

# LANDON SCHOOL SUMMER READING 2008

## Grade 6

Dear rising 6th graders –

Summer is a great time to kick back with a book whether you're hanging out at home, at camp, or on a family trip.

We encourage you to read as much as possible during the summer. **You are required to read *I, Dred Scot* by Sheila P. Moses. You also have to choose 3 additional books from the attached summer reading list.**

The books on this list are divided into general categories and the fiction genre is indicated following the annotation where applicable. We suggest that you read books from different categories.

You may listen to audio books, but not exclusively.

List the four books (including *I, Dred Scot*) that you read on the form below and bring it in to Mrs. Sears on the first day of school **with your parent's signature**. You may list additional books you read on the back of the page. You will be entered into a **lottery for fabulous prizes** based on reading the 4 books as well as any additional books.

**Rate the books from 1 to 5 stars, 5 being the best rating.**

Author	Title	Category	Rating
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**Student's Name (printed)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

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## REQUIRED READING

***I, Dred Scott*** by Sheila P. Moses

Dred Scott, born into slavery in Virginia in the late 1700s, had very little to look forward to in life. As an adult, he learned that he had the right to be free under the Missouri Compromise. However, no matter how many times he went before a judge, he was always denied his freedom. This story will help readers understand the experiences of this young slave and the tremendous courage and fierce determination he displayed to become a free man. (Historical Fiction)

## CLASSICS NEW & OLD

***Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl*** by Anne Frank

Anne Frank received a blank diary on her 13th birthday, just weeks before she and her family went into hiding in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam. For two years, she writes about hiding and living with her parents, sister, and several others in a cramped attic. Her observations of the grubby particulars of life during wartime (scant, bad food; shabby, outgrown clothes that can't be replaced; constant fear of discovery) and candid discussion of emotions familiar to every teenager (everyone criticizes me, no one sees my real nature, when will I be loved?). Yet Frank was no ordinary teen: the later entries reveal a sense of compassion and a spiritual depth remarkable in a girl barely 15.

***Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*** retold by Marcia Williams

Step back into the Middle Ages for a boisterous, bawdy storytelling session led by the one and only Chaucer. Nine Canterbury classics, including "The Clerk's Tale," "The Miller's Tale," and "The Wife of Bath's Tale" are retold in a graphic novel format. Chaucer's ribald tales, which often veer into the juvenile gross-out antics of bawdy adults, are toned down a bit for cheeky young readers (though farts still fly), and the tales-within-a-tale structure of the book nicely matches Williams' multiple-level layouts. Enjoy this entertaining introduction to a storytelling classic.

***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*** by Roald Dahl

Candy for life and a tour of Willie Wonka's top-secret chocolate factory is the prize for buying a candy bar containing a Golden Ticket. Here is the exciting, hilarious, and moral story of the five prizewinners. They are, alas, repulsive children, with the exception of Charlie Bucket, a boy whose family is so poor he could only have one candy bar a year. Rich in humor and acutely observant, this story will entertain the most discriminating readers.

***D'Aulaires Book of Greek Myths*** by Ingrid and Edgar D'Aulaire

Spend your summer with the Olympians. In the D'Aulaires' book of myths all of the great gods and goddesses of ancient Greece are depicted in a beautifully illustrated and skillfully told rendition of the classic myths. From petty squabbles to heroic deeds, their actions cover the range of godly--and mortal--personalities. Try *D'Aulaires Book of Norse Myths* too. (Myth)

***Elijah of Buxton*** by Christopher Paul Curtis

Eleven-year-old Elijah is the first child born into freedom in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves. When a former slave steals money from Elijah's friend, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the south, Elijah embarks on a dangerous journey to America in pursuit of the thief. Along the way he discovers firsthand the unimaginable horrors of the life his parents fled—a life from which he'll always be free, if he can find the courage to get back home.

