

Summer Reading 2022



June 2022

Dear Families,

Reading for enjoyment during the summer is one of life's little pleasures for most of us. Our wish for your children is that they too look forward to reading those books that they didn't have time for during the school year. All students entering sixth, seventh, and eighth grade are expected to read **at least three books** over the summer. Although we recommend students use sticky notes or take notes to engage more deeply with their reading, there is no specific assignment to respond to the books.

While curating our lists, we try to choose books that are of high interest to students. The books also vary widely by reading level. If you feel that a book is not at an appropriate level, please help your child choose something else. You may want to read the books alongside your child so you can discuss them together. Some students may want to pair up with friends to read the same book together, too.

The following list is organized by genre. Each list includes a brief synopsis of the book, and some include links to book trailers or short video reviews.

You can check the [Dobbs Ferry Public Library](#) catalog to see if a book is available through the public library system. Students can also see if books are available online through [Sora](#).

Another option for children to continue learning over the summer is through the [Middle School Choice Board](#). The choice board is essentially a grid with a range of activities that gives students the opportunity to choose what they would like to learn and how they would like to show their learning. The board represents content and strategies from the whole school year, and is designed to be self-paced.

Happy reading!

Best wishes,

Ellen Elsen
Library Media Specialist

Michelle Yang-Kaczmarek
K-8 Literacy Coordinator

The Language and Literature Department at DFMS (Claudia Ducic, Danielle Egan, Ed Feller, Melissa Gretczko, Rachael Lief, Mike Pagano, Jill Rosenblum, and Denise Rivera)

Dobbs Ferry Middle School
Suggested Summer Reading for Eighth Grade
Summer 2022

Students are expected to read any three books this summer, although we hope you will choose to read all summer. Books may be chosen from the suggestions below, but you are not limited to this list. You do not need to write a response to what you have read over the summer, but there will be an assignment when you return to school in September. We do recommend that you use sticky notes or jot down notes in a response notebook as a way to record your thinking as you read.

Short Story Collection

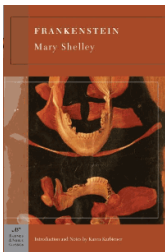


Flying Lessons & Other Stories, edited by Ellen Oh
From basketball dreams and family fiascos to first crushes and new neighborhoods, this anthology, written by award-winning children's authors, celebrates the uniqueness and universality in all of us. Features stories by Kwame Alexander, Soman Chainani, Matt de la Peña, Grace Lin, Walter Dean Myers, Jacqueline Woodson, and more. ★4 starred reviews

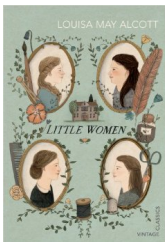


Once Upon an Eid: Stories of Hope and Joy by 15 Muslim Voices, edited by S.K. Ali and Aisha Saeed
This collection showcases the most brilliant Muslim voices writing today, all about the most joyful holiday of the year: Eid! ★5 starred reviews

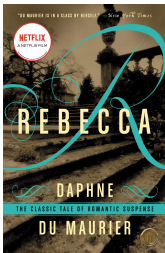
Classics



Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus by Mary Shelley
Victor Frankenstein discovers the secret of creating life and fashions an eight-foot monster, only to bring danger and destruction to the lives of those he loves.

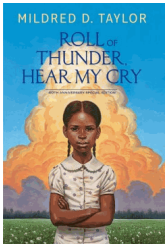


Little Women by Louisa May Alcott
This book chronicles the joys and sorrows of the four March sisters as they grow into young ladies in nineteenth-century New England. (Other books in series: *Good Wives*, *Little Men*, *Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag*, and *Jo's Boys*)



Rebecca by Daphne duMaurier

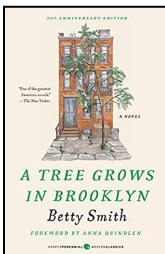
For months after her death, the memory of Rebecca de Winter continues to dominate everyone at her former home, Manderley, one of the most famous English country houses.



Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

An African-American family living in Mississippi during the Depression of the 1930s is faced with prejudice and discrimination which its children do not understand. (Other books in series: *Song of the Trees*, *Mississippi Bridge*, *Let the Circle Be Unbroken*, *The Friendship*, *The Road to Memphis*, *The Gold Cadillac*, and *All the Days Past, All the Days to Come*)

🏆 Newbery Medal



A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

From the moment she entered the world, Francie Nolan needed to be made of stern stuff, for growing up in the Williamsburg slums of Brooklyn, New York demanded fortitude, precocity, and strength of spirit. Often scorned by neighbors for her family's erratic and eccentric behavior, no one, least of all Francie, could say that the Nolans' life lacked drama.

