8th Grade Suggested Reading List

FICTION

Horowitz, Andrew  STORMBREAKER  F
After the death of the uncle who had been his guardian, fourteen-year-old Alex Rider is coerced to continue his uncle’s dangerous work for Britain’s Intelligence Agency, M16.

Tolan, Stephanie  SURVIVING THE APPLEWHITES  F
Jake, a budding juvenile delinquent, is sent for home schooling to the arty and eccentric Applewhite family’s Creative Academy, where he discovers talents and interests he never knew he had.

Austen, Jane  PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*  F
In early nineteenth-century England, a spirited young woman, Elizabeth Bennett, copes with the courtship of a snobbish gentleman, Mr. Darcy, as well as the romantic entanglements of her four sisters.

Stevenson, Robert Louis  DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*  F
A respected doctor who lives a secret double life begins losing his identity to his violent evil side.

Horvath, Polly  THE CANNING SEASON  F
2003 National Book Award
Thirteen-year-old Ratchet spends a summer in Maine with her eccentric great-aunts Tilly and Penpen, hearing strange stories from the past and encountering a variety of unusual and colorful characters.

Colfer, Eoin  THE ETERNITY CODE: ARTEMIS FOWL BOOK 3  F
Artemis Fowl’s father has made him promise to give up his life of crime and Artemis must go along with it, but not before he completes one last scheme: a supercomputer that will render all human technology obsolete.
Paolini, Christopher  ERAGON  F
In Aagaesia, a fifteen-year-old boy of unknown lineage called Eragon finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power, peopled with dragons, elves, and monsters.

Pearsall, Shelley  TROUBLE DON’T LAST  F
Samuel, an 11-year-old Kentucky slave, and the elderly slave who helped raise him, attempt to escape to Canada via the Underground Railroad.

Peck, Richard  THE RIVER BETWEEN US  F
2003 National Book Award Honor Book
During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled New Orleans to come north to Illinois.

Nimmo, Jenny  CHARLIE BONE AND THE TIME TWISTER  F
While at Bloor’s Academy, Charlie Bone gets a surprise when Henry Yewbean arrives from the year 1916 and needs Charlie’s help to stay alive.

Beatty, Patricia.  CHARLEY SKEDADDLE  F
A young boy from New York City enlists in the Union Army as a drummer boy after his brother is killed at Gettysburg and then “skedaddles” away from the Army and hides in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Beatty, Patricia.  WHO COMES WITH CANNONS?  F
The Underground Railroad is viewed through the eyes of a young Quaker girl who helps slaves escape
Bunting, Eve. THE BLUE AND THE GRAY  
As an African American boy and his white friend watch the construction of a house which will make them neighbors within view of the site of a Civil War battlefield, one boy's father helps both boys to remember the lives that were lost to win freedoms so long ago. Eve Bunting and illustrator Ned Bittinger contrast the destruction and misery of the Civil War with the construction of a modern interracial community.

Calvert, Patricia. BIGGER  
When his father disappears near the Mexican border at the end of the Civil War, 12-year-old Tyler decides to find him and bring him home, acquiring on the journey a strange dog that he names Bigger.

Collier, James L., and Christopher Collier. WINTER HERO  
Fourteen-year-old Justin Conkey tries to save his family farm while spying for the rebellious forces during Shay's Rebellion.

Cox, Clinton. UNDYING GLORY  
This is the story of the courageous men of the 54th Regiment of Massachusetts, who fought as Union soldiers to free their brothers and sisters from slavery. Black-and-white archival photographs bring the "glory" regiment to life.

DeAngeli, Marguerite. DOOR IN THE WALL  
A handicapped boy in 14th century England proves his courage and earns recognition from the king.
Dorris, Michael. MORNING GIRL   F
Morning Girl's Taino culture encounters Columbus on her Bahamian island in 1492

Ferris, Jeri. NATIVE AMERICAN DOCTOR   NF
This is the biography of the young Omaha woman who became the first Native American woman to graduate from medical school. (NF)

Forbes, Esther. JOHNNY TREMAIN   F
A young silversmith participates in the dramatic events leading to the Revolutionary War, including the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Lexington.

Freedman, Russell. LINCOLN: A PHOTOBIOGRAPHY   NF
This award-winning book traces the life of Abraham Lincoln through the medium of photojournalism.

