to fall into place.

Lester, Julius Day of Tears

Presents an historical fiction written in first-person format that follows Emma, the slave of Pierce Butler, through a series of events in her life as her master hosts the largest slave auction in American history in Savannah, Georgia in 1859 in order to pay off his mounting gambling debts.

Morpugo, Michael Private Peaceful (YA)

When Thomas Peaceful's older brother is forced to join the British Army, Thomas decides to sign up as well, although he is only sixteen years old, to prove himself to his country, his family, his childhood love, Molly, and himself.

Rees, Douglas Vampire High (YA)

When his family moves from California to New Sodom, Massachusetts and Cody enters Vlad Dracul Magnet School, many things seem strange, from the dark-haired, pale-skinned, supernaturally strong students to Charon, the wolf who guides him around campus on the first day.

Shusterman, Neal The Schwa Was Here

A Brooklyn eighth-grader nicknamed Antsy befriends the Schwa, an "invisible-ish" boy who is tired of blending into his surroundings and going unnoticed by nearly everyone

Zevin, Gabrielle Elsewhere (YA)

After fifteen-year-old Liz Hall is hit by a taxi and killed, she finds herself in a place that is both like and unlike Earth, where she must adjust to her new status and figure out how to "live."

Classics

Austen, Jane Sense and Sensibility

In nineteenth-century England, two sisters are drawn into unhappy romances despite the cool judgment of one and the emotional intensity of the other.

Bradbury, Ray Fahrenheit 451

"Fahrenheit 451 -- temperature at which book paper catches fire and burns." A book burner in a future fascist state finds out books are a vital part of a culture he never knew. He secretly pursues reading until he is betrayed.

Carroll, Lewis Alice in Wonderland

A little girl falls down a rabbit hole and discovers a world of nonsensical and amusing characters.

McCarty, Nick The Iliad

A retelling of Homer's classic Greek epic of Helen, Queen of Sparta, who is taken by Paris, a Trojan prince, inaugurating the Trojan War and is written for the fifth through eighth-grade classroom. Can also read original by Homer.

Mitchell, Adrian The Odyssey

A retelling of Homer's epic that describes the wanderings of Odysseus after the fall of Troy. Illustrated notes throughout the text explain the historical background of the story. Can also read original by Homer.

Stoker, Bram Dracula

Having discovered the double identity of the wealthy Transylvanian nobleman, Count Dracula, a small group of people vow to rid the world of the evil vampire.

Tolkien, J.R.R. The Lord of the Rings (trilogy)

Frodo, the hobbit, and a band of warriors from the different kingdoms set out to destroy the Ring of Power before the evil Sauron grasps control.

Contemporary

Abbott, Tony Firegirl

A middle school boy's life is changed when Jessica, a girl disfigured by burns, starts attending his Catholic school while receiving treatment at a local hospital.

Calonita, Jen Secrets of my Hollywood Life: A Novel

Longing to experience the life of a "normal" teenager, sixteen-year-old actress Kaitlin Burke assumes a false identity to attend a local high school.

Howe, James 13: Thirteen Stories That Capture the Agony and Ecstasy of Being Thirteen

Thirteen stories in which the authors explore what it is like to be thirteen.

Konigsburg, E.L. The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place

Upon leaving an oppressive summer camp, twelve-year-old Margaret Rose Kane spearheads a campaign to preserve three unique towers her granduncles have been building in their backyard for over forty years

Lord, Cynthia Rules 2007 Newbery Honor

Frustrated at life with an autistic brother, twelve-year-old Catherine longs for a normal existence but her world is further complicated by a friendship with a young paraplegic.

Mourlevat, Jean-Claude The Pull of the Ocean 2007 Batchelder Award

Loosely based on Charles Perrault's "Tom Thumb," seven brothers in modern-day France flee their poor parents' farm, led by the youngest who, although mute and unusually small, is exceptionally wise.

