



SUMMER READING LIST*

Get in the Game: READ! ~ Grades 9-12

Suggested fitness/health/nutrition-themed summer reading titles compiled for the Connecticut Department of Education by Linda Williams, Connecticut State Library

FICTION

Call Me by My Name by John Ed Bradley

Growing up in Louisiana in the late 1960s, where segregation and prejudice still thrive, two high school football players, one white, one black, become friends, but some changes are too difficult to accept. | Lexile: 930 | [NCSS](#)

Swim the Fly by Don Calame

Fifteen-year-old Matt and his two best friends Sean and Coop, the least athletic swimmers on the local swim team, find their much anticipated summer vacation bringing them nothing but trouble with unsuccessful schemes to see a live naked girl and with Matt, eager to impress the swim team's "hot" new girl, agreeing to swim the 100-yard butterfly. | Lexile: 620

Ready Player One by Ernest Cline

Immersing himself in a mid-21st-century technological virtual utopia to escape an ugly real world of famine, poverty and disease, Wade Watts joins an increasingly violent effort to solve a series of puzzles by the virtual world's super-wealthy creator, who has promised that the winner will be his heir. | Lexile: 990 | [ALA](#), [Nutmeg Nominee 2016](#)

Leverage by Joshua C. Cohen

High school sophomore Danny excels at gymnastics but is bullied, like the rest of the gymnasts, by members of the football team, until an emotionally and physically scarred new student joins the football team and forms an unlikely friendship with Danny. | Lexile: 870 | [ALA](#), [NCSS](#)

See No Color by Shannon Gibney

Alex has always identified herself as a baseball player, the daughter of a winning coach, but when she realizes that is not enough she begins to come to terms with her adoption and her race. | Lexile: 780

Darius & Twig by Walter Dean Myers

Two best friends, a writer and a runner, deal with bullies, family issues, social pressures, and their quest for success coming out of Harlem. | Lexile: 730 | [ALA](#)

The Distance from Me to You by Marina Gessner

McKenna and her best friend planned for over a year to defer their freshman year of college to hike the Appalachian Trail all the way from Maine to Georgia, so when her friend backs out McKenna embarks alone on a physical and

emotional journey that will change her life forever. | Lexile: 840 | [SLJ](#)

The Art of Fielding by Chad Harbach

A baseball star at a small college near Lake Michigan launches a routine throw that goes disastrously off course and inadvertently changes the lives of five people, including the college president, a gay teammate, and the president's daughter.

Boy21 by Matthew Quick

Finley, an unnaturally quiet boy who is the only white player on his high school's varsity basketball team, lives in a dismal Pennsylvania town that is ruled by the Irish mob, and when his coach asks him to mentor a troubled African American student who has transferred there from an elite private school in California, he finds that they have a lot in common in spite of their apparent differences. | Lexile: 830 | [ALA](#), [Nutmeg Nominee 2015](#)

Winger by Andrew Smith

Two years younger than his classmates at a prestigious boarding school, fourteen-year-old Ryan Dean West grapples with living in the dorm for troublemakers, falling for his female best friend who thinks of him as just a kid, and playing wing on the Varsity rugby team with some of his frightening new dorm-mates. Lexile: 890 | [ALA](#)

The Walls Around Us by Nova Ren Suma

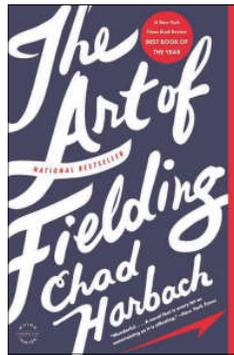
Orianna and Violet are ballet dancers and best friends, but when the ballerinas who have been harassing Violet are murdered, Orianna is accused of the crime and sent to a juvenile detention center where she meets Amber and they experience supernatural events linking the girls together. | Lexile: 860 | [ALA](#)

Big Fat Manifesto by Susan Vaught

Overweight, self-assured, high school senior Jamie Carcaterra writes in the school newspaper about her own attitude to being fat, her boyfriend's bariatric surgery, and her struggles to be taken seriously in a very thin world. | Lexile: 800 | [NCSS](#)

A Time to Dance by Padma Venkatraman

In India, a girl who excels at Bharatanatyam dance refuses to give up after losing a leg in an accident. | Lexile: 720 | [NCSS](#)