**Holes** by Louis Sachar

*Holes* tells the tale of poor Stanley Yelnats and the curse of his “no-good-pig-stealing great-great grandfather.” Due to a twist of fate, Stanley ends up digging holes at a youth detention center in a hot barren dried up lake in Texas, trying to stay clear of tough kids, poisonous reptiles, and the menacing warden. (Young Adult Fiction/Humor)

**Island of the Blue Dolphin** by Scott O'Dell

Imagine living alone on an island in the Pacific Ocean for 18 years, fighting off a pack of wild dogs, finding your own food, and dealing with loneliness and terror all by yourself. According to history, this is what an Indian girl named Karana experienced in the early 1800's. This is the story of how one girl overcame her hardship through self-reliance, strength, and serenity. It's a book you'll remember long after you've finished reading the last page. (Historical Fiction/Adventure/Survival)

**Johnny Tremain** by Esther Forbes

A story filled with danger and excitement, *Johnny Tremain* tells of the turbulent, passionate times in Boston just before the Revolutionary War. Johnny, a young apprentice silversmith, is caught up in a dramatic involvement with James Otis, John Hancock, and John and Samuel Adams in the exciting currents and undercurrents that were to lead to the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Lexington. (Historical Fiction)

**The Jungle Book** by Rudyard Kipling

This is the classic tale of Mowgli, the lost boy raised by wolves in the jungles of India. Mowgli's days are filled with danger, wonder, and excitement. He learns the ways of the jungle from the wise old bear, Baloo, and the great black panther, Bagheera. He is befriended by the faithful wolf, Gray Brother, and is carried off by the crafty Monkey-People -- only to be rescued by the mighty python, Kaa. And through it all, Mowgli knows that he must someday face his sworn enemy: the ferocious man-hating tiger, Shere Khan.

**The Little Prince** by Antoine de Saint-Exupery (translated by Richard Howard)

The narrator is a downed pilot in the Sahara Desert, frantically trying to repair his wrecked plane. His efforts are interrupted one day by the apparition of a little prince, who asks him to draw a sheep. "In the face of an overpowering mystery, you don't dare disobey," the narrator recalls. The Little Prince describes his journey from planet to planet, each tiny world populated by a single adult. *The Little Prince* was published in 1943, only a year before the author's Lockheed P-38 vanished over the Mediterranean during a reconnaissance mission. More than a half century later, this fable of love and loneliness has lost none of its power. (Recommended for French students)

**My Side of the Mountain** by Jean Craighead George

Young Sam Gribble feels closed in by the city and his large family, so he runs away to the Catskills. He tells the story of his year in the wilderness where he sets up house in a huge hollowed-out tree, with a falcon and a weasel for companions and his wits as his tool for survival. (Adventure Fiction) Trilogy *On the Far Side of the Mountain* and *Frightful's Mountain*. (Survival/ Adventure)

**The People Could Fly: Black American Folktales** by Virginia Hamilton

Many of the stories in this collection were told among slaves as they dreamt of freedom or remembered their lives in Africa. Hamilton focuses on several themes—animal tales, magical and supernatural tales, and tales of freedom—and following each story is a note explaining its history and meaning. (Folktales)

***Phantom Tollbooth*** by Norman Juster

When Milo returns home resigned to the boredom that is his life he finds a gift; an easy to assemble tollbooth. When he drives through it in his toy car, Milo finds wild adventures in lands of Dictionopolis, Digitopolis, and many places in between. He is on a quest to bring back the Princess of Rhyme and Reason. Along the way he finds plenty to appreciate. (Humor/Philosophy)

***Red Badge of Courage*** by Stephen Crane

In the spring of 1863, as he faces battle for the first time at Chancellorsville, Virginia, a young Union soldier matures to manhood and finds peace of mind as he comes to grips with his conflicting emotions about war. (Historical Fiction/War)

***Sees Behind Trees*** by Michael Dorris

This story is about a sight-impaired Native American boy in 15th-century Virginia. Walnut learns to listen carefully and interpret non-visual cues in such a way that he earns his adult name, Sees Behind Trees, and embarks on a great journey as companion to Grey Fire, an elder he much admires. It turns out to be his own adventure as he not only survives alone in snow, but rescues an infant. In recognizing how each individual has his or her own experiences, tests, and lessons, Sees Behind Trees comes to wisdom earlier than most.

