

# SUMMER READING LIST\*

## Fizz Boom Read ~ Grades 9-12

Suggested summer reading compiled for the Connecticut Department of Education by Linda Williams, Connecticut State Library

### FICTION

#### **We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves**

by *Karen Joy Fowler*

Coming of age in middle America, 18-year-old Rosemary evaluates how her entire youth was defined by the presence and forced removal of an endearing chimpanzee who was secretly regarded as a family member and who Rosemary loved as a sister.

[ALA, Outstanding Books for the College Bound](#)

#### SCIENCE FICTION

#### **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** by

*Douglas Adams*

Seconds before Earth is demolished to make room for a galactic freeway, an earthman is saved by his friend. Together they journey through the galaxy. Lexile: 1000

#### **Parable of the Sower** by *Octavia E. Butler*

In 2025 California, an eighteen-year-old African American woman, suffering from a hereditary trait that causes her to feel others' pain as well as her own, flees northward from her small community and its desperate savages. Lexile: 710

[ALA](#)

#### **Little Brother** by *Cory Doctorow*

After being interrogated for days by the Department of Homeland Security in the aftermath of a major terrorist attack on San Francisco, California, seventeen-year-old Marcus, released into what is now a police state, decides to use his expertise in computer hacking to set things right. Lexile: 900. Ebook can be downloaded for free here: <http://bit.ly/1ILO4vt>

[ALA](#)

#### **Jekel Loves Hyde** by *Beth Fantaskey*

As seventeen-year-old Jill Jekel and classmate Tristen Hyde work together on a chemistry project, hoping to win a scholarship for her and a cure for his curse, they also uncover family secrets and a chemistry of their own.

#### **Flowers for Algernon** by *Daniel Keyes*

Charlie Gordon, born with an unusually low IQ, must face his gradual return to his former state when the

astounding results of an experimental surgery that increased his intelligence prove to be only temporary. Lexile: 910

[ALA](#)

#### **The Knife of Never Letting Go** by *Patrick*

*Ness*

Pursued by power-hungry Prentiss and mad minister Aaron, young Todd and Viola set out across New World searching for answers about his colony's true past and seeking a way to warn the ship bringing hopeful settlers from Old World. Lexile: 860. Sequels: *The Ask* and *The Answer* and *Monsters of Men*.

[ALA, Outstanding Books for the College Bound](#)

#### **A Confusion of Princes** by *Garth Nix*

Battling aliens, space pirates, and competitors, Prince Khemri meets a young woman, named Raine, and learns more than he expected about the hidden workings of a vast, intergalactic Empire, and about himself. Lexile: 1070

[ALA](#)

#### **The Madman's Daughter** by *Megan*

*Shepherd*

Dr. Moreau's daughter, Juliet, travels to her estranged father's island, only to encounter murder, medical horrors, and a love triangle. Lexile: 640

[ALA](#)

#### **Grasshopper Jungle** by *Andrew Smith*

Austin Szerba narrates the end of humanity as he and his best friend Robby accidentally unleash an army of giant, unstoppable bugs and uncover the secrets of a decades-old experiment gone terribly wrong.

#### **Double Helix** by *Nancy Werlin*

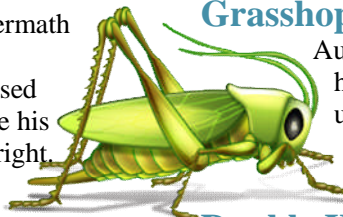
Eighteen-year-old Eli discovers a shocking secret about his life and his family while working for a Nobel Prize-winning scientist whose specialty is genetic engineering. Lexile: 690

[NBA Finalist](#)

#### **The 5th Wave** by *Rick Yancey*

Cassie Sullivan, the survivor of an alien invasion, must rescue her young brother from the enemy with help from a boy who may be one of them. Lexile: 690

[ALA](#)



# SUMMER READING LIST\*

---

## GRAPHIC NOVELS

---

### **How to Fake a Moon Landing: Exposing the Myths of Science Denial** by Darryl Cunningham

Author-illustrator Darryl Cunningham looks at hot-button science topics and presents a fact-based, visual assessment of current thinking and research on eight different issues everybody's arguing about.

[ALA](#)

**Gris Grimly's Frankenstein** by *Gris Grimly*  
Retells, in graphic novel format, Mary Shelley's classic tale of a monster, assembled by a scientist from parts of dead bodies, who develops a mind of his own as he learns to loathe himself and hate his creator.

### **Feynman** by *Jim Ottaviani*

A graphic novel overview of the life and accomplishments of Nobel-winning quantum physicist, adventurer, and musician Richard Feynman. Lexile: 620

[ALA](#)

---

## POETRY

---

### **Steampunk Poe** by *Edgar Allan Poe*

Presents a collection of Poe's short stories and poems, including "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Fall of the House of Usher," and "The Raven," accompanied by steampunk-inspired illustrations.