SUMMER READING LIST*

GRAPHIC NOVELS

Andre the Giant: Life and Legend by *Box Brown*

Drawing from historical records about Andre's life as well as a wealth of anecdotes from his colleagues in the wrestling world, including Hulk Hogan, and his film co-stars (Billy Crystal, Robin Wright, Mandy Patinkin, etc), Brown has created in *Andre the Giant*, the first substantive biography of one of the twentieth century's most recognizable figures. | [ALA](#)

Tomboy: A Graphic Memoir by *Liz Prince*

Eschewing female stereotypes throughout her early years and failing to gain acceptance on the boys' baseball team, Liz learns to embrace her own views on gender as she comes of age, in an anecdotal graphic novel memoir. | [ALA](#)

21: The Story of Roberto Clemente by *Wilfred Santiago*

A graphic depiction of the life of Roberto Clemente that discusses his childhood, success in baseball, mission off the field, death, and other related topics. | [ALA](#)

NONFICTION

League of Denial: The NFL, Concussions and the Battle for Truth by *Mark Fainaru-Wada*

Draws on interviews, e-mails, and previously undisclosed documents to reveal how the NFL has endeavored to cover up evidence of the connection between football and brain damage for the past two decades. | [ALA](#) ([Outstanding Books for the College Bound](#))

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics by *Daniel James Brown*

Traces the story of an American rowing team from the University of Washington that defeated elite rivals at Hitler's 1936 Berlin Olympics, sharing the experiences of such contributors as their enigmatic coach, a visionary boat builder and a homeless teen rower. | [ALA](#)

Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream by *H. G. Bissinger*

Chronicles a football season in Odessa, Texas, a depressed all-American town that lives and dies with the fortunes of its high school football team. | Lexile: 1220

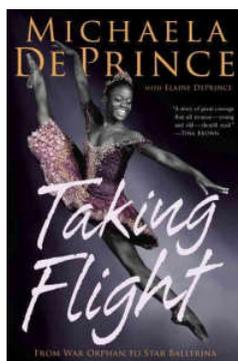
Born to Run: A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen by *Christopher McDougall*

An adventure enthusiast and contributing editor to *Men's Health* traces the running history of the Tarahumara Native Americans, assessing how they have produced athletes capable of long-distance runs without rest or injury and how they compare against professional runners. | [ALA](#)

BIOGRAPHY

Taking Flight: from war orphan to star ballerina by *Michaela DePrince*

The memoir of Michaela DePrince, who lived the first few years of her life in war-torn Sierra Leone until being adopted by an American family. Now seventeen, she is one of the premiere ballerinas in the United States. | Lexile: 940 | [ALA](#), [NCSS](#)

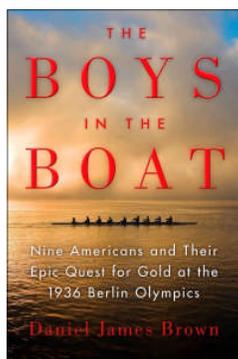


Minecraft: The Unlikely Tale of Markus "Notch" Persson and the Game that Changed Everything (2nd ed.) by *Daniel Goldberg*

The creator of the popular "virtual Lego" game, *Minecraft*, traces his unlikely rise from a disaffected youth who rose from a family marked by drug abuse and conflict to a multi-millionaire and international icon.

Unbroken: An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive by *Laura Hillenbrand*

A biography of Olympic runner and World War II bombardier, Louis Zamperini, who had been rambunctious in childhood before succeeding in track and eventually serving in the military, which led to a trial in which he was forced to find a way to survive in the open ocean after being shot down. | Lexile: 850 | [ALA](#), [NCSS](#)



Find a Way by *Diana Nyad*

A firsthand account of the author's record-breaking swim from Cuba to Florida describes her early achievements and setbacks, the support behind her decision to return to competitive swimming, and her determination to live life at the highest level.