***Sounder*** by William H. Armstrong

When the African American sharecropper who raised Sounder from a pup is hauled off to jail for stealing a hog, his family suffers humiliation and a crushing loss. To make matters worse, Sounder is shot and disappears. The eventual return of a tattered and emaciated Sounder doesn't change the fact that the sharecropper's oldest son is forced to take on a man's work to help support the family.

***Tangerine*** by Edward Bloor

Things change for Paul Fisher when his family moves to Tangerine County Florida, where lightning strikes regularly and sink holes swallow trailers. Paul's moves on the soccer field, in the tangerine groves, and away from his cruel football star brother are well-captured in this amusing, but suspenseful novel. (Young Adult/Humor/Sports)

***Treasure Island*** by Robert Louis Stevenson

A mysterious seaman hides at a country inn; cut-throats raid a sleepy English village; suddenly, young Jim Hawkins becomes the owner of a map leading to a lost tropical island and a fortune in stolen gold. Three adventurers--Jim, Squire Trelawney, and Dr. Livesey set out to find the treasure. Enjoy this classic pirate tale. (Adventure)

***Watson's Go to Birmingham: 1963*** by Christopher Paul Curtis

*The Watson's Go to Birmingham* blends fictional account with factual events of the violent summer of 1963. In an attempt to get their son Kenny back on the right track, the Watson's pack up their car in Michigan and drive down to see family in Alabama and into one of the most chilling moments in America's history. If you like Mr. Curtis' style, try *Bud, Not Buddy*, too. (Historical Fiction/Family)

## GENERAL FICTION

### ***Al Capone Does My Shirts*** by Gennifer Choldenko

When his father accepts a position on Alcatraz Island, 12-year-old Moose Flanagan also takes up residence on the island. The year is 1935, Al Capone is in residence and Moose is charged with the care of his unpredictable autistic sister. When Moose meets the warden's attractive but trouble-seeking daughter, Piper he learns about the island and the prisoners, and reluctantly becomes involved in Piper's schemes. (Young Adult Fiction)

### ***The Big Field*** by Mike Lupica

Hutch has always been the star shortstop until the arrival of Darryl "D-Will" Williams. D-Will, a top shortstop prospect from Florida, displaces Hutch in more ways than one. Second base feels like second fiddle, and when he sees his father giving fielding tips to D-Will—the same father who can't be bothered to show up to watch his son play—Hutch feels betrayed. With the summer league championship on the line, just how far is Hutch willing to bend to be a good teammate? (Sports Fiction/Family)

### ***Brain Boy and the Deathmaster*** by Tor Seidler

If you enjoy books with adventure and suspense, *Brainboy and the Deathmaster* is for you. Darryl, a twelve-year-old genius, survives and overcome multiple adversities, including a horrible fire, being orphaned, and then adopted by the software guru Keith Masterly who forces him to work concocting a formula to conquer time. Can he escape before the formula is complete? (Adventure)

### ***The Bridge to America*** by Linda Glaser

Eight-year-old Fivel narrates the story of his family's Atlantic Ocean crossing to reunite with their father in the United States, from its desperate beginning in a shtetl in Poland in 1920 to his stirrings of identity as an American boy. (Historical Fiction)

### ***The Conch Bearer*** by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

In India, a healer invites twelve-year-old Anand to join him on a quest to return a magical conch to its safe and rightful home, high in the Himalayan Mountains. His task is to return the shell to its rightful home many hundreds of miles away. Accompanying him are Nisha, a headstrong but resourceful child of the streets, and a mysterious man of indeterminate age and surprising resources named Abadhyatta. His quest will take him farther from home than he's ever been and will teach him more than he ever imagined. (Fantasy/Adventure)

### ***Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Roderick Rules*** by Jeff Kinney

Greg Heffley tells about his summer vacation and his attempts to steer clear of trouble when he returns to middle school and tries to keep his older brother Roderick from telling everyone about Greg's most humiliating experience of the summer.

