Kingsway Regional Middle School Suggested Summer Reading List

Choice Inspires the Love of Reading

Strong reading skills are essential to many forms of learning. Reading ignites the imagination, builds knowledge of the world, and inspires the love of continued reading. This summer reading list is only a suggested reading list. Students do not have to select books from this list to complete the summer reading assignment. Parents are encouraged to read along with their children! Enjoy!

Fiction
(7th Grade)

1. *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt
   - Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 4-7: Reading Level 4.2
   
   The author of the beloved *One for the Murphys* gives readers an emotionally-charged, uplifting novel that will speak to anyone who has ever thought there was something wrong with him/her because he/she didn't fit in.

   - Interest Level 3-6: Recommended Grade Level 3-5: Reading Level 4.3
   
   The well-known author retells 24 black American folk tales in sure storytelling voice: animal tales, supernatural tales, fanciful and cautionary tales, and slave tales of freedom. All are beautifully readable.

3. *Middle School, the Worst Years of My Life* by James Patterson
   - Interest Level 3-6: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 4.5
   
   When Rafe Kane enters middle school, he teams up with his best friend, "Leo the Silent," to create a game to make school more fun by trying to break every rule in the school's code of conduct. This is the first book in the Middle School Series.

4. *The Fourteenth Goldfish* by Jennifer L. Holm
   - Interest Level 3-6: Recommended Grade Level 5-7: Reading Level 4.5
   
   Ellie's scientist grandfather has discovered a way to reverse aging and consequently has turned into a teenager—which makes for complicated relationships when he moves in with Ellie and her mother, his daughter. This is a recommended especially if you enjoy humor and fantasy.
5. **Ghost** by Jason Reynolds  
**Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 5-9: Reading 4.6**

“Ghost,” a naturally talented runner and troublemaker, is recruited for an elite middle school track team. He must stay on track, literally and figuratively, to reach his full potential. It combines realism and sports. This is the first book in the Track series.

6. **The Angel Experiment** by James Patterson  
**Interest Level: Young Adult: Recommended Grade Level 7 and up: Reading Level 4.6**

After the mutant Erasers abduct the youngest member of their group, the "birdkids," who are the result of genetic experimentation, take off in pursuit and find themselves struggling to understand their own origins and purpose. This book is the first book in the Maximum Ride series.

7. **Night Divided** by Jennifer Nielsen  
**Interest Level 3-6: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 4.7**

With the rise of the Berlin Wall, twelve-year-old Gerta finds her family suddenly divided. She, her mother, and her brother Fritz live on the eastern side, controlled by the Soviets. Her father and middle brother, who had gone west in search of work, cannot return home. Gerta knows it is dangerous to watch the wall, to think forbidden thoughts of freedom, yet she can't help herself. She sees the East German soldiers with their guns trained on their own citizens; she, her family, her neighbors and friends are prisoners in their own city. But one day, while on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Then, when she receives a mysterious drawing, Gerta puts two and two together and concludes that her father wants Gerta and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. However, if they are caught, the consequences will be deadly. No one can be trusted.

8. **Wonder** by R. J. Palacio  
**Interest Level 3-6: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 4.8**

Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school in Manhattan, which entails enduring the taunts and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student. Be sure to check out the companion stories found in the book *Auggie and Me.*
9. *Maybe a Fox* by Kathi Appelt  
   **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 4-7: Reading Level 4.9**

When her sister Sylvie goes missing on a snowy morning and is never seen again, Jules refuses to believe she is gone forever, meanwhile, in the shadow world, a shadow fox is born. If you love fantasy, then read this book.

10. *Fever, 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 6-10: Reading Level 5.0**

August 1793. Fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook is ambitious, adventurous, and sick to death of listening to her mother. Mattie has plans of her own. She wants to turn the Cook Coffeehouse into the finest business in Philadelphia, the capital of the new United States. But the waterfront is abuzz with reports of disease. "Fever" spreads from the docks and creeps toward Mattie's home, threatening everything she holds dear. As the cemeteries fill with fever victims, fear turns to panic, and thousands flee the city. Then tragedy strikes the coffeehouse, and Mattie is trapped in a living nightmare. Suddenly, her struggle to build a better life must give way to something even more important—the fight to stay alive.

11. *Things Not Seen* by Andrew Clements  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 6 and up: Reading Level 5.0**

When fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up and finds himself invisible, he and his parents and his new blind friend Alicia try to find out what caused his condition and how to reverse it. This is a great science fiction read.