Fritz, Jean. AROUND THE WORLD IN A HUNDRED YEARS FROM HENRY THE NAVIGATOR TO MAGELLAN   NF
This book examines the great wave of European exploration during the 1400s in a way that brings to life the explorers who changed the world map.

Fritz, Jean. EARLY THUNDER   F
Daniel and his widowed father must choose to be either Tory or Whig as growing violence between the groups sets the stage for the Revolutionary War.

Fritz, Jean. THE GREAT LITTLE MADISON   NF
This in-depth account of James Madison's life gives an interesting picture of life in America before, during, and after the American Revolution.

Fritz, Jean; Katherine Paterson; Patricia and Frederick McKissack; Margaret Mahy; and Jamake Highwater. THE WORLD IN 1492   NF
This collection contains information about people, places, and events of this time period from several areas in the world.
Frost, Robert. YOU COME TOO: FAVORITE POEMS FOR YOUNG READERS NF
Robert Frost wrote and selected this collection of witty, wise, and tender poems for young people.

Gilman, Dorothy. THE BELLS OF FREEDOM
This is the story of Jed Crane, an English boy sold as an indentured servant at the time of the Revolutionary War. When his master’s mysterious dealings force Jed to slip through the British lines, he is captured by the rebels and brought face to face with American patriots engaged in a life-or-death struggle.

Hamilton, Virginia. THE HOUSE OF DIES DREAR
This tale gives the reader a history lesson about the Underground Railroad. An African American family discovers incredible secrets in their Civil War-era house.

Harding, R. R., and R. F. Symes. CRYSTAL & GEM
This book provides interesting facts and colorful pictures to increase understanding of these wonders of nature.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett (ed.). HAND IN HAND: AN AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH POETRY
This collection of poems and lyrics from songs provides a look at America from Colonial times to the present.

Jacques, Brian. MARTIN, THE WARRIOR
This animal tale is part of the Redwall series, in which Martin journeys to help his people stand against a band of villains.

Jones, Charlotte. MISTAKES THAT WORKED
The author presents the stories of 40 items that were invented or named by accident, including aspirin, X-rays, Frisbees, Silly Putty, and Velcro.

Kehret, Peg. EARTHQUAKE TERROR
Jonathan and Abby’s parents have just rushed to the emergency room, leaving their children alone when an earthquake strikes the island where
they are camping. The book recounts the children's survival efforts in the aftermath of the earthquake

Kerr, Judith. WHEN HITLER STOLE PINK RABBIT
A Jewish family forced to flee Germany in 1933 overcomes the difficulties of their refugee lives through their love and support for each other.

Lasky, Kathryn. SURTSEY: THE NEWEST PLACE ON EARTH. This is a description of the formation, naming, and colonization of the 27-year-old volcanic island Surtsey, and how the first animals and plants established themselves there.

Lauber, Patricia. PAINTERS OF THE CAVES
Mammoths, bison, horses, bears, and lions leap to life across the cave walls depicted on the pages of this book. These animals and their artists lived 32,000 years ago. The works of these early Europeans were recently discovered in caves in southern France.

Lowry, Lois. NUMBER THE STARS
The Nazi takeover of Denmark impacts 10-year-old Annemarie Johansen and her best friend, Ellen. Ellen, a young Jewish girl, pretends to be part of the Johansen family in order to hide from the Nazis. Will the Johansen family be successful in reuniting Ellen with her family before the Nazis discover their secret?

Macaulay, David. SHIP
This book follows a group of modern-day underwater archaeologists as they search for a long-lost ship in the reefs of the Caribbean.

Murphy, Jim. THE BOYS' WAR
This book includes diary entries, personal letters, and archival photographs describing the experiences of boys, 16 years old or younger, who fought in the Civil War.

Nixon, Joan Lowery. CIRCLE OF LOVE: ORPHAN TRAIN ADVENTURES.
Nineteen-year-old Frances Mary Kelly, a former orphan train rider,
chaperones 30 orphans on the train to New York from Missouri. Frances cares for the children as she deals with a dangerous stranger.