Patron, Susan The Higher Power of Lucky 2007 Newbery Winner

Fearing that her legal guardian plans to abandon her to return to France, ten-year-old aspiring scientist Lucky Trimble determines to run away while also continuing to seek the Higher Power that will bring stability to her life.

Paulsen, Gary, editor Shelf Life - Stories by the Book

Ten short stories in which the lives of young people in different circumstances are changed by their encounters with books.

Smelcer, John The Trap

In alternating chapters, seventeen-year-old Johnny Least-Weasel, who is better known for brains than brawn, worries about his missing grandfather, and the grandfather, Albert Least-Weasel, struggles to survive, caught in his own steel trap in the Alaskan winter.

Yee, Lisa Millicent Min, Girl Genius

In a series of journal entries, eleven-year-old Millicent Min records her struggles to learn to play volleyball, tutor her enemy, deal with her grandmother's departure, and make friends over the course of a tumultuous summer. Sequels are Stanford Wong Flunks Big-Time and So Totally Emily Ebers, which take place the same summer as Millicent Min, Girl Genius.

Fantasy/Science Fiction

Barry, Dave Peter and the Shadow Thieves

Peter must visit London to help his friend Molly and her family of star catchers locate the missing star stuff, leaving the boys on Mollusk Island at the mercy of Hook.

Cornish, D. M. Foundling (Monster Blood Tattoo) (YA)

Having grown up in a home for foundlings and possessing a girl's name, Rossamund sets out to report to his new job as a lamplighter and has several adventures along the way as he meets people and monsters who are more complicated than he previously thought. Includes glossaries and maps.

Knox, Elizabeth Dreamhunter

In a world where select people can enter "The Place" and find dreams of every kind to share with others for a fee, a fifteen-year-old girl is training to be a dreamhunter when her father disappears, leaving her to carry on his mysterious mission.

Meyer, Stephanie New Moon: A Novel (YA) Sequel to Twilight (YA)

When the Cullens, including her beloved Edward, leave Forks rather than risk revealing that they are vampires, it is almost too much for eighteen-year-old Bella to bear, but she finds solace in her friend Jacob until he is drawn into a "cult" and changes in terrible ways.

Pfeffer, Susan Life as We Knew It

Through journal entries sixteen-year-old Miranda describes her family's struggle to survive after a meteor hits the moon, causing worldwide tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.

Reeve, Phillip Larklight

In an alternate Victorian England, young Arthur and his sister Myrtle, residents of Larklight, a floating house in one of Her Majesty's outer space territories, uncover a spidery plot to destroy the solar system.

Rowling, J. K. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

The seventh and final book in the Harry Potter series is being published this summer. Be sure you read the series!

Stewart, Trenton The Mysterious Benedick Society

After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.

Historical Fiction

Anderson, M.T. The Pox Party (YA)

Various diaries, letters, and other manuscripts chronicle the experiences of Octavian, a young African American, from birth to age sixteen, as he is brought up as part of a science experiment in the years leading up to and during the Revolutionary War.

Auch, Mary Jane Ashes to Roses

Sixteen-year-old Rose Nolan arrives on Ellis Island in 1911 in the hopes of starting a new life, but after most of her family is sent back to Ireland, she must find her own way in a new country and fend for herself and her younger sister.

Boyne, John The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

Bored and lonely after his family moves from Berlin to a place called "Out-With" in 1942, Bruno, the son of a Nazi officer, befriends a boy in striped pajamas who lives behind a wire fence.

Drapper, Sharon Copper Sun (YA) 2007 Coretta Scott King Award

Two fifteen-year-old girls -- one a slave and the other an indentured servant -- escape their Carolina plantation and try to make their way to Fort Moses, Florida, a Spanish colony that gives sanctuary to slaves.

Frost, Helen The Braid

Two Scottish sisters, living on the western island of Barra in the 1850s, relate, in alternate voices and linked narrative poems, their experiences after their family is forcibly evicted and separated with one sister accompanying their parents and younger siblings to Cape Breton, Canada, and the other staying behind with other family on the small island of Mingulay.