### ***Elephant Run*** by Roland Smith

Nick endures servitude, beatings, and more after his British father's plantation in Burma is invaded by the Japanese in 1941, and when his father and others are taken prisoner and Nick is stranded with his friend Mya, they plan a daring escape on elephants, risking their lives to save Nick's father and Mya's brother from a Japanese prisoner of war camp. (Historical Fiction/War)

***Feathers*** by Jacqueline Woodson

Frannie is discovering that change can be as simple as a new student showing up at school. The Jesus Boy, as the class calls him, is faced with being the lone white youth in a black school. He hails from across the highway that unofficially segregates the black and white neighborhoods. The students start grappling with what it means to be different. Should they give the Jesus Boy a chance to settle into the class? Or will they continue relentlessly teasing him?

***Half Moon Investigations*** by Eion Colfer

Twelve-year-old private investigator Fletcher Moon, nicknamed "Half Moon" because of his shortness, must track down a conspiracy or be framed for a crime he did not commit. (Mystery/Adventure)

***Hatchet*** by Gary Paulsen

After a plane crash, thirteen-year-old Brian spends fifty-four days in the wilderness, learning to survive initially with only the aid of a hatchet given him by his mother, and learning also to survive his parents' divorce. (Adventure/Survival)

***Hidden Talents*** by David Lubar

When 13-year-old Martin arrives at an alternative school for misfits and problem students, he falls in with a group of boys with psychic powers and discovers something surprising about himself. (Humor)

***The House with a Clock in its Walls*** by John Bellairs

A boy goes to live with his magician uncle in a mysterious mansion. As he explores the dozens of rooms and secret passages in the weeks before school begins. The adventure turns frightening when Lewis discovers the chilling secret hidden in the walls; a clock which is ticking off the minutes until doomsday. (Fantasy)

***Jade Green*** by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

While living with her uncle in a house haunted by the ghost of a young woman, recently orphaned Judith Sparrow wonders if her one small transgression causes mysterious happenings. (Horror)

***The Last Mission*** by Harry Mazer

This fast moving World War II story follows a 15-year-old Jewish boy from Brooklyn who passes himself off as his older brother to enlist in the Army Air Corp. Jack is sent overseas and gets more action than he bargained for and learns about the reality of war. Anyone who enjoys action, adventure or war stories will enjoy this book. (Historical Fiction)

***Listen*** by Stephanie S. Tolan

During her solitary convalescence from a crippling accident, twelve-year-old Charley finds a wild dog, and the arduous process of training him leads her to explore her feelings about her mother's death two years earlier; a great boy and dog story. (Dog Story)

**Millions** by Frank Cottrell Boyce

After their mother dies, two brothers find a huge amount of money which they must spend quickly before England switches from the pound to the new European currency. They have many ideas but they can't agree on what to do with it. (Humor)

**The Number Devil: A Mathematical Adventure** by Hans Magnus

Robert visits a bizarre magical land of number tricks with the number devil as his host. Starting at one and adding zero and all the rest of the numbers, Robert and the number devil introduce basic concepts of numeracy, from interesting number sequences to exponents to matrices. (Math Fiction)

**Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver** by E.L. Konigsburg

While waiting in heaven for divine judgment to be passed on her second husband, Eleanor of Aquitaine and three of the people who knew her well recall the remarkable events of her life. (Historical Fiction)

**Sing Down the Moon** by Scott O'Dell

A young Navaho girl is captured and enslaved by the Spaniards. An escape attempt fails, but then a kind Spaniard takes pity on some of the slaves and assists them in their bid for freedom. (Historical Fiction)

**Starfall: Phaeton and the Chariot of the Sun** by Michael Cadnum

Phaeton sets off to see if Apollo, the god of the sun, will acknowledge that he is Phaeton's father. The story of his journey and the tragedy that results from the boon that Apollo gives him remains true to the Greek myth. Phaeton is an appealing character, and his desire to prove himself worthy of his heritage is convincingly told. (Mythology)