    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 5.1**

The orphan Bod, short for Nobody, is taken in by the inhabitants of a graveyard as a child of eighteen months and raised lovingly and carefully to the age of eighteen years by the community of ghosts and otherworldly creatures. This book is mystery, fantasy, and horror all wrapped in one.
13. *The Hammer of Thor* by Rick Riordan  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 6-9: Reading Level 5.1**  
    Thor's hammer is missing again. The thunder god has a disturbing habit of misplacing his weapon—the mightiest force in the Nine Worlds. But this time the hammer isn't just lost—it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase and his friends can't retrieve the hammer quickly, the mortal worlds will be defenseless against an onslaught of giants. This is a recommended read for readers of fantasy, action, and adventure. This is the second book in the Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard series.

14. *Counting by 7's* by Holly Goldberg Sloan  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 5.3**  
    In the tradition of *Out of My Mind*, *Wonder*, and *Mockingbird*, this is an intensely moving middle grade novel about being an outsider, coping with loss, and discovering the true meaning of family.

15. *Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 5.3**  
    Lost in the Black Forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and finds himself entwined in a prophecy, a promise, and a harmonica. Decades later—three children Friedrich in Germany, Mike in Pennsylvania, and Ivy in California find themselves caught up in the same thread of destiny in the darkest days of the twentieth century, struggling to keep their families intact and tied together by the music of the same harmonica.

16. *Ashes* by Laurie Halse Anderson  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 5.4**  
    **Sequel to: Forge** "As the Revolutionary War rages on, Isabel and Curzon are reported as runaways, and the awful Bellingham is determined to track them down. With purpose and faith, Isabel and Curzon march on, fiercely determined to find Isabel's little sister Ruth, who is enslaved in a Southern state."

17. *Better Nate than Ever* by Tim Federle  
    **Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 5-8: Reading Level 5.9**  
    An eighth-grader who dreams of performing in a Broadway musical concocts a plan to run away to New York and audition for the role of Elliot in the musical version of "E.T."
18. *Tesla’s Attic* by Neal Shusterman  
*Interest Level 5-8: Recommended Grade Level 4-6: Reading Level 6.3*

With a plot combining science and the supernatural, four kids are caught up in a dangerous plan concocted by the eccentric inventor Nikola Tesla. This is a book that combines action, adventure, and science fiction. This book is the first book in the Accelerati Trilogy.

19. *Dairy Queen* by Catherine Gilbert Murdock  
*Interest Level: Young Adult: Recommended Grade Level 6-10: Reading Level 5.9*

After spending her summer running the family farm and training the quarterback for her school's rival football team, sixteen-year-old D.J. decides to go out for the sport herself, not anticipating the reactions of those around her. This book is the first in the Dairy Queen series.
Nonfiction

1. *Dogs of War* by Sheila Keenan (Graphic Novel)
   Interest Level 3-6: Reading Level 2.9

*Dogs of War* is a graphic novel that tells the stories of the canine military heroes of World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War. This collection of three fictional stories was inspired by historic battles and real military practice. Each story tells the remarkable adventures of a soldier and his service dog.

2. *Tillie Pierce: Teen EyeWitness to the Battle of Gettysburg* by Tanya Anderson
   Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.1

In July 1863, fifteen-year-old Tillie Pierce found herself trapped, facing one of history's bloodiest battles. Without training, but with courage and compassion, Tillie and other Gettysburg citizens helped save the lives of countless wounded soldiers. In gripping prose, in Tillie's own words, the Civil War's most famous battle comes alive.

3. *The Dolphins of Shark Bay* by Pamela S. Turner
   Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.2

Ride alongside the author Pamela S. Turner and her scientific team and meet a cast of dolphin characters large enough (and charismatic enough) to rival a Shakespearean play—Puck, Piccolo, Flute, and Dodger among them. You will fall in love with this crew, both human and finned, as they seek to answer the question: just why are dolphins so smart?

