

8th Grade Suggested Nonfiction Reading List

WE ENCOURAGE ALL STUDENTS AT DURHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL TO READ A VARIETY OF MATERIALS. STUDENTS MAY CHOOSE TO READ ANY BOOK THAT INTERESTS THEM; IF A STUDENT NEEDS SOME SUGGESTIONS, THIS LIST CONTAINS SOME GOOD BOOKS TO TRY. SUMMER READING IS REQUIRED; HOWEVER, STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE TO CHOOSE FROM THIS LIST. ANY NONFICTION BOOK OF THE APPROPRIATE LENGTH (150 PAGES MIN.), COMPLEXITY, AND INTEREST IS ACCEPTABLE.

NON-FICTION

Alcorn, Stephen, and Andrea Davis Pinckney. LET IT SHINE: STORIES OF BLACK WOMEN FREEDOM FIGHTERS (Lexile 940)
From Sojourner Truth to Shirley Chisholm, this collection gives the reader a view of African American history through individual lives

Allaby, Michael. TORNADOES: and OTHER DRAMATIC WEATHER SYSTEMS (Lexile ?)
Explores several types of extreme weather including tornadoes, thunderstorms, blizzards, and droughts, and looks at the ways in which humans affect the weather of the planet.

Ambrose, Stephen E. THE GOOD FIGHT: HOW WWII WAS WON (Lexile 1110)
Ambrose presents a concise, readable chronicle of WWII through amazing photographs and research.

Angelou, Maya I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS (Lexile 1070)
Maya Angelou's autobiography of her life.

Bachrach, Susan. TELL THEM WE REMEMBER: THE STORY OF THE HOLOCAUST (Lexile 1190)
The U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of artifacts and pictures tells the story of the Holocaust.

Ballard, Robert. EXPLORING THE TITANIC (Lexile 980)
This book describes the large luxury liner that sank in 1912 and the discovery and exploration of its underwater wreckage.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *GROWING UP IN COAL COUNTRY* (Lexile 1110)
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* (Lexile 1040)
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

Coleman, Penny. *ROSIE THE RIVETER*. (Lexile 1060)
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.

Covey, Sean *THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEENS* (Lex. 870)
Based on his father's bestselling *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Sean Covey applies the same principles to teens, using a vivacious, entertaining style. To keep it fun, Covey writes, he "stuffed it full of cartoons, clever ideas, great quotes, and incredible stories about real teens from all over the world... along with a few other surprises." Did he ever! Flip open to any page and become instantly absorbed in real-life stories of teens who have overcome obstacles to succeed, and step-by-step guides to shifting paradigms, building equity in "relationship bank accounts," creating action plans, and much more.

Cox, Clinton. *UNDYING GLORY* (Lexile 1190)
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.

Driscoll, Michael *A CHILD'S INTRODUCTION TO POETRY* (Lex.NC1110)
Colorful illustrations and poems introduce the reader to poetry, teaching them about different types of poems and the most popular poets from history.

Dyson, Marianne J. *SPACE STATION SCIENCE*. (Lexile 910)

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*. (Lexile ?)

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.

Ferris, Jeri. *NATIVE AMERICAN DOCTOR* (Lexile 1110)

This is the biography of the young Omaha woman who became the first Native American woman to graduate from medical school.

Fleming, Candace *BEN FRANKLIN'S ALMANAC* (Lexile 1000)

The life of Benjamin Franklin is told in a "scrapbook" format with etchings, artifacts, and quotations.

Freedman, Russell. *ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: A LIFE OF DISCOVERY*.

(Lexile ?)

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.

Freedman, Russell. *GIVE ME LIBERTY: THE STORY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE*. (Lexile 1070)

Using newspapers, letters, and illustrations, Freedman paints the picture of what went on behind the scenes of the Declaration of Independence.

Freedman, Russell. *LINCOLN: A PHOTOBIOGRAPHY* (Lexile 1110)

This award-winning book traces the life of Abraham Lincoln through the medium of photojournalism.

Fritz, Jean. *THE GREAT LITTLE MADISON* (Lexile 1030)

This in-depth account of James Madison's life gives an interesting picture of life in America before, during, and after the American Revolution.

Frost, Robert. *YOU COME TOO: FAVORITE POEMS FOR YOUNG READERS*

(Lexile ?)

Robert Frost wrote and selected this collection of witty, wise, and tender poems for young people

Godfrey, Neale. *ULTIMATE KID'S MONEY BOOK*. (Lexile ?)

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*.

(Lexile 920)

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.

Grimes, Nikki *JAZMIN'S NOTEBOOK* (Lexile 980)

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.

Hardesty, Von *AIR FORCE ONE: THE AIRCRAFT THAT SHAPED THE MODERN AMERICAN PRESIDENCY* (Lexile ?)