Fantasy & Magical Realism



Instructions for Dancing by Nicola Yoon

After picking up a book from the library, Yvette--who has given up on love--gains the ability to see how other people's romantic relationships will end.

Book trailer:

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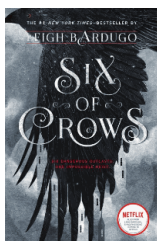
Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard

In a world divided by blood--those with common, Red blood serve the Silver-blooded elite, who are gifted with superhuman abilities.

Seventeen-year-old Mare, a Red, discovers she has an ability of her own. (Other books in series: *The Glass Sword*, *King's Cage*, *War Storm*)

Book Trailer:

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Six of Crows by Leigh Bardugo

Offered a chance to participate in a deadly heist that could make him rich beyond his wildest dreams, criminal prodigy Kaz Brekker recruits a team of talented associates to organize a plot that is threatened by their mutual enmity. (Sequel: *Crooked Kingdom*) ★5 starred reviews

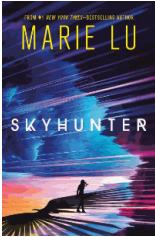
Book Trailer:

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Superman: Dawnbreaker by Matt de la Peña

Clark Kent has always been faster, stronger--better--than everyone around him. He knows drawing attention to himself could be dangerous, but lately it's difficult to stay in the shadows. When Clark follows the sound of a girl crying, he comes across Gloria Alvarez and learns that people are disappearing from the Mexican-American and undocumented worker community in Smallville. Teaming up with his best friend, Lana Lang, Clark discovers that before he can save the world, he must save Smallville. ★ 1 starred review



Skyhunter by Marie Lu

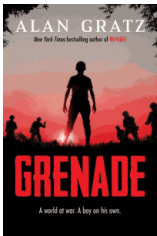
Talin is a Striker, a member of an elite fighting force that stands as the last defense for Mara, the only free nation in the world, but when a mysterious prisoner is brought from the front to Mara's capital, Talin senses there is more to him than meets the eye. (Sequel: *Steelstriker*)

Historical Fiction



The Downstairs Girl by Stacey Lee

1890, Atlanta. By day, seventeen-year-old Jo Kuan works as a lady's maid for the cruel Caroline Payne, the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in Atlanta. But by night, Jo moonlights as the pseudonymous author of a newspaper advice column for "the genteel Southern lady." ★ 4 starred reviews

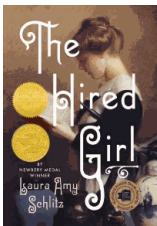


Grenade by Alan Gratz

On April 1, 1945, fourteen-year-old native Okinawan Hideki, drafted into the Blood and Iron Student Corps, is handed two grenades and told to go kill American soldiers. Hideki does not want to kill anyone, he just wants to find his family. Hideki's struggle across the island will finally bring him face-to-face with Ray, a marine in his very first battle--and the choice he makes will change Hideki's life forever. ★ 2 starred reviews

[Author speaking about the book:](#)

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The Hired Girl by Laura Amy Schlitz

Fourteen-year-old Joan Skraggs, just like the heroines in her beloved novels, yearns for real life and true love. But what hope is there for adventure, beauty, or art on a hardscrabble farm in Pennsylvania where the work never ends? Over the summer of 1911, Joan pours her heart out into her diary as she seeks a new, better life for herself--because maybe, just maybe, a hired girl cleaning and cooking for six dollars a week can become what a farm girl could only dream of--a woman with a future.

★ 2 starred reviews 🏆 Sydney Taylor Book Award



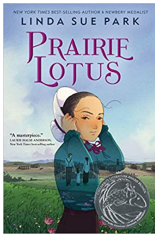
Kent State by Deborah Wiles

Told from different points of view--protesters, students, National Guardsmen, and "townies"--this novel recounts the story of what happened at Kent State in May 1970, when four college students were killed by National Guardsmen, and a student protest was turned into a bloody battlefield. Novel in verse.

