West Sound Academy
2019 Summer Reading Choices List - Grade 8

Over the summer rising 8th graders are required to read TWO books from this list. Plan to briefly summarize your chosen books during the first week of school.

**Ashfall**, by Mike Mullin, 2011, 466 p. Science fiction. KRL PTPL

After the eruption of the Yellowstone super volcano destroys his city and its surroundings, fifteen-year-old Alex must journey from Cedar Falls, Iowa, to Illinois to find his parents and sister, trying to survive in a transformed landscape and a new society in which all the old rules of living have vanished. BL: Gr 8-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


This dramatic introduction to the international competition to create the first atomic bomb recounts the scientific discoveries that enabled atom splitting, the military intelligence operations that occurred in rival countries and the work of brilliant scientists hidden at Los Alamos. BL: Gr 7-10; SLJ: Gr 5 Up.


Draws on sensationalized, period newspaper articles to recreate the events of the infamous Borden murders and the trial and acquittal of Lizzie Borden, sorting out fact from fiction to explore Lizzie's story and consider what probably happened. BL: Gr 7-10; SLJ: Gr 7 Up.

**Bruiser**, by Neal Shusterman, 2010, 328 p. Supernatural fiction; Science fiction. KRL PTPL

Sixteen-year-old twins Tennyson and Bronte Sternberger aren't the closest of siblings, but Tennyson is concerned when his sister starts dating Brewster "Bruiser" Rawlins, an antisocial delinquent from a dubious family. But as the Sternbergers grow closer to Bruiser, they discover his secret: he takes on the pain and injuries of those he cares about, healing them at his own expense, whether he wants to or not. BL: Gr 8-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


This is the story of two fatherless boys from Baltimore, both named Wes Moore. One is in prison, serving a life sentence for murder. The other is a Rhodes scholar, an army veteran, and the author of the best-selling book, *The Other Wes Moore*. In this adaptation for younger readers, the author contrasts events from his life with those of his fatherless friend to explore the issues that separate the outcomes of success and failure. BL: Gr 7-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.

**Dreamland Burning**, by Jennifer Latham, 2017, 371 p. African American fiction; Alternating points of view; Historical fiction; Mysteries. KRL PTPL

When Rowan finds a skeleton on her family's property, investigating the brutal, century-old murder leads to painful discoveries about the past. Alternating chapters tell the story of William, another teen grappling with the racial firestorm leading up to the 1921 Tulsa race riot, providing some clues to the mystery. BL: Gr 8-11; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.
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*Endangered*, by Eliot Schrefer, 2012, 264 p. (*Ape Quartet*, Book 1.) Adventure stories; Ecofiction; First person narratives. KRL PTPL

Sophie is not happy to be back in the Congo for the summer, but when she rescues an abused baby bonobo she becomes more involved in her mother’s sanctuary--and when fighting breaks out and the sanctuary is attacked, it is up to Sophie to rescue the apes and somehow survive in the jungle. BL: Gr 8-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up. Or, read the sequels: *Threatened*, Book 2; *Rescued*, Book 3; *Orphaned*, Book 4.)


In a world of hyper-advanced technology, cyber terrorism and extreme gaming, Michael, a talented young hacker, is enlisted by the government to stop a violent fellow hacker who is trapping hostages in nightmarish, brain-damaging virtual reality environments. BL: Gr 7-10; SLJ: Gr 8-Up. Or, read the sequels: *The Rule of Thoughts*, Book 2; *The Game of Lives*, Book 3.)

*The Grimm Legacy*, by Polly Shulman, 2019, 387 p. Fairy tale and folklore-inspired fiction; Fantasy fiction. KRL PTPL

After high school student Elizabeth, working as a page, gains access to the Grimm Collection of magical objects, she and the other pages are drawn into a series of frightening adventures involving mythical creatures and stolen goods. BL: Gr 6-9; SLJ: Gr 6-9.