---

## NONFICTION

---

### **Frankenstein's Cat: Cuddling up to Biotech's Brave New Beasts** by *Emily Anthes*

Examines the advances in cloning technology, including sensor-wearing seals, cyborg beetles, a bionic bulldog, and the world's first cloned cat. Lexile:

[AAAS](#)

### **Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom and Science** by *Marc Aronson*

Sugar has left a bloody trail through human history. Cane—not cotton or tobacco—drove the bloody Atlantic slave trade and took the lives of countless Africans who toiled on vast sugar plantations under cruel overseers. And yet the very popularity of sugar gave abolitionists in England the one tool that could finally end the slave trade. This

book traces the history of sugar from its origins in New Guinea around 7000 B.C. to its use in the 21st century to produce ethanol. Lexile: 1120

[ALA](#), [NCSS](#)

### **Gulp.: Adventures on the Alimentary Canal** by *Mary Roach*

Examines the alimentary canal and the digestive system, answering such questions as, can constipation kill a person, why the stomach doesn't digest itself, how much can be eaten before the stomach bursts, and more. Lexile: .  
Or any book by Mary Roach.

[AAAS](#)

### **The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks** by *Rebecca Skloot*

Examines the experiences of the children and husband of Henrietta Lacks, who, twenty years after her death from cervical cancer in 1951, learned doctors and researchers took cells from her cervix without consent which were used to create the immortal cell line known as the HeLa cell; provides an overview of Henrietta's life; and explores issues of experimentation on African-Americans and bioethics. Lexile: 1140

[ALA](#), [Outstanding Books for the College Bound](#)

### **Death by Black Hole: And Other Cosmic Quandaries** by *Neil deGrasse Tyson*

A collection of essays on the cosmos, written by an American Museum of Natural History astrophysicist, includes "Holy Wars," "Ends of the World," and "Hollywood Nights." Lexile: 1300

### **The World Without Us** by *Alan Weisman*

A study of what would happen to Earth if the human presence was removed examines our legacy for the planet, from the objects that would vanish without human intervention to those that would become long-lasting remnants of humankind.

---

## BIOGRAPHY

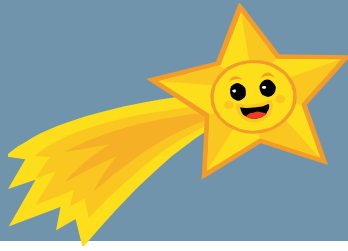
---

### **The Radioactive Boy Scout: The Frightening True Story of a Whiz Kid and His Homemade Nuclear Reactor** by *Ken Silverstein*

This book recreates David Hahn's nuclear quest to build a breeder reactor in his backyard garden shed. Lexile: 1300

[ALA](#), [Outstanding Books for the College Bound](#)

\*Many listed were selected as exemplary by one or more of the following organizations: the *American Library Association* (ALA), the *International Reading Association* (IRA), the *National Council for the Social Studies* (NCSS), the *National Council of Teachers of English* (NCTE), the *National Science Teachers Association* (NSTA), the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* (AAAS) or the *United States Board on Books for Young People* (USBBY).



# SUMMER READING

## Favorites & Classics For Grades 9-12

### **Speak** by Laurie Ralse Anderson

A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school. Lexile: 690

### **Kindred** by Octavia Butler

A young African-American woman is mysteriously transferred back in time leading to an irresistible curiosity about her family's past. Lexile: 580

### **Feed** by M. T. Anderson

In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble. Lexile: 770

### **The Handmaid's Tale** by Margaret Atwood

Set in the near future, America has become a puritanical theocracy and Offred tells her story as a Handmaid under the new social order. Lexile: 750

### **Ender's Game** by Orson Scott Card

Young Ender Wiggin may prove to be the military genius Earth needs to fight a desperate battle against a deadly alien race that will determine the future of the human race. Lexile: 780

### **The House on Mango Street** by Sandra Cisneros

A young girl living in a Hispanic neighborhood in Chicago ponders the advantages and disadvantages of her environment and evaluates her relationships with family and friends. Lexile: 850

### **The Perks of Being a Wallflower** by

*Stephen Chbosky*

A series of letters to an unknown correspondent reveals the coming-of-age trials of a high-schooler named Charlie. Lexile: 720

### **Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close** by

*Jonathan Safran Foer*

Follows nine-year-old Oskar Schell as he encounters a

number of interesting characters in his search for information about his father, who died in the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and tries to find the lock that fits the mysterious key he left behind. Lexile: 940

### **The Fault in Our Stars** by John Green

Sixteen-year-old Hazel, a stage IV thyroid cancer patient, has accepted her terminal diagnosis until a chance meeting with a boy at cancer support group forces her to reexamine her perspective on love, loss, and life. Lexile: 850

### **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime** by Mark Haddon

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother. Lexile: 1180

### **Monster** by Walter Dean Myers

While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken. Lexile: 670

### **Persepolis** by Marjane Satrapi

Contains black-and-white comic strip images in which the author shares the story of her life in Tehran, Iran, where she lived from ages six to fourteen while the country came under control of the Islamic regime. Lexile: 380

### **A Tree Grows in Brooklyn** by Betty Smith

Young Francie Nolan, having inherited both her father's romantic and her mother's practical nature, struggles to survive and thrive growing up in the slums of Brooklyn in the early twentieth century. Lexile: 810

### **Buried Onions** by Gary Soto

When nineteen-year-old Eddie drops out of college, he struggles to find a place for himself as a Mexican American living in a violence-infested neighborhood of Fresno, California. Lexile: 850

---

## SERIES

---

**Weetzie Bat** series by Francesca Lia Block

**The Mortal Instruments** series by Cassandra Clare

**Earthsea** series by Ursula K. Le Guin

**His Dark Materials** series by Philip Pullman

**Shiver** trilogy by Maggie Steifvater

**Daughter of Smoke and Bone** series by Laini Taylor

**Uglies** series by Scott Westerfeld

---