★6 starred reviews

Author speaking about the book:

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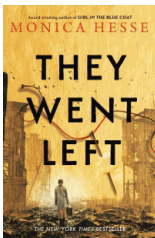


Prairie Lotus by Linda Sue Park

In Dakota Territory in the 1880s, half-Chinese Hanna and her white father face racism and resistance to change as they try to make a home for themselves. Includes author's note. ★5 starred reviews 🏆 Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature Honor book

One Minute Book Review:

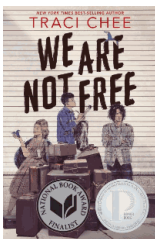
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xQ_6BssrFlbw6nQ8M-87Q3VZLulgcnlp/view?usp=sharing



They Went Left by Monica Hesse

Zofia, a teenage Holocaust survivor, travels across post-war Europe as she searches for her younger brother and seeks to rebuild her shattered life.

★4 starred reviews 🏆 Sydney Taylor Book Honor



We Are Not Free by Traci Chee

For fourteen-year-old budding artist Minoru Ito, her two brothers, her friends, and the other members of the Japanese-American community in southern California, the three months since Pearl Harbor was attacked have become a waking nightmare: attacked, spat on, and abused with no way to retaliate--and now things are about to get worse, their lives forever changed by the mass incarcerations in the relocation camps. ★5 starred reviews 🏆 Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature Honor & Printz Honor

Horror



Bloom by Kenneth Oppel

The invasion begins-- with rain. Rain that carries seeds. Seeds that sprout--overnight, everywhere. These new plants take over crop fields, twine up houses, and burrow below streets. They bloom--and release toxic pollen. They bloom--and form Venus flytrap-like pods that swallow animals and people. Three kids on a remote island seem immune to the toxic plants. They each have strange allergies--and yet not to these plants. What's their secret? Can they somehow be the key to beating back this invasion? (Other books in series:

Hatch, Thrive) ★1 starred review

Video book review:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H8eBspymYI8312w-5xsuZ76X5Ep3rncw/view?usp=sharing>



The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle by Janet Fox

In 1940, during the Blitz, Katherine, Robbie, and Amelie Bateson are sent north to a private school in Rookskill Castle in Scotland, a brooding place, haunted by dark magic from the past--but when some of their classmates disappear, Katherine has to find out if the cause is hidden in the past or very much in the present. ★3 starred reviews

Book trailer:

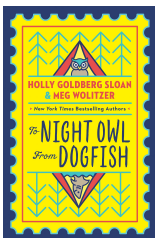
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1c4s2tw1CKbSr0idjD0bN-U2-4xro0x5/view?usp=sharing>



The Night Gardener by Jonathan Auxier

Irish orphans Molly, fourteen, and Kip, ten, travel to England to work as servants in a crumbling manor house where nothing is quite what it seems to be. Soon the siblings are confronted by a mysterious stranger and secrets of the cursed house. ★4 starred reviews

Humor

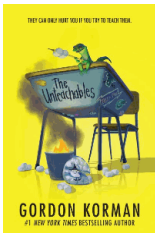


To Night Owl from Dogfish by Holly Goldberg Sloan and Meg Wolitzer

Unhappy about being sent to the same summer camp after their fathers start dating, Bett and Avery, eleven, eventually begin scheming to get the couple back together after a break-up. Told entirely through emails. ★1 starred review

Book trailer:

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The Unteachables by Gordon Korman

The Unteachables are a wayward medley of characters: Parker the dyslexic farm boy; Aldo, who is perpetually angry; Elaine (rhymes with pain); Barnstorm the jock; Rahim the sleep-deprived artist; and Mateo, lost in fantasy worlds. Plus Kiana, who isn't even registered with the school. Not to mention their teacher, who remains in disgrace after a 25-year-old cheating scandal and is just killing time, waiting to take early retirement. Are they really incorrigible, or is it possible they are just misunderstood?

One Minute Book Review:

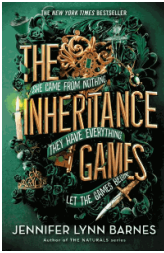
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Mystery



I Am Princess X by Cherie Priest

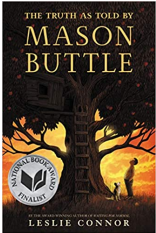
Years after writing stories about a superheroine character she created with a best friend who died in a tragic car accident, sixteen-year-old May is shocked to see stickers, patches and graffiti images of the superheroine appearing all over town. ★3 starred reviews



The Inheritance Games by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

A Connecticut teenager inherits vast wealth and an estate from the richest man in Texas, but she must also live with his surviving family and solve a series of puzzles to discover how she earned her inheritance.