4. *A Short Walk Around the Pyramids and Through the Walk of Art* by Phillip M. Isaacson
   Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.2

This text is illustrated with full-color photos. Isaacson introduces art in all its forms: painting, sculpture, folk art, crafts, and even cities. He discusses the differences between realism and abstraction, links between tribal art and modern sculpture, the use of color by diverse artists, and why everyday objects can be works of art.
   **Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.2**

   When a terrible drought struck William Kamkwamba's tiny village in Malawi, his family lost all of the season's crops, leaving them with nothing to eat and nothing to sell. William began to explore science books in his village library—looking for a solution. There, he came up with the idea that would change his family's life forever: he could build a windmill. Made out of scrap metal and old bicycle parts, William's windmill brought electricity to his home and helped his family pump the water they needed to farm the land.

   **Interest Level 3-6: Reading Level 6.3**

   Explores how to lead a heroic life—facing challenges with courage, strength of character, and wisdom—much as a hiker uses those qualities on a challenging trail.

   **Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.4**

   On July 17, 1944, a massive explosion rocked the segregated Navy base at Port Chicago, California, killing more than 300 sailors who were at the docks, critically injuring off-duty men in their bunks—and shattering windows up to a mile away. On August 9th, 244 men refused to go back to work until unsafe and unfair conditions at the docks were addressed. When the dust settled, fifty were charged with mutiny, facing decades in jail and even execution.

8. *This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie* by Elizabeth Partridge
   **Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.5**

   From the late 1920s to the 1950s, Guthrie wrote the words to more than three thousand songs, including "This Land Is Your Land," a song many call America's unofficial national anthem. With a remarkable ability to turn any experience into a song almost instantaneously, Woody Guthrie spoke out for people of all colors and races, setting an example for generations of musicians to come. Award-winning author, Elizabeth Partridge has taken the life of this songwriting genius and woven in
his lyrics and other rich materials to create a touching and highly entertaining portrait of a true talent.

*Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.6*

The action begins in October of 1875, as Secret Service agents raid the Fulton, Illinois, workshop of master counterfeiter Ben Boyd. Soon after Boyd is hauled off to prison, members of his counterfeiting ring gather in the back room of a smoky Chicago saloon to discuss how to spring their ringleader. Their plan—grab Lincoln's body from its Springfield tomb, stash it in the sand dunes near Lake Michigan, and demand, as a ransom, the release of Ben Boyd—and $200,000 in cash. From here, the action alternates between the conspirators, the Secret Service agents on their trail, and the undercover agent moving back and forth between the two groups. Along the way readers get glimpses into the inner workings of counterfeiting, grave robbing, detective work, and the early days of the Secret Service. The plot moves toward a wild climax as robbers and lawmen converge at Lincoln's tomb on election night: November 7, 1876.

10. *Courage and Defiance* by Deborah Hopkinson  
*Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.6*

When the Nazis invaded Denmark on Tuesday, April 9, 1940, the people of this tiny country to the north of Germany awoke to a devastating surprise. The government of Denmark surrendered quietly, and the Danes were ordered to go about their daily lives as if nothing had changed. But everything had changed. Award-winning author Deborah Hopkinson traces the stories of the heroic young men and women who would not stand by as their country was occupied by a dangerous enemy. Rather, they fought back. Some were spies, passing tactical information to the British; some were saboteurs, who aimed to hamper and impede Nazi operations in Denmark; and 95% of the Jewish population of Denmark were survivors, rescued by their fellow countrymen—who had the courage and conscience that drove them to act.
11. *Escape!: The Story of the Great Houdini* by Sid Fleischman  
*Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 6.6*

In this fresh, witty biography of the most famous bamboozler since Merlin, Sid Fleischman, a former professional magician, enriches his warm homage with insider information and unmaskings. Did Houdini really pick the jailhouse lock to let a fellow circus performer escape? Were his secrets really buried with him? How did he manage to be born in two cities, in two countries, on two continents at the same instant? Here are the stories of how a knockabout kid named Ehrich Weiss changed himself into the legendary Harry Houdini.

12. *We Were There, Too!: Young People in U.S. History* by Phillip Hoose  
*Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 7.1*

Philip Hoose's own lively, knowledgeable voice provides a rich historical context. This is the first U.S. history book of this scope to focus on the role young people have played in the making of our country. Its compelling stories combine to tell our larger national story.

*Interest Level: 5-8: Reading Level 7.3*

An account of espionage, counter-espionage, codes, and ciphers during the American Revolution.