O'Dell, Scott. THE BLACK PEARL
Ramon's family is in the pearl business in Baja. While his father is away on a trip, Ramon finds the fabulous Pearl of Heaven, but it earns him powerful enemies.

Pinkwater, Daniel. FAT MEN FROM SPACE
In this humorous story, William receives bulletins about an invasion from outer space through the filling in his tooth. He's taken captive aboard a spacecraft of fat spacemen who plan to invade Earth.

Pitts, Paul. RACING THE SUN
Brandon Rogers begins to learn some new lessons about heritage and love when his Navajo grandfather moves from the reservation into Brandon's room.

Polacco, Patricia. PINK AND SAY
Pinkus Ayless, a black Union soldier, and Sheldon Curtis, a white Union soldier, develop a wonderful friendship that tests their courage as they run away from Southern troops.

Reiss, Johanna. THE UPSTAIRS ROOM
This is a recollection of a Jewish child who was forced to hide from the Nazis in Holland during World War II.

Shura, Mary Francis. GENTLE ANNIE
This book describes the conflicts of the Civil War through the story of Annie Etheridge, who entered the Union Army at the age of 16.

Simon, Seymour. EARTHQUAKES
The phenomenon of earthquakes is examined, including descriptions of how and where they occur, how they can be predicted, and how much damage they can inflict.

Soto, Gary. THE SKIRT
Miata loses a special skirt her mother gave her to wear for a performance. She needs all her wits to get it back without her parents finding out that she has lost something again.

Taylor, Mildred. SONG OF THE TREES
Cassie’s family is deeply attached to the forest on the land where they live. While Cassie’s father is away, the family tries to save the trees from being destroyed by an unscrupulous man.

Ullman, James Ramsey. BANNER IN THE SKY
Rudi Matt’s father perished in his attempt to reach the last great summit of the Alps, the Citadel. At sixteen, Rudi is determined to pay tribute to the father he never knew by completing the quest that claimed his father’s life. Rudi must search deep within himself to find the strength for the final ascent to the summit to plant his banner in the sky.

Walter, Mildred Pitts. JUSTIN AND THE BEST BISCUITS IN THE WORLD. Justin visits his grandfather’s ranch and learns about being a part of the family. He discovers his great-grandfather’s diary that describes conditions for African Americans after the Civil War.

Williams, Barbara. TITANIC CROSSING
In 1912, 13-year-old Albert is returning to the United States aboard the Titanic. When it hits an iceberg, he is forced to make the most important decision of his life.

Wisler, G. Clifton. MR. LINCOLN’S DRUMMER
William Johnson is an 11-year-old Vermont farm boy who is determined to serve in Mr. Lincoln’s army. He becomes the youngest recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor as a Civil War drummer boy.

Woodruff, Elvira. GEORGE WASHINGTON’S SOCKS
During a campout, five children are transported back to George Washington’s time, where they learn the sober realities of the Revolutionary War.

Adams, Richard. WATERSHIP DOWN*
Seeing a vision of the destruction of their homes, a band of wild rabbits sets out on a quest for a new home and a new society. Personalities and adventures come alive in this unique picture of humanity and nature.

Alcorn, Stephen, and Andrea Davis Pinckney. LET IT SHINE: STORIES OF BLACK WOMEN FREEDOM FIGHTERS
From Sojourner Truth to Shirley Chisholm, this collection gives the reader a view of African American history through individual lives.

Alcott, Louisa M. LITTLE WOMEN
The March family endures trials and tribulations while their father is involved in the Civil War.

Ambrose, Stephen E. THE GOOD FIGHT: HOW WWII WAS WON
Ambrose presents a concise, readable chronicle of WWII through amazing photographs and research.

Bachrach, Susan. TELL THEM WE REMEMBER: THE STORY OF THE HOLOCAUST
The U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s collection of artifacts and pictures tells the story of the Holocaust.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. GROWING UP IN COAL COUNTRY
The story of the “breaker boys” who worked the coal mines in the early 1900s is told through pictures and anecdotes.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. BLACK POTATOES
Through the voices of Irish People, these eyewitness accounts and memories combine with devastating facts: one million died from starvation and disease; two million emigrated; the famine could have been avoided; the legacy was a bitter resentment against the English, who owned most of Ireland.