**Stuck in Neutral** by Terry Trueman

"...Life can be great, even for me. Even for me," thinks Shawn who has cerebral palsy. That is why he panics when he begins to suspect that his father is thinking of killing him. Shawn knows that his father is trying to be kind; he imagines that his son's life is an endless torment. (Young Adult Reality/Handicap)

**Tale of Despereaux** by Kate DiCamillo

The adventures of Despereaux Tilling, a small mouse of unusual talents, the princess that he loves, the servant girl who longs to be a princess and a devious rat determined to bring them all to ruin. (Fantasy)

**Underwater** by Debbie Levy

Gabe travels underwater in his imagination as an escape from his problems getting along with other people--especially kids at school. Gabe's got big dreams and ambitions--he sees himself as the next Jacques Cousteau or Steven Spielberg, or *somebody* famous--but first he needs to figure out how to be himself. (Young Adult)

***The Westing Game*** by Ellen Raskin

*The Westing Game* is an amusing murder mystery full of eclectic characters, one of whom may have murdered the mysterious and reclusive Sam Westing. Mr. Westing ties the distribution of his great estate to winning the game he concocted to determine who murdered him. This book is a Newbery Medal winner and well worth reading. (Mystery)

***The Whipping Boy*** by Sid Fleischman and Peter Sis

This story is about the adventures of the orphan Jemmy, kept in his king's palace to be thrashed for the offenses committed by the royal heir, known as Prince Brat. It is forbidden to punish Brat, whose tricks multiply until Jemmy is tempted to escape the daily round of flogging. But the prince himself runs away and forces the whipping boy to go with him. As they get into and out of trouble on the outside, Jemmy hears that he has been accused of abducting Brat. When the prince arranges for their return to the palace, poor Jemmy fears the worst, but things turn out for the best at the story's satisfying close. (Historical Fantasy)

***Zach's Lie/Jack's Run*** by Roland Smith

In *Zach's Lie*, Jack's life is turned upside down when his family is forced to enter the witness protection program. He begins to adjust to life in rural Elko, NV, but the drug cartel against which his father will testify is determined to track them down. The sequel, *Jack's Run*, Jack and his family have been relocated again, but find it isn't easy to shake the drug lord's wrath. (Young Adult Fiction/Suspense)

## FICTION SERIES

***Alex Rider Series*** by Anthony Horowitz

Fourteen-year old Alex Rider is reluctantly conscripted into Britain's secret service following the untimely death of his only living relative. Time after time Alex faces mortal danger as he seeks to thwart evil doers' attempts to take over the world. The series can be read individually or sequentially. Read any or all: *Point Blank*, *Stormbreaker*, *Skeleton Key*, *Scorpia*, and, his latest, *Ark Angel*. (Adventure)

***Artemis Fowl Series*** by Eoin Colfer

Pit a twelve-year-old criminal mastermind against Holly Short, fairy captain, and you end up with a fantastical and contemporary fairy story. Try the sequels – *Artemis Fowl*, *The Arctic Incident*, *Eternity Code*, and *The Lost Colony* for more exciting adventures. (Fantasy)

***Firestorm, Book One: The Caretaker Trilogy*** by David Klass

Seventeen-year-old Jack's life has always been normal—except that his parents have encouraged him to blend in and not try too hard. But then he learns that he is different, that he has special powers and abilities, and that he is from the future and has been sent back to save the planet. The second book *The Whirlwind* just came out this spring. (Eco-Adventure)

***Jackie & Me Series*** by Dan Gutman

With his ability to travel through time by using baseball cards, Joe goes back to 1947 to meet Jackie Robinson, turning into a black boy in the process. Travel back through any of Gutman's baseball card series, including *Babe and Me*, *Shoeless Joe and Me*, and *Mickey and Me*. (Time Travel/Historical Fiction)

***Land of Silver Apples, Book Two: The Sea of Trolls Series*** by Nancy Farmer

This story continues the saga begun in *The Sea of Trolls*. Set in Britain in 790 A.D., young Jack, a bard-in-training, learns that his little sister, Lucy, so different from the rest of the family, is actually a changeling and his real sister is living with the hobgoblins. Lucy disappears during an exorcism, and Jack descends into the out-of-time Land of the Silver Apples to rescue her and his lost sister. Start with *The Sea of Trolls* if you haven't read it yet. (Fantasy)