*The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas, 2017, 444 p. African American fiction; Realistic fiction. KRL PTPL

After witnessing her friend’s death at the hands of a police officer, Starr Carter’s life is complicated when the police and a local drug lord try to intimidate her in an effort to learn what happened the night Kahlil died. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


In a terrifying, futuristic United States where Muslim-Americans are forced into internment camps, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin must lead a revolution against complicit silence. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


South American journalist Paul Faustino begins his interview with World Cup Soccer star El Gato and learns a fantastic story of a young, lonely boy growing up in the middle of a rain forest who wandered upon a mysterious soccer field and an apparition that appeared to him daily -- a seamless blend of magic realism and exhilarating soccer action. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


When Malcolm finds a secret message inquiring about a dangerous substance called Dust, he’s embroiled in a tale of intrigue featuring enforcement agents from the Magisterium, a woman with an evil monkey daemon, and a baby named Lyra. BL: Gr 7-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.

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The Librarian of Auschwitz, by Antonio Iturbe, 2017, 423 p. Historical fiction. KRL PTPL

Follows the true story of Dita Kraus, a fourteen-year-old girl from Prague who, after being sent to Auschwitz, is chosen to protect the eight volumes prisoners have smuggled past the guards. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.

The List, by Patricia Forde, 2017, 353 p. Dystopian fiction; Science fiction. KRL PTPL

Letta, charged with collecting and saving words, uncovers a sinister plan to suppress language, robbing the people of Ark of the power of speech, and realizes she must also save the culture, itself. BL: Gr 6-9; SLJ: Gr 7-10.

Long Way Down, by Jason Reynolds, 2017, 306 p. African American fiction; Ghost stories; Mysteries; Novels in verse. KRL PTPL

As Will sets out to avenge his brother Shawn's fatal shooting, seven ghosts who knew Shawn board the elevator and reveal truths Will needs to know. Will contemplates over the course of 60 psychologically suspenseful seconds whether or not he is going to murder the person who killed his brother. BL: Gr 7-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


Witnessing a series of sexist incidents at her high school, an exasperated teen takes a page from her former Riot Grrrl mom's past and creates an anonymous feminist zine (magazine) that triggers a revolution in her small-town Texas high school. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.

One of Us is Lying, by Karen M. McManus, 2017, 360 p. Mysteries; Thrillers. KRL PTPL

Pretty Little Liars meets The Breakfast Club. When one of five students in detention is found dead, his high-profile classmates—including a brainy intellectual, a popular beauty, a drug dealer on probation and an all-star athlete—are investigated and revealed to be the subjects of the victim's latest gossip postings. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


A tribute to the heroic service of 101 U.S. Army nurses trapped in the Philippines by the attack on Pearl Harbor describes the harrowing conditions under which they treated wounded soldiers before they were captured and forced to endure starvation and disease for three years. BL: Gr 7-10; SLJ: Gr 7 Up.

The Reader, by Traci Chee, 2016, 442 p. (Sea of Ink and Gold, Book 1) Action & adventure; Fantasy fiction. KRL

Set in a world where reading is unheard-of, Sefia makes use of a mysterious object to track down who kidnapped her aunt Nin and what really happened the night her father was murdered. BL: Gr 8-11; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.
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Forced to become trained killers in a disease-free world where people can only die if eliminated by professional assassins, teens Citra and Rowan reluctantly train under a master reaper who informs them that the one who successfully kills the other will become his apprentice. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up. Or, read the sequels: Thunderhead, 2018 (Book 2); The Toll, 2019 (Book 3).

Shadow of the Fox, by Julie Kagawa, 2018, 461 p. (Shadow of the Fox, Book 1) Fantasy fiction; Japanese fiction. KRL

The first book in a fantasy series inspired by Japanese legends and mythology follows the adventures of a secret shape shifter who escapes an attack on her temple with a piece of an ancient scroll before meeting a samurai who would kill her for it. BL: Gr 8-11; SLJ: Gr 9 Up. Or, read the sequel, Soul of the Sword, 2019 (Book 2).

Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda, by Becky Albertalli, 2015, 303 p. Books to movies; Coming-of-age stories; LGBTQIA fiction; Realistic fiction. KRL PTPL

When an email falls into the wrong hands, sixteen-year-old, not-so-openly gay Simon is blackmailed into playing wingman for a classmate or risk having his sexual identity revealed and the privacy of the boy he's been emailing compromised. BL: Gr 8-11; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.


Autobiography of a bright, hard-working young girl’s struggle to overcome everyday problems of making the cheer squad while keeping the mean girls at a distance as she fears her legal status will be discovered and her family destroyed. BL: Gr 8-11; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.

Stupid Fast: The Summer I Went from a Joke to a Jock, by Geoff Herbach, 2011, 311 p. (Felton Reinstein trilogy, Book 1) First person narratives; Realistic fiction. KRL PTPL

Growing suddenly very tall in his sophomore year of high school, former small kid Felton Reinstein discovers that he has become a very fast runner but finds his athletic ambitions compromised by his mother’s depression, his annoying younger brother, a first romance and a shocking secret from his past. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 7-10. Or, read Nothing Special, 2012 (Book 2); I'm With Stupid, 2013 (Book 3).

To All the Boys I've Loved Before, by Jenny Han, 2014, 355 p. (To All The Boys I've Loved Before, Book 1) Books to movies; Contemporary romances; Teen chick lit. KRL PTPL

Keeping private love letters written to five secret crushes she has had, Lara Jean Song finds her personal life going from imaginary to out of control when the letters are unexpectedly mailed. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 7-10. Or, read P.S. I still love you, 2015 (Book 2); Always and forever, Lara Jean, 2017 (Book 3).

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The Trouble in Me, by Jack Gantos, 2015, 208 p. Autobiographical fiction; Humorous stories. KRL PTPL

An autobiographical novel that captures a pivotal time in the life of 14-year-old Jack Gantos opens when Jack and his family move to Fort Lauderdale, where young Jack becomes mesmerized by a rebellious neighbor who has just served time in juvie for car theft, a fixation that causes Jack to embark on a dangerous course that leads to his imprisonment as described in his memoir Hole in My Life. BL: Gr 7-10; SLJ: Gr 7-10. Or, read Hole in My Life, 2002.

Unbroken: An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive, by Laura Hillenbrand, 2014, 307 p. (The Young Adult Adaptation.) Biographies; Books to movies; Narrative nonfiction for teens. KRL PTPL

This young adult edition of Hillenbrand's New York Times best-seller documents the inspirational true story of how Louis Zamperini, a juvenile delinquent-turned-Olympic athlete and World War II pilot, crashed into the ocean and survived for weeks on a life raft only to become a prisoner of war. Includes more than 100 photographs and an exclusive interview with Louis Zamperini. BL: Gr 8-12; SLJ: Gr 9 Up.


Presents the true story of how Jim Thorpe and Pop Warner created the legendary Carlisle Indians football team, one of the most winning teams in American football history. BL: Gr 6-9; SLJ: Gr 6 Up.

Warcross, by Marie Lu, 2017, 353 p. (Warcross, Book 1) Science fiction; STEM fiction. KRL PTPL

After hacking into the Warcross Championships' opening game to track illegal betting, teen hacker and competitive bounty hunter Emika Chen is asked by the game's creator to go undercover to investigate a security problem, and she uncovers a sinister plot. BL: Gr 9-12; SLJ: Gr 8 Up.

You Bring the Distant Near, by Mitali Perkins, 2017, 303 p. Family sagas; Historical fiction; Multiple perspectives. KRL PTPL

Told in alternating teen voices across three generations, an exploration of sisterhood, first loves, friendship and the inheritance of culture traces a family that is shaped by Indian-American identity, a forbidden biracial love affair and social activism. BL: Gr 7-11; SLJ: Gr 9 Up.