West Sound Academy
2016 Summer Reading Choices - Grades 6 and 7

Over the summer rising 6th and 7th graders are required to read two books from this list.


Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Woodson's poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 4-7.

**The Cat at the Wall**, by Deborah Ellis, 2014, 152 p. Fantasy; War stories. KRL [BL] PTPL

When normal American middle-school student Clare dies and comes back as a cat in the middle of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, she wonders if she should even try to do what she can to help since, after all, she is just a cat. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5 Up.

**The Crossover**, by Kwame Alexander, 2014, 237 p. African American fiction; First person narratives; Novels in verse; Realistic fiction; Sports fiction. KRL [BL] PTPL

Fourteen-year-old twin basketball stars Josh and Jordan Bell wrestle with highs and lows on and off the court as their father, a former professional basketball player, ignores his declining health. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse. BL: Gr 6-12; SLJ: Gr 6-10.

**Echo**, by Pam Muñoz Ryan, 2015, 585 p. Fantasy fiction; Historical fiction. KRL [BL]

Lost in the Black Forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and finds himself entwined in a prophecy, a promise, and a harmonica--and 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. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.


Orphan Jax Aubrey doesn't expect much on his thirteenth birthday, but when he discovers there's an extra day squeezed between Wednesday and Thursday whose origins are rooted in Arthurian legend, it's clear his life will never be the same. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 5-7.

**Fish in a Tree**, by Lynda Mullaly Hunt, 2015, 276 p. Realistic fiction. KRL [BL] PTPL

"Everybody is smart in different ways. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its life believing it is stupid." Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the troublemaker. BL: Gr 4-6; SLJ: Gr 4-7.
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*Found*, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, 2008, 314 p. Science fiction. (*The Missing*, Book 1) KRL[1][1][1][1] PTPL[1][1][1][1]

One night a plane appeared out of nowhere, the only passengers aboard: thirty-six babies. As soon as they were taken off the plane, it vanished. Now, thirteen years later, two of those children are receiving sinister messages, and they begin to investigate their past. Their quest to discover where they really came from leads them to a conspiracy that reaches from the far past to the distant future—and will take them hurtling through time. SLJ: Gr 4-8. Or, read one of the other books in the series: *Sent*, 2009 (Book 2); *Sabotaged*, 2010 (Book 3); *Torn*, 2011 (Book 4); *Caught*, 2012 (Book 5); *Risked*, 2013 (Book 6); *Revealed*, 2014 (Book 7); or *Redeemed*, 2015 Book 8).

*The Fourteenth Goldfish*, by Jennifer Holm, 2014, 201 p. First person narratives; Humor; Science fiction. KRL[1][1][1][1] PTPL[1][1][1][1]

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. BL: Gr 4-6; SLJ: Gr 5-7.

*A Girl Named Disaster*, by Nancy Farmer, 1996, 309 p. Adventure stories; Survival stories. KRL[1][1][1][1] PTPL[1][1][1][1]

Eleven-year-old Nhamo lives in a traditional village in Mozambique, where she doesn't quite fit in. When her family tries to force her into marrying a cruel man, she runs away to Zimbabwe, hoping to find the father she's never met. But what should have been a short boat trip across the border turns into a dangerous year-long adventure, and Nhamo must summon her innermost courage to ensure her survival. BL: Gr 6-10; SLJ: Gr 6-9.

*Go Big or Go Home*, by Will Hobbs, 2008, 185 p. Adventure stories; First person narratives; Science fiction. KRL[1][1][1][1] PTPL[1][1][1][1]

Brady Steele's love for all things extreme is given a boost when a meteorite crashes through the roof of his house in the Black Hills of South Dakota. During a wild week of extreme bicycling, fishing, and caving with his cousin Quinn, Brady discovers he's able to do strange and wonderful feats that shouldn't be possible. At the same time, he's developing some frightening symptoms. Could he be infected with long-dormant microbes from space? BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

*The Golden Dream of Carlo Chuchio*, by Lloyd Alexander, 2007, 306 p. Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction. KRL[1][1][1][1] PTPL[1][1][1][1]

Naive and bumbling Carlo, his shady camel-puller Baksheesh, and Shira, a girl determined to return home, follow a treasure map through the deserts and cities of the infamous Golden Road, as mysterious strangers try in vain to point them toward real treasures. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-9.

In 1943, eleven-year-old Dewey Kerrigan lives with her scientist father in Los Alamos, New Mexico, as he works on a top-secret government program - the Manhattan Project. Dewey befriends Suze, a classmate and aspiring artist, and eventually the two girls must learn to put their differences aside during this life-changing time for many in the United States.  BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 5-8.


When bad-tempered teenager Dylan Barstow is caught joyriding in a stolen car he is sent to his ex-Marine uncle for the summer, but soon they are on the way to Papua New Guinea in search of a World War II fighter plane - where Dylan discovers that defiance is not a survival skill when you are lost in a jungle.  BL: Gr 3-6; SLJ: Gr 5-8.


When Ted and Kat's cousin Salim disappears from the London Eye Ferris wheel, the two siblings must work together--Ted with his brain that is "wired differently" and impatient Kat--to try to solve the mystery of what happened to Salim.  BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

**Nightbird**, by Alice Hoffman, 2015, 199 p. Fantasy Fiction.  KRL PTPL

Twig, aged twelve, is practically ignored by classmates and other residents of Sidwell, Massachusetts, but gets along fine with just her mother and brother, whose presence must be kept secret, until descendants of the witch who cursed her family move in next door and want to be her friends.  BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 4-6.


Shares the inspirational story of a youth soccer team comprised of refugees from around the world who, under the guidance of a formidable female coach, helped to transform their Georgia community.  A young adult adaptation of Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference, by Warren St. John.  BL: Gr 6-10; SLJ: Gr 7 Up.

**The Red Pyramid**, by Rick Riordan, 2010, 516 p. Fantasy fiction; First person narratives; Multiple perspectives; Mythological fiction.  (The Kane Chronicles, Book 1)  KRL PTPL

Brilliant Egyptologist Dr. Julius Kane accidentally unleashes the Egyptian god Set, who banishes the doctor to oblivion and forces his two children to embark on a dangerous journey, bringing them closer to the truth about their family and its links to a secret order that has existed since the time of the pharaohs.  BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 4-9.  Or, read one of the other books in the series:  The Throne of Fire, 2011 (Book 2);  The Serpent's Shadow, 2012 (Book 3).

Twelve-year-old twins Katie and David Bowen evade foreign militants and make their way from Washington, D.C. to their uncle's Vermont home, hoping he can help rescue their parents, who were kidnapped because of their secret invention, Rover. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

The Unwanteds, by Lisa McMann, 2011, 390 p. Fantasy fiction. (The Unwanteds, Book 1)  KRL PTPL

In a society that purges thirteen-year-olds who are creative, identical twins Aaron and Alex are separated, one to attend University while the other, supposedly Eliminated, finds himself in a wondrous place where youths hone their abilities and learn magic. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 4-7. Or, read one of the other books in the series: Island of Silence, 2012 (Book 2); Island of Fire, 2013 (Book 3); Island of Legends, 2014 (Book 4); Island of Shipwrecks, 2015 (Book 5); Island of Graves, 2015 (Book 6); Island of Dragons, 2016 (Book 7).

The War That Saved My Life, by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley, 2015, 316 p. Adventure fiction; First person narratives; Historical fiction. KRL PTPL

Nine-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is evacuated from London to the English countryside during World War II, Ada doesn't waste a minute--she sneaks out to join him. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in --and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 4-6.