***Magyk, Book One: Septimus Heap Series*** by Angie Sage

The seventh son of the seventh son, aptly named Septimus Heap, is stolen the night he is born by a midwife who pronounces him dead. That same night, the baby's father, Silas Heap, comes across a bundle in the snow containing a newborn girl with violet eyes. The Heaps take this helpless newborn into their home, name her Jenna, and raise her as their own. But who is this mysterious baby girl, and what really happened to their beloved son Septimus? Spell casting, Brownies, boggarts, dastardly villains and wizards add lively scenery and action throughout. Sequels include *Flyte* and *Physik*. (Fantasy)

***Mister Monday, Book One: Keys to the Kingdom Series*** by Garth Nix

On the first day of school, Arthur Penhaligon suffers an asthma attack while running cross country and dreams that a mysterious figure hands him a key shaped like the minute hand of a clock. When he wakes up, he still has the key. That's when strange things begin to happen. There are five exciting books in the series so far. (Fantasy)

***The Prophet of Yonwood Series*** by Jeanne DuPrau

In the third installment of the City of Ember series, it's 50 years before the settlement of the city of Ember, and the world is in crisis. War looms on the horizon as 11-year-old Nickie and her aunt travel to the small town of Yonwood, North Carolina. There, one of the town's respected citizens has had a terrible vision of fire and destruction. Her garbled words are taken as prophetic instruction on how to avoid the coming disaster. If only they can be interpreted correctly. . . . (Fantasy)

***Redwall Series*** by Brian Jacques

When the peaceful life of ancient Redwall Abbey is shattered by the arrival of the evil rat Cluny and his villainous hordes, Matthias, a young mouse, determines to find the legendary sword of Martin the Warrior which, he is convinced, will help Redwall's inhabitants destroy the enemy. The *Redwall* series has endless volumes; plenty to keep even avid readers occupied for some time. (Fantasy/Animal)

***Samurai Mysteries*** by Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler

Check out this series, of mystery and intrigue in 18<sup>th</sup> century Japan. Follow 14-year-old Seikei the Hoobler's *Ghost in the Tokaido Inn*, *The Demon in the Teahouse*, *In Darkness*, *Death*, *The Sword that Cut the Burning Grass* and their most recent *A Samurai Never Fears Death*. Follow Seikei in these Sherlock Holmes style mysteries in which Seikei assists the Judge to solve mysteries and bring justice. (Mystery/Hisotrical Fiction)

***Series of Unfortunate Events*** by Lemony Snicket

First the Baudlaire children are orphaned and things get worse from there. This aptly named series will have you wondering what could possibly go wrong next. From *Bad Beginnings* (v. 1) to *Book the Thirteenth: The End: Too Dreadful to Picture*, the Baudlaire endure more than their share of unfortunate events. (Mystery/Suspense)

***Shakespeare Stealer, Book One: The Shakespeare Stealer Series*** by Gary Blackwood

Widge is an orphan with a rare talent for shorthand. His fearsome master demand that he steal Shakespeare's play "Hamlet"--or else. Widge has no choice but to follow orders, so he works his way into the heart of the Globe Theatre, where Shakespeare's players perform. This entertaining novel is rich in period details, colorful characters, villainy, and drama. *Shakespeare Scribe* and *Shakespeare's Spy* are the next books in the series. (Historical Fiction)

***Tunnels*** (Book 1) by Roderick Gordon

Will Burrows has little in common with his strange, dysfunctional family. The only bond he shares with his eccentric father is a passion for archaeological excavation. So, when his dad mysteriously vanishes, Will is compelled to dig up the truth behind his disappearance and unearths the unbelievable: a subterranean society that time forgot. " Will must free his father and may ignite a revolution in the process.