Holm, Jennifer L. Penny from Heaven 2007 Newbery Honor

As she turns twelve during the summer of 1953, Penny gains new insights into herself and her family while also learning a secret about her father's death.

Larson, Kirby Hattie Big Sky 2007 Newbery Honor

After inheriting her uncle's homesteading claim in Montana, sixteen-year-old orphan Hattie Brooks travels from Iowa in 1917 to make a home for herself and encounters some unexpected problems related to the war being fought in Europe.

McCaughrean, Geraldine Cyrano

Ashamed of his ugliness, long-nosed Cyrano de Bergerac, a brilliant seventeenth-century poet and expert swordsman in the French army, helps a rival woo and win Roxane, the beautiful cousin Cyrano loves in silence.

Orlev, Uri Run, Boy, Run

Based on the true story of a boy who escapes the Warsaw Ghetto and must survive throughout the war in the Nazi-occupied Polish countryside.

Richardson, V.A. The Moneylender's Daughter (sequel to The House of Windjammer)

In 1637, Adam Windjammer, now sixteen years old, confronts danger in the New World as he tries to restore his family's fortune, while fourteen-year-old Jade Van Helson struggles in Amsterdam against her moneylender father's decree that she marry a wealthy, elderly Englishman.

Zusak, Markus Book Thief (YA)

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesl - a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

Humor

Coville, Bruce Juliet Dove, Queen of Love

A shy twelve-year-old girl must solve a puzzle involving characters from Greek mythology to free herself from a spell which makes her irresistible to boys.

Glori, Debi Pure Dead Brilliant

Time travel, a deadly computer, and other strange things begin to happen when some would-be witches come to stay with the eccentric Strega-Borgia family.

Hobbs, Valerie Letting Go of Bobby James, or, How I Found Myself of Steam (YA)

After being left by her husband at a gas station in Florida, sixteen-year-old Sally Jo Walker, also known as Jody, makes some difficult decisions and a better life for herself.

Lubar, David Hidden Talents

Thirteen-year-old Martin, a new student at an alternative school for misfits and problem students, falls in with a group of boys with psychic powers and discovers something surprising about himself.

Lubar, David Punished!

Logan and his friend Benedict are playing tag in the library when a mysterious man punished him by making him speak only in puns.

Mackler, Carolyn The Earth, My Butt, and Other Round Things

Feeling like she doesn't fit in with the other members of her family, who are all thin, brilliant and good-looking, fifteen-year-old Virginia tries to deal with her self-image, her first relationship, and her disillusionment with some of the people close to her.

Martin, Ann M. The Meanest Doll in the World

Annabelle and Tiffany, dolls who are best friends living in the Palmer house, have an adventure when they hide in Kate Palmer's backpack, are carried to school, mistakenly go to another house and try to stop Princess Muni, a doll who threatens all doll-dom.

Young, Steve 15 Minutes

Seventh-grader Casey Little is always late until he discovers a magic watch that takes him back in time fifteen minutes, a trick he uses both on and off the football field.

Multicultural

Bruchac, Joseph Wabi: a Hero's Tale

After falling in love with an Abenaki Indian woman, a white great horned owl named Wabi transforms into a human being and has several trials and adventures while learning to adapt to his new life.

Cameron, Ann Colibri

Kidnapped when she was very young by an unscrupulous man who has forced her to lie and beg to get money, a twelve-year-old Mayan girl endures an abusive life, always wishing she could return to the parents she can hardly remember.

Grimes, Nikki Jazmin's Notebook

Jazmin, an African-American teenager who lives with her older sister in a small Harlem apartment in the 1960s, finds strength in writing poetry and keeping a record of the events in her sometimes difficult life.

Grimes, Nikki The Road to Paris 2007 Coretta Scott King Honor Book

Inconsolable at being separated from her older brother, eight-year-old Paris is apprehensive about her new foster family but just as she learns to trust them, she faces a life-changing decision.

Jaramille, Ann La Linea

When fifteen-year-old Miguel's time finally comes to leave his poor Mexican village, cross the border illegally, and join his parents in California, his younger sister's determination to join him soon imperils them both.