The book shows how aircraft have been used by U.S. presidents in the second half of the twentieth century and explains how the presidency itself has been affected by events throughout the century.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett (ed.). *HAND IN HAND: AN AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH POETRY* (Lexile ?)

This collection of poems and lyrics from songs provides a look at America from Colonial times to the present.

Hoose, Philip. *WE WERE THERE TOO: YOUNG PEOPLE IN U.S. HISTORY*.

(Lexile ?) 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.

Hudson, Wade *POWERFUL WORDS: MORE THAN 200 YEARS OF EXTRAORDINARY WRITING BY AFRICAN AMERICANS* (Lexile 1130)

Excerpts from the writings and speeches of over thirty notable African-

Americans from colonial times to the twenty-first century. It includes commentary about the time period in which each person lived, information about the speaker/writer, and public response to the words.

Jackson, Livia I HAVE LIVED A THOUSAND YEARS (Lexile 720)
Growing up in the Holocaust.

Jones, Charlotte. MISTAKES THAT WORKED (Lexile 1040)
The author presents the stories of 40 items that were invented or named by accident, including aspirin, X-rays, Frisbees, Silly Putty, and Velcro.

Kaminsky, Mary and Bobby Valentine. UNCOMMON CHAMPIONS: FIFTEEN ATHLETES WHO BATTLED BACK. (Lexile 1090)
This book tells the stories of courageous athletes who battled adversity to find success.

Kiefer, Joanne JOBS FOR KIDS: A SMART KID'S Q & A GUIDE (Lexile ?)
Answers questions about the five most popular jobs for young people, as well as about other ways they can make money, with advice on the planning and marketing involved.

Kings, Casey & Osborne, L. OH FREEDOM! (Lexile 950)
Interviews between young people and people who took part in the civil rights movement accompany essays that describe the history of efforts to make equality a reality for African-Americans.

Lasky, Kathryn. SURTSEY: THE NEWEST PLACE ON EARTH. (Lexile 950)
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.

Lasky, Kathryn. THE MAN WHO MADE TIME TRAVEL. (Lexile 840)
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.

Lauber, Patricia. PAINTERS OF THE CAVES (Lexiles 860)

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.

Leroe, Ellen. DISASTER! THREE REAL-LIFE STORIES OF SURVIVAL.

(Lexiles 870) 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.

(Lexile 890) 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.

Lyon, Mary LETTERS FROM A SLAVE GIRL: THE STORY OF HARRIET JACOBS (Lexile 880)

The life of Harriet Jacobs is told in the form of letters that she might have written during her slavery in North Carolina and as she prepared to escape to the North in 1842.

Macaulay, David. THE NEW WAY THINGS WORK. (Lexile 1180)

This book provides a fascinating and humorous look at the way things work.

Marrin, Albert. COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE CIVIL WAR. (Lexile 890)

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. (Lexile ?)

A sharecropper's daughter describes her childhood in Texas in the early years of the twentieth century.

Murphy, Jim AN AMERICAN PLAGUE: THE TRUE AND TERRIFYING

STORY OF THE YELLOW FEVER EPIDEMIC OF 1793. (Lexile 1130)

Provides an account of the yellow fever epidemic that swept through Philadelphia in 1793, discussing the chaos that erupted when people began evacuating in droves, leaving the city without government, goods, or services, and examining efforts by physicians.

Murphy, Jim. BLIZZARD: THE STORM THAT CHANGED AMERICA. (Lex. ?)

In March 1888, "The Great White Hurricane" hit the east coast of the U.S. This is the story of that deadly blizzard.

Murphy, Jim. THE BOYS' WAR (Lexile 1060)

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.

Myers, Walter Dean. THE GREATEST: MUHAMMAD ALI. (Non-prose)

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. (Lexile 1150)

The author describes some of the dogs that were special to him during his life.

Pfetzner, Mark, and Jack Galvin. WITHIN REACH: MY EVEREST STORY. (Lexile 970)

In this suspenseful first-person narrative, sixteen-year-old Mark Pfetzner relates his experiences as the youngest climber to attempt Everest.

Shura, Mary Francis. GENTLE ANNIE (Lexile 760)

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

Schyffert, Bea Uusma THE MAN WHO WENT TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE MOON (Lexile 850)

Michael Collins circled the moon while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin

walked on it. The book describes Michael's everyday activities while aboard Apollo 11 as well as background on all three astronauts.

Stanley, Diane. MICHAELANGELO. (Lexile ?)

This is a picture book biography of the Renaissance sculptor, architect, and poet.

Uchida, Yoshiko. INVISIBLE THREAD. (Lexile 1060) 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.