★2 starred reviews



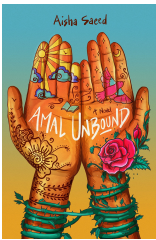
The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor

Mason Buttle is the biggest, sweatiest kid in his grade, and everyone knows he can barely read or write. Mason's learning disabilities are compounded by grief. Fifteen months ago, Mason's best friend, Benny, turned up dead in the Buttle family's orchard. An investigation drags on, and Mason can't understand why Lieutenant Baird won't believe what Mason has told him about that day. Mason's new friend, tiny Calvin Chumsky, goes missing, Mason finds himself in trouble again. ★3 starred reviews 🏆 Schneider Family Book Award

One Minute Book review:

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Realistic Fiction



Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed

In Pakistan, Amal holds onto her dream of being a teacher even after becoming an indentured servant to pay off her family's debt to the wealthy and corrupt Khan family. (Sequel: *Omar Rising*)

★4 starred reviews



Field Notes on Love by Jennifer E. Smith

Two teens, Hugo and Mae, are strangers until they share a cross-country train trip that teaches them about love, each other, and the futures they can build for themselves. ★1 starred review

Book trailer:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JS3LtfXBbeUiCjrBEmU2Zd6bF-eyQCfD/view?usp=sharing>



Just Like That by Gary D. Schmidt

Following the death of her closest friend in summer 1968, Meryl Lee Kowalski goes off to St. Elene's Preparatory Academy for Girls, where she struggles to navigate the venerable boarding school's traditions and a social structure heavily weighted toward students from wealthy backgrounds. In a parallel story, Matt Coffin has wound up on the Maine coast near St. Elene's with a pillowcase full of money lifted from the leader of a criminal gang, fearing the gang's relentless, destructive pursuit. Both young people gradually dispel their loneliness, finding a way to be hopeful and also finding each other. ★4 starred reviews

One Minute Book Review:

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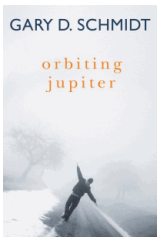
King and the Dragonflies by Kacen Callender

In a small but turbulent Louisiana town, one boy's grief takes him beyond the bayous of his backyard, to learn that there is no right way to be yourself.

★5 starred reviews 🏳️ Coretta Scott King Author Honor & National Book Award for Young People's Literature

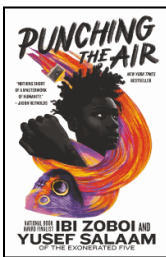
Author speaking about the book:

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Orbiting Jupiter by Gary D. Schmidt

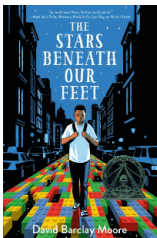
Jack, 12, tells the gripping story of Joseph, 14, who joins his family as a foster child. Damaged in prison, Joseph wants nothing more than to find his baby daughter, Jupiter, whom he has never seen. When Joseph has begun to believe he'll have a future, he is confronted by demons from his past that force a tragic sacrifice. ★5 starred reviews



Punching the Air by Ibi Zoboi with Yusef Salaam

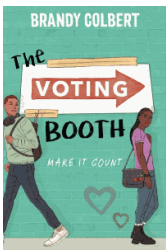
At sixteen years old, Amal is convicted of a crime he didn't commit and sent to prison. Despair and rage almost sink him until he turns to the refuge of his words, his art. This never should have been his story. But can he change it?

Novel in verse. ★6 starred reviews



The Stars Beneath Our Feet by David Barclay Moore

A boy tries to steer a safe path through the projects in Harlem in the wake of his brother's death. ★5 starred reviews



The Voting Booth by Brandy Colbert

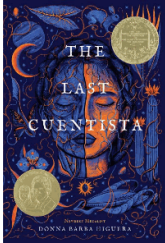
The first year they are eligible to vote, Marva and Duke meet at their polling place and, over the course of one crazy day, fall in love. ★3 starred reviews

Science Fiction



Dragon Pearl by Yoon Ha Lee

Min, a thirteen-year-old girl with fox-magic, stows away on a battle cruiser and impersonates a cadet in order to solve the mystery of what happened to her older brother in the Thousand World Space Forces. ★3 starred reviews



The Last Cuentista by Donna Barba Higuera

Petra Pena wanted nothing more than to be a storyteller, like her abuelita. But Petra's world is ending. Earth has been destroyed by a comet, and only a few hundred scientists and their children—among them Petra and her family—have been chosen to journey to a new planet. Hundreds of years later, Petra wakes to this new planet—and the discovery that she is the only person who remembers Earth. A sinister Collective has taken over the ship during its journey, bent on erasing the sins of humanity's past. They have systematically purged the memories of all aboard—or purged them altogether. Petra alone now carries the stories of our past, and with them, any hope for our future. Can she make them live again?