Kadohata, Cynthia Weedflower

After twelve-year-old Sumiko and her Japanese-American family are relocated from their flower farm in southern California to an internment camp on a Mojave Indian reservation in Arizona, she helps her family and neighbors, becomes friends with a local Indian boy, and tries to hold on to her dream of owning a flower shop.

Osa, Nancy Cuba 15

Violet Paz, a Chicago high school student reluctantly prepares for her "quince," a Spanish nickname for the celebration of an Hispanic girl's fifteenth birthday.

Park, Linda Sue When My Name Was Keoko

With national pride and occasional fear, a brother and sister face the increasingly oppressive occupation of Korea by Japan during World War II, which threatens to suppress Korean culture entirely.

Mystery/Suspense/Horror

Allison, Jennifer Gilda Joyce: the Ladies of the Lake

Having earned a scholarship to a private girls' high school, self-proclaimed psychic investigator Gilda Joyce investigates the circumstances surrounding the drowning death of a student whose ghost supposedly haunts the campus.

Clements, Andrew Room One: a Mystery or Two

Ted Hammond, the only sixth grader in his small Nebraska town's one-room schoolhouse, searches for clues to the disappearance of a homeless family.

Shan, Darren Cirque du Freak series

The series begins with two boys, best friends, who encounter a vampire and a deadly spider at an illegal freak show and consequently must make life-changing choices.

Non-Fiction

Armstrong, Jennifer The American Story

Contains 100 short stories about real people and events in American history, arranged chronologically from 1565 to 2000, including the lost colony of Roanoke, Pocahontas, the Chicago fire, and the 2000 presidential election.

Bausum, Ann Freedom Riders 2007 Sibert Honor Book

Chronicles John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement in 1961.

Koscielniak, Bruce Looking at Glass through the Ages

Presents the processes of glassmaking through the ages from where it began in ancient Egypt, through the cathedral stained-glass windows of the Middle Ages, and to the modern use of glass to make such things as telescope lenses.

Patent, Dorothy The Buffalo and the Indians

Traces the history of the dependence of the American Indians on the buffalo from prehistoric times to the present.

Thimmesh, Catherine Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon 2007 Sibert Award

Team Moon chronicles the Apollo 11 mission, the spaceflight that landed the first man on Earth's moon on July 20, 1969, emphasizing the contributions and reactions of the thousands of people who made the mission successful.

Wolf, Allan Immersed in Verse

Contains a guide to writing poetry, providing advice, ideas, writing activities, and encouragement from a working poet, presenting poems by a variety of poets from the unknown to the famous, including Langston Hughes, e.e. cummings, Eve Merriam, and more.

Sports

Fitzgerald, Dawn Soccer Chick Rules

While trying to focus on a winning soccer season, thirteen-year-old Tess becomes involved in local politics when she learns that all sports programs at her school will be stopped unless a tax levy is passed.

Gutman, Dan Million Dollar Goal

Twins Dawn and Dusk learn to admire their crotchety old grandmother when they take on the task of training her to play hockey after she wins a chance to shoot a goal for a million dollars; but when she dies before the contest, they must decide who is going to take her place.

Hale, Daniel Red Card

After living in a series of foreign countries, thirteen-year-old Zeke Armstrong moves to Dallas, Texas, and hopes to have a normal life. He joins the Sundogs soccer team and soon finds himself at the Lone Star Invitational tournament. When someone tries to kill his coach, he finds himself in the middle of another adventure.

Paulsen, Gary How Angel Peterson Got His Name

Gary Paulsen relates tales from his youth in a small town in northwestern Minnesota in the late 1940s and early 1950s, such as skiing behind a souped-up car and imitating daredevil Evel Knievel.

Wallace, Rich Dunk Under Pressure

Free throw specialist Cornell "Dunk" Duncan joins the YMCA summer basketball league all-star team, but after losing his confidence in an important game the seventh-grader makes some decisions about becoming an all-around player.