Brontë, Charlotte. JANE EYRE*
In early 19th century England, an orphaned young woman accepts employment as a governess and soon finds herself in love with her employer, who has a terrible secret.

Coleman, Penny. ROSIE THE RIVETER.
This book tells how World War II brought about extraordinary job opportunities for women. On the home front, businesses employed women as men filled the military ranks.

Curtis, Christopher. WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM - 1963. The Watsons live in Flint, Michigan. They fix up the "brown bomber" and drive to visit Grandmother in Alabama to leave their brother Byron to live with her.

Curtis, Christopher. BUD, NOT BUDDY. During the Great Depression, motherless Bud sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father renowned bandleader, H.E. Calloway.

Dyson, Marianne J. SPACE STATION SCIENCE. Satisfy your curiosity with this book which includes photographs and facts from the Space Station. What is daily life really like for astronauts?

Eastaway, Rob; Jeremy Wyndham; and Tim Rice. WHY DO BUSES COME IN THREES?: THE HIDDEN MATHEMATICS IN EVERYDAY LIFE. Why can’t I find a four-leaf clover? How can I win without cheating? How many people watch Friends? This intriguing book explains how math and the laws of probability are at work in our lives.

Flake, Sharon. THE SKIN I’M IN. Thirteen-year-old Maleeka, an excellent student who is choosing the wrong friends, meets a new teacher who helps her make some discoveries about who she is and what she believes.

Freedman, Russell. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: A LIFE OF DISCOVERY. The courage and dedication of Eleanor Roosevelt, the first president’s wife to have an independent role as spokesperson for the powerless and downtrodden, are described in this biography.

Godfrey, Neale. ULTIMATE KID’S MONEY BOOK.
This book has everything you need to know about money – how to earn, save, spend, and share it.

Greenberg, Jan, and Sophie Jordan. FRANK O. GEHRY: OUTSIDE IN.
Illustrated with photos and sketches, (Outside In) introduces readers to the architect of one of the most acclaimed buildings of our times, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain.

Hobbs, Will. JASON’S GOLD.
When 15-year-old Jason Hawthorn sets off from Seattle to the newly discovered gold fields, he has no idea of the difficulties that lie ahead. A husky, which Jason names King, becomes essential to the boy’s survival.

Hoose, Philip. WE WERE THERE TOO: YOUNG PEOPLE IN U.S. HISTORY.
This book contains stories of real children and teens who contributed to important events in American history from Columbus’ arrival right up to the 1990s.

Kaminsky, Mary and Bobby Valentine. UNCOMMON CHAMPIONS: FIFTEEN ATHLETES WHO BATTLED BACK.
This book tells the stories of courageous athletes who battled adversity to find success.

Koller, Jackie French. NOTHING TO FEAR.
When his father moves away to find work and his mother becomes ill, Danny struggles to help his family by starting a shoeshine business during the Great Depression.

Korman, Gordon. NO MORE DEAD DOGS.
Eighth grader and football hero Wallace Wallace is assigned as detention to attend rehearsals of the school play. His suggestions change not only the play but his own life as well.

Lasky, Kathryn. THE MAN WHO MADE TIME TRAVEL.
John Harrison, an eighteenth-century clock maker solved the problem of tracking longitude in shipboard navigation. A shipwreck begins the story and
explains how longitude was a life and death question for those who sailed the seas.

Leroe, Ellen. DISASTER! THREE REAL-LIFE STORIES OF SURVIVAL. Children looking for exciting, real-life survival stories will be attracted by the cover of this collection of first-person accounts of three disasters: the 1914 shipwreck of the Empress of Ireland, the 1928 crash of the airship Italia, and the 1930 crash of the dirigible R-101.

Levine, Ellen. DARKNESS OVER DENMARK: THE DANISH RESISTANCE. When Germany occupied Denmark during World War II, the Danes refused to turn a blind eye to Nazi atrocities. Of the nearly 8,000 Jews living in Denmark at the time of the occupation, almost all survived because the Danes took action.

Macaulay, David. THE NEW WAY THINGS WORK. This book provides a fascinating and humorous look at the way things work.

Marrin, Albert. COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE CIVIL WAR. This study brings Lincoln to life by relating his own personal background to his decisions and actions during our country’s greatest conflict.