14. *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy  
*Interest level 5-8: Reading Level 7.4*

Vivid firsthand descriptions by persons who lived through the 1871 Chicago fire are woven into a gripping account of this famous disaster. Murphy also examines the origins of the fire, the errors of judgment that delayed effective response, the organizational problems of the city's firefighters, and the post-fire efforts to rebuild the city. Newspaper lithographs and a few historical photographs convey the magnitude of human suffering and confusion.
15. *Titanic: Voices from the Disaster* by Deborah Hopkinson

**Interest Level 3-6: Reading Level 7.4**

Deborah Hopkinson weaves together the voices and stories of real Titanic survivors and witnesses to the disaster—from the stewardess Violet Jessop to Captain Arthur Rostron of the *Carpathia*, who came to the rescue of the sinking ship. Packed with heart-stopping action, devastating drama, fascinating historical details, loads of archival photographs on almost every page, and quotes from primary sources, this gripping story, which follows the Titanic and its passengers from the ship's celebrated launch at Belfast to her cataclysmic icy end, is sure to thrill and move readers.

16. *Beyond Courage: The Untold Story of Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust* by Doreen Rappaport

**Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 7.4**

In a stirring chronicle, Doreen Rappaport brings to light the courage of countless Jews who organized to sabotage the Nazis and help other Jews during the Holocaust.


**Interest Level 5-8: Reading Level 7.5**

This book offers readers a unique look at the events that led to the Emancipation Proclamation. Filled with little-known facts and fascinating details, it includes excerpts from historical sources, archival images, and new research that debunks myths about the Emancipation Proclamation and its causes. Complete with a timeline, glossary, and bibliography.


**Interest Level 3-6: Reading Level 7.7**

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus and give up her seat to a white man. This refusal to give up her dignity sparked the Montgomery bus boycott, a yearlong struggle, and a major victory in the Civil Rights movement.
19. Popular by Maya Van Wagenen
   Interest Level: Young Adult

   It’s not an unfamiliar story: a girl on the lower end of the popularity scale decides to reinvent herself. But Maya Van Wagenen, tired of being a “social outcast” at her Texas middle school, is far from fictional. The then eighth-grader unearthed a 1950s guide to popularity and underwent an experiment: to follow all the instructions in the book, no matter how outdated, and document the results for a year. It’s a touching—and touchingly honest—memoir, as Maya navigates the pitfalls of the eighth grade and her experiment.

20. Eyes Wide Open: Going Behind the Environmental Headlines by Paul Fleischman
   Interest Level: Young Adult

   Paul Fleischman offers teens an environmental wake-up call and a tool kit for decoding the barrage of conflicting information confronting them.

21. One Shot at Forever: A Small Town, An Unlikely Coach and a Magical Baseball Season by Chris Ballard
   Interest Level: Young Adult

   In this gripping, cinematic narrative, Sports Illustrated writer Chris Ballard tells the story of the team and its coach, Lynn Sweet, a hippie, dreamer, and intellectual who arrived in Macon in 1966, bringing progressive ideas to a town stuck in the Eisenhower era. Beloved by students but not administration, Sweet reluctantly took over the ragtag team, intent on teaching the boys as much about life as baseball.

22. Fourth Down and Inches: Concussions and Football’s Make-or-Break Moment by Carla Killough McClafferty
   Interest Level: Young Adult

   Award-winning author Carla Killough McClafferty takes readers on a bone-crunching journey from football’s origins to the latest research on concussion and traumatic brain injuries in the sport.
23. *Be a Changemaker: How to Start Something that Matters* by Laurie Ann Thompson  
*Interest Level: Young Adult*

Do you wish you could make a difference in your community or even the world? Either way, *Be a Changemaker* will empower you with the confidence and knowledge you need to affect real change. You'll find all the tools you need right here—through engaging youth profiles, step-by-step exercises, and practical tips, you can start making a difference today.

24. *Street Sketchbook: Journeys* by Tristan Manco  
*Interest Level: Young Adult*

Fans of the hit graffiti title *Street Sketchbook* will delight in this new volume dedicated to the journeys both geographical and imaginative of street artists. Twenty-six of the hottest new artists working worldwide today have opened up their sketchbooks to share their impressions as they travel on road trips, trek halfway across the globe, and explore internal landscapes. From widely diverse backgrounds, these cutting-edge artists share one crucial decision: to bypass conventional routes for the creative road less taken, the urban streets and alleyways. From doodles on a bus in Central America to fully realized murals spanning the Israel-Palestine border, *Street Sketchbook: Journeys* is an engrossing travelogue of visual free expression. This is the second book in the Street Sketchbook series.