

8th Grade Suggested Reading List

FICTION

Adams, Douglas *THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY* (Lexile 1000)
The funny and famous science fiction must-read.

Adams, Richard. *WATERSHIP DOWN** (Lexile 880)
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

Alcott, Louisa M. *LITTLE WOMEN* (Lexile 1230)
The March family endures trials and tribulations while their father is involved in the Civil War.

Austen, Jane *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE** (Lexile 1190)
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.

Beatty, Patricia. *CHARLEY SKEDADDLE* (Lexile ?)
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?* (Lexile 760)
The Underground Railroad is viewed through the eyes of a young Quaker girl who helps slaves escape

Brontë, Charlotte. *JANE EYRE** (Lexile 890)
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.

Bunting, Eve. *THE BLUE AND THE GRAY* (Lexile 620)
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

Burch, Robert *QUEENIE PEAVY* (Lexile 850)
The story of what happens when the biggest troublemaker in school tries to behave herself for just one day. An ALA Notable Book.

Calvert, Patricia. *BIGGER* (Lexile 1040)
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

Colfer, Eoin *THE ETERNITY CODE: ARTEMIS FOWL BOOK 3* (Lexile 620)
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.

Collier, James and Collier, Christopher MY BROTHER SAM IS DEAD (Lexile 770)
A family is divided when one son rebels against the Tories in the Revolutionary War.

Collier, James L., and Christopher Collier. WINTER HERO (Lexile 750)
Fourteen-year-old Justin Conkey tries to save his family farm while spying for the rebellious forces during Shay's Rebellion

Curtis, Christopher. WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM - 1963. (Lexile 1000)
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.

Cushman, Karen CATHERINE, CALLED BIRDY (Lexile 1170)
Catherine, the daughter of an impoverished knight, begins a diary of her daily life at the age of 14.

DeAngeli, Marguerite. DOOR IN THE WALL (Lexile 990)
A handicapped boy in 14th century England proves his courage and earns recognition from the king

Defoe, Daniel ROBISON CRUSOE * (Lexile 1070)
Crusoe is stranded on a deserted island for over 30 years, but doesn't give up hope.

Dorris, Michael. MORNING GIRL (Lexile 980)
Morning Girl's Taino culture encounters Columbus on her Bahamian island in 1492

Flake, Sharon. THE SKIN I'M IN. (Lexile 670)
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

Forbes, Esther. JOHNNY TREMAIN (Lexile 840)
A young silversmith participates in the dramatic events leading to the Revolutionary War, including the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Lexington.

Gilman, Dorothy. THE BELLS OF FREEDOM (Lexile 870)
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 (Lexile 670)
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

Horowitz, Andrew STORMBREAKER (Lexile 670)
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.

Horvath, Polly THE CANNING SEASON (Lexile 870)
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.

Jacques, Brian. MARTIN, THE WARRIOR (Lexile 890)

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

Kehret, Peg. EARTHQUAKE TERROR (Lexile 690)

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 (Lexile 940)

A Jewish family forced to flee Germany in 1933 overcomes the difficulties of their refugee lives through their love and support for each other.

Koller, Jackie French. NOTHING TO FEAR. (Lexile 730)

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. (Lexile 610)

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.

Mikaelson, Ben. PETEY. (Lexile 740)

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.

Nixon, Joan Lowery. CIRCLE OF LOVE: ORPHAN TRAIN ADVENTURES. (Lexile 740)

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 (Lexile 980)

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.

Paolini, Christopher ERAGON (Lexile 710)

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.

Paulsen, Gary DOGSONG (Lexile 930)

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

Pearsall, Shelley TROUBLE DON'T LAST (Lexile 720)

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 (Lexile 740)

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.

Pinkwater, Daniel. FAT MEN FROM SPACE (Lexile 810)

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 (Lexile 720)

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 (Lexile 590)

Pinkus Ayles, 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.

Smith, Betty. A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN* (Lexile 810)

Childhood and family relationships in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn are seen through the eyes of young Francie

Soto, Gary A SUMMER LIFE (Lexile 990)

True stories about the author's youth in a Mexican-American community in California

Soto, Gary. THE SKIRT (Lexile 540)

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

Spinelli, Jerry. STARGIRL. (Lexile 590)

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."

Stevenson, Robert Louis DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* (Lexile 910)

A respected doctor who lives a secret double life begins losing his identity to his violent evil side.

Tolan, Stephanie SURVIVING THE APPLEWHITES (Lexile 820)

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.

Verne, Jules. 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* (Lexile 850)

An eccentric captain explores the undersea world in a submarine powered by a strange energy source.

Walter, Mildred Pitts. JUSTIN AND THE BEST BISCUITS IN THE WORLD. (Lexile 620)

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 (Lexile ?)

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 (Lexile 800)

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 (Lexile ?)

During a campout, five children are transported back to George Washington's time, where they learn the sober realities of the Revolutionary War