Mays, Osceola; Shane Evans; and Alan B. Grovenor. OSCEOLA: MEMORIES OF A SHARECROPPER’S DAUGHTER. A sharecropper’s daughter describes her childhood in Texas in the early years of the twentieth century.

Mikaelson, Ben. PETEY. Petey, born in 1905 with cerebral palsy, faces a lonely and uninspired life in an institution. Though he is barely able to communicate, he shares his intelligence, friendship, and dignity with the caregivers whom he comes to know during his 90 years.

Murphy, Jim. BLIZZARD: THE STORM THAT CHANGED AMERICA. In March 1888, “The Great White Hurricane” hit the east coast of the U.S. This is the story of that deadly blizzard.
Myers, Walter Dean. *THE GREATEST: MUHAMMAD ALI.*
Award-winning author Walter Dean Myers presents the amazing story of Muhammad Ali's childhood, his rise as a champion, his politics, and his battles against Parkinson's disease. Packed with dramatic black and white photos, this critically acclaimed biography is the perfect choice for both young adult sports fans and fans of Walter Dean Myers.

Paulson, Gary. *MY LIFE IN DOG YEARS.*
The author describes some of the dogs that were special to him during his life.

Pfetzer, Mark, and Jack Galvin. *WITHIN REACH: MY EVEREST STORY.*
In this suspenseful first-person narrative, sixteen-year-old Mark Pfetzer relates his experiences as the youngest climber to attempt Everest.

Peters, Julie Anne. *DEFINE NORMAL.*
The outstanding student, Antonia, is matched up with the unusual and mysterious punker, Jazz, for a peer counseling program. As the counseling sessions progress, the two girls discover that they have many things in common.

Smith, Betty. *A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN*  
Childhood and family relationships in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn are seen through the eyes of young Francie

Spinelli, Jerry. *STARGIRL.*
Sixteen-year-old Leo tells the story of Stargirl Caraway, the free spirit who enrolls at Mica High School, not exactly the “hotbed of non-conformity.”

Stanley, Diane. *MICHAELANGELO.*
This is a picture book biography of the Renaissance sculptor, architect, and poet.

Taylor, Theodore. *THE BOMB.*
This is the story of Bikini Island, a nuclear test site during World War II, told from the point of view of Sorry, a 16-year-old islander.
Uchida, Yoshiko. INVISIBLE THREAD. Uchida describes growing up in California as a second generation Japanese American and her family’s internment in a Utah concentration camp during World War II.

Verne, Jules. 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* 
An eccentric captain explores the undersea world in a submarine powered by a strange energy source.

Wulffson, Don. THE KID WHO INVENTED THE POPSICLE. 
Brief, factual stories of how various familiar things were invented, many by accident, make for an informative read. Also, THE KID WHO INVENTED THE TRAMPOLENE.

Zindel, Paul. THE GADGET. 
It is 1945 and Stephen has moved to the top secret military base in Los Alamos, New Mexico, to join his father, a famous physicist, who is working on a project he is forbidden to discuss. Stephen is determined to find out the true nature of “the gadget.”

Cushman, Karen CATHERINE, CALLED BIRDY 
Catherine, the daughter of an impoverished knight, begins a diary of her daily life at the age of 14.

Fradin, Dennis Brindell THE PLANET HUNTERS 
A history of the planets and the men and women who have hunted for undiscovered ones.

Paulsen, Gary DOGSONG 
A 14-year old Eskimo boy takes a life-changing journey by dog sled across ice, tundra, and mountains.

Adams, Douglas THE HITCHHIKER’S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY 
The funny and famous science fiction must-read.

Collier, James and Collier, Christopher MY BROTHER SAM IS DEAD 
A family is divided when one son rebels against the Tories in the Revolutionary War.
Defoe, Daniel  ROBISON CRUSOE *
Crusoe is stranded on a deserted island for over 30 years, but doesn't give up hope.

Soto, Gary  A SUMMER LIFE
True stories about the author's youth in a Mexican-American community in California

Yep, Lawrence  DRAGONWINGS
A boy comes from China to live with his father in early 1900's California, and helps create a flying machine.

Burch, Robert  QUEENIE PEAVY
The story of what happens when the biggest troublemaker in school tries to behave herself for just one day. An ALA Notable Book.