***Wolf Brother, Book One: Chronicles of Ancient Darkness Series*** by Michelle Paver

A giant bear possessed by a demon fatally wounds Torak's father, who makes his son swear that he will find the Mountain of the World Spirit, far from where they have been hunting in the forest. The spirit, his father says, offers the only hope to defeat the bear, which will become invincible if not stopped. So begins Torak's desperate quest, undertaken in the company of an orphaned wolf cub, Torak's guide. (Fantasy Adventure)

## NONFICTION

***The Dangerous Book for Boys*** Conn Iggulden and Hal Iggulden

The bestselling book for every boy from eight to eighty, covering essential boyhood skills such as building tree houses, learning how to fish, finding true north, and even answering the age old question of what is the big deal with girls?

***Down to Earth Guide to Global Warming*** by Laurie David and Cambria Gordon

The causes of global warming are presented in the book, the ways in which it impacts our planet, and how we can work together to stop it.

***For Boys Only: The Biggest, Baddest Book Ever*** by Marc Aronson and HP Newquist

Hey, Boys! Want to have some fun? Maybe learn how to land an airplane in an emergency? Or fight off an alligator? Escape from being tied up? How about taking a ride on one of America's scariest roller coasters? Learn how to make fake blood or turn a real bone into a pretzel. You'll find all this-and much more!

***Go Figure: A Totally Cool Book About Numbers*** by Johnny Ball

If you want to know how to count to one hundred in Egyptian hieroglyphics, how many grains of sand would fill the universe, and what the newspaper would look like if numbers did not exist, this is the book to read. Just as the title infers, the author has written a book entirely about math, but managed to make it fun and interesting. *Recommended for Math enthusiasts*

***How Everything Works*** by Louis A. Bloomfield

Examining everything from roller coasters to radio, knuckleballs to nuclear weapons, *How Everything Works* reveals the answers to such questions as why the sky is blue, why metal is a problem in microwave ovens, how MRIs see inside you, and why some clothes require dry cleaning.

***Lacrosse: National Game of the Iroquois*** by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith

The author presents both the history and technique of one of the most popular interscholastic sports in the area. (LAX)

***Material World: a Global Family*** by Peter Menzel, Charles C. Mann, and Paul Kennedy

This book provides a fascinating look at the material possessions of families throughout the world. These families represent the "average" for their countries and have agreed to have the contents of their houses moved outside in order to create visible representations of their relative standards of living. The dirt house and few possessions of Mali residents contrast with the 4 cars, 45-foot long sofa, and 12+ oriental carpets lined up outside the luxury home of a family from Kuwait. It includes interesting comparisons of things such as televisions, meals, and toilets.

***Perilous Journey of the Donner Party*** by Martin Calabro

The Donner Party's ill-fated wagon train faced horrific circumstances on its way to California. This book contains some graphic depictions of this tragic stories of pride and misdirection that lead eighty-one people to become lost, and then trapped by snow in the Sierra Nevadas with so little food and water that they resorted to severe methods of survival.

***Political Parties, Interest Groups, and the Media*** by Geoffrey Horn

This book describes the two major U.S. political parties, third parties, how lobbyists influence the governmental process, and the importance of money. Special sections focus on the role of the media -- from the influential images of political cartoonists to the coverage in newspapers and magazines and on radio, TV, and the Internet -- on politics and government in the United States.

***Shark Life: True Stories about Sharks and the Sea*** by Peter Benchley

Master storyteller Peter Benchley combines high adventure with practical information in *Shark Life*, a book that is at once a thriller and a valuable guide to being safe in, on, under, and around the sea. The bestselling author of *Jaws*, *The Deep*, and other works draws on more than three decades of experience to share information about sharks and other marine animals.

***Slaves on a Southern Plantation*** by Debbie Levy

This book discusses the daily life of slaves on southern plantations including home life, family, work, and treatment by slave owners and society.

***Spying: The Secret History of History*** by Denis Collins

This book from the new International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. allows you to step into the secret history of history--and learn what it is really like to live undercover.