We Should Hang Out Sometime: Embarassingly, A True Story by *Josh Sundquist*

The Paralympic ski racer, YouTube star, and motivational speaker documents his coming of age as an amputee cancer survivor and his efforts to investigate past dates gone wrong to discover why he was still single. | Lexile: 830

*Many listed were selected as exemplary by one or more of the following organizations: the *American Library Association* (ALA), the *International Literacy Association* (ILA), 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

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. | Lexile: 600

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

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

Squashed by Joan Bauer

As sixteen-year-old Ellie pursues her two goals — growing the biggest pumpkin in Iowa and losing twenty pounds herself—she strengthens her relationship with her father and meets a young man with interests similar to her own. | Lexile: 930

Love in the Time of Global Warming

by Francesca Lia Block

After a devastating earthquake destroys the West Coast, causing seventeen-year-old Penelope to lose her home, her parents, and her ten-year-old brother, she navigates a dark world, holding hope and love in her hands and refusing to be defeated. | Lexile: 890

Weetzie Bat by Francesca Lia Block

Follows the wild adventures of Weetzie Bat and her Los Angeles friends, Dirk, Duck, and My-Secret-Agent-Lover-Man. | Lexile: 960

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

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 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

Girl Overboard by Justina Chen

After a snowboarding accident, Syrah Cheng, a billionaire's daughter, must rehabilitate both her knee and her self-esteem while forging relationships with those who accept her for who she is. | Lexile: 960

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

Just Listen by Sara Dessen

Isolated from friends who believe the worst because she has not been truthful with them, sixteen-year-old Annabel finds an ally in classmate Owen, whose honesty and passion for music help her to face and share what really happened at the end-of-the-year party that changed her life. | Lexile: 810

Copper Sun by Sharon M. Draper

Two fifteen-year-old girls — one a slave and the other an indentured servant — escape their Carolina plantation and try to make their way to Fort Moses, Florida, a Spanish colony that gives sanctuary to slaves. | Lexile: 820

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



SUMMER READING

Favorites & Classics

For Grades 9-12

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

Seraphina by *Rachel Hartman*

In a world where dragons and humans coexist in an uneasy truce and dragons can assume human form, Seraphina, whose mother died giving birth to her, grapples with her own identity amid magical secrets and royal scandals, while she struggles to accept and develop her extraordinary musical talents. | Lexile: 760

Born Confused by *Tanuja Desai Hidier*

Seventeen-year-old Dimple, whose family is from India, discovers that she is not Indian enough for the Indians and not American enough for the Americans, as she sees her hypnotically beautiful, manipulative best friend taking possession of both her heritage and the boy she likes. | Lexile: 890

Game by *Walter Dean Myers*

If Harlem high school senior Drew Lawson is going to realize his dream of playing college, then professional, basketball, he will have to improve at being coached and being a team player, especially after a new — white — student threatens to take the scouts' attention away from him. | Lexile: 800

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

Midwinterblood by *Marcus Sedgwick*

Seven linked vignettes unfold on a Scandinavian island inhabited — throughout various time periods — by Vikings, vampires, ghosts, and a curiously powerful plant. | Lexile: 770

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

Marcelo in the Real World by *Francisco X. Stork*

Marcelo Sandoval, a seventeen-year-old boy on the high-functioning end of the autistic spectrum, faces new challenges, including romance and injustice, when he goes to work for his father in the mailroom of a corporate law firm. | Lexile: 700

Jumped by *Rita Williams-Garcia*

The lives of Leticia, Dominique, and Trina are irrevocably intertwined through the course of one day in an urban high school after Leticia overhears Dominique's plans to beat up Trina and must decide whether or not to get involved. | Lexile: 600

How to Save a Life by *Sara Zarr*

Told from their own viewpoints, seventeen-year-old Jill, in grief over the loss of her father, and Mandy, nearly nineteen, are thrown together when Jill's mother agrees to adopt Mandy's unborn child but nothing turns out as they had anticipated. | Lexile: 710

SERIES

Weetzie Bat series by *Francesca Lia Block*

Finishing School series by *Gail Carriger*

The Mortal Instruments series by *Cassandra Clare*

The Hunger Games series by *Suzanne Collins*

The Maze Runner series by *James Dashner*

The Rangers Apprentice series *Flanagan*

Earthsea series by *Ursula K. Le Guin*

Life as We Knew It series by *Susan Beth Pfeffer*

His Dark Materials series by *Philip Pullman*

The Raven Cycle by *Maggie Stiefvater*

Shiver trilogy by *Maggie Stiefvater*

Daughter of Smoke and Bone series by *Laini*