## MEMOIR/BIOGRAPHY

### ***Alexander the Great Rocks the World*** by Vicky Alvear Shecter

Because of the frequent use of the word *dude*, this could pass as a biography of Tony Hawk. Yet tossing contemporary slang into Alexander the Great's story doesn't seem out of place; slang, after all, is the language of youth, and Alexander astonished the world as a very young man, making most of his conquests before he turned 30. Despite the light tone, Shecter manages to impart the familiar information about Alexander while mixing in some lesser-known facts (for example, Alexander's famous steed, Bucephalus, was probably only slightly larger than a pony).

### ***Escape: The Story of the Great Houdini*** by Sid Fleischman

Fleischman adopts a tone somewhere between vaudeville announcer and carnival barker, luring readers to the drama of Houdini's escapades and adventures with sure and energetic pacing. A magician himself, Fleischman does not disappear from the narrative but offers personal comments and conjures up verbal wordplay.

### ***Facing the Lion*** by Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton

*Facing the Lion* is the extraordinary memoir of Lekuton's nomadic boyhood in Kenya. Lekuton grew up a Maasai in Africa, herding cows and playing in trees before entering a missionary boarding school, attending college in the U.S. Lekuton taught at the Langley School in Virginia, and is now a member of Parliament in the Kenya National Assembly.

### ***Miracle in the Andes: 72 Days on the Mountain and the Long Trek Home*** by Nando Parrado

Nando Parrado was unconscious for three days before he woke to discover that the plane carrying his rugby team, as well as their family members and supporters, to an exhibition game in Chile had crashed deep in the Andes. He soon learned that his own mother and sister were dead. Those who remained no supplies and no means of summoning help. They struggled to endure freezing temperatures, deadly avalanches, and then the devastating news that the search for them had been called off. An astonishing account of survival and hope.

### ***Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution*** by Ji-Li Jiang

Ji-Li reveals her gradual disillusionment with what she had been taught to believe about the Chinese communist government. A highly successful student, Ji-Li's life begins to unravel during the Cultural Revolution when her family wants her to turn down a chance to be trained by the government as a gymnast. *A good choice for students studying Chinese.*

### ***Remarkable Journeys: The Story of Jules Verne*** by William Schoell

This entertaining biography follows the life of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Frenchman whose love of literature, science and adventure led him to create insightful exciting and innovative science fiction books such as *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. His real life adventures are almost as amazing as his invented ones. As a boy he traded places with the cabin boy on a ship bound for the West Indies and made it to the first stop before his father caught up with him. *This is a good choice for students studying French.*

## POETRY

### ***Blue Lipstick: Concrete Poems*** by John Grandits

A 15-year-old girl named Jessie voices typical and not so typical teenage concerns in this unique, hilarious collection of poems. Her musings about playing volleyball and cello, dealing with her annoying younger brother and writing poetry to cat are never boring or predictable.

### ***Committed to Memory: 100 Best Poems to Memorize*** by John Hollander

This is a selection of 100 poems ranging from Blake and Hughes, Bishop and Thomas, to Yeats and Hayden. These are classics that lend themselves to memorization, being short; often in form, or at least metrical; always rhythmic; and delightful.

### ***A Fury of Motion: Poetry for Boys*** by Charles Chigna

While the first ten poems are about sports, the remaining thirty-plus cover a variety of topics, including a haircut, a firefly, different seasons, playground showdown, ants, eternity, family, death, and dreams. There is a good balance of funny and serious, rhyming and free verse. The poems are targeted at teens, but are appropriate for younger children as well.

### ***The Same Sky*** by Naomi Shihab Nye

An award-winning multicultural compilation of poetry introduces more than 125 poems from 68 countries around the world, many translated into English for the first time, and offers glimpses of similarities across people despite cultural differences.

### ***The Trouble with Poetry and Other Poems*** by Billy Collins

Using simple, understandable language, Collins captures ordinary life—its pleasure, its discontents, its moments of sadness and of joy.

### ***You Come Too: Favorite Poems for Young Readers*** by Robert Frost

This collection of Robert Frost poems was not originally written for children, as they are appealing to a wide age range. The collection includes old favorites like, "Fire and Ice," "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Birches," plus some lesser known works. Most of the poems reflect Frost's deep feelings for nature.