★3 starred reviews 🏆 Newbery Medal & Pura Belpré Author Award

[Author speaking about the book:](#)

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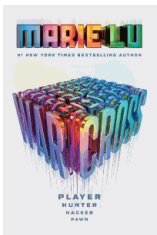
Scythe by Neal Shusterman

In a world where disease has been eliminated, the only way to die is to be randomly killed (“gleaned”) by professional reapers (“scythes”). Two teens must compete with each other to become a scythe—a position neither of them wants. (Other books in series: *Thunderhead*, *The Toll*)

★6 starred reviews 🏆 Printz Honor

[Book trailer:](#)

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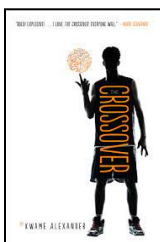


Warcross by Marie Lu

When teenage coder Emika Chen hacks her way into the opening tournament of the Warcross Championships, she glitches herself into the game as well as a sinister plot with major consequences for the entire Warcross empire.

(Sequel: *Wildcard*) ★3 starred reviews

Sports Fiction



The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

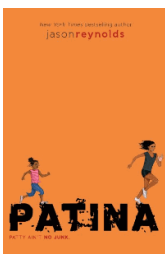
Fourteen-year-old twin basketball stars Josh and Jordan wrestle with highs and lows on and off the court as their father ignores his declining health. Novel in verse.

★6 starred reviews 🏆 Newbery Medal & Coretta Scott King Author Honor



Golden Arm by Carl Deuker

Lazarus Weathers, a high school senior from the wrong side of the tracks, seeks to protect his half-brother while pitching his way out of poverty, one strike at a time. ★1 starred review



Patina by Jason Reynolds

A newbie to the track team, Patina 'Patty' Jones must learn to rely on her family and teammates as she tries to outrun her personal demons. (Other books in series: *Ghost*, *Sunny*, *Lu*)

★5 starred reviews

Informational Texts/Biographies/Memoirs



Becoming RBG: Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Journey to Justice by Debbie Levy

Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a modern feminist icon--a leader in the fight for equal treatment of girls and women in the workplace and in society. She blazed trails to the peaks of the male-centric worlds of education and law, where women had rarely risen before. Graphic format.

Book trailer:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cdnz1p-DL2Es82wUP2BBXy6tygsaTbjk/view?usp=sharing>

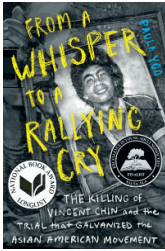


Fallout: Spies, Superbombs, and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown

by Steve Sheinkin

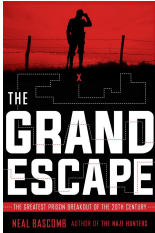
As World War II comes to a close, the United States and the Soviet Union emerge as the two world superpowers. After the United States shows its hand with the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, the Soviets refuse to be left behind. With communism sweeping the globe, the two nations begin a neck-and-neck competition to build even more destructive bombs and conquer the Space Race. In their battle for dominance, spy planes fly above, armed submarines swim deep below, and undercover agents meet in the dead of night. The decades-long showdown culminates in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the world's close call with the third-and final-world war.

★3 starred reviews 🏆 Robert F. Silbert Informational Book Honor



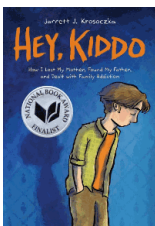
From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry: The Killing of Vincent Chin and the Trial that Galvanized the Asian American Movement by Paula Yoo

An account of the killing of Vincent Chin, the verdicts that took the Asian American community to the streets in protest, and the groundbreaking civil rights trial that followed. ★4 starred reviews



The Grand Escape: The Greatest Prison Breakout of the 20th Century by Neal Bascomb

The story of a group of Allied POWs in WWI who dared to escape from Germany's most notorious prison camp. ★3 starred reviews

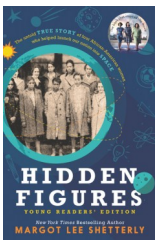


Hey, Kiddo by Jarrett Krosoczka

Author and illustrator Jarrett J. Krosoczka discusses growing up in a family grappling with addiction. Graphic format. ★7 starred reviews

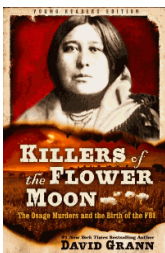
[Author speaking about the book:](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JT9LPUQaNFtTXnWI5uyLvbPQEzqSjLjF/view?usp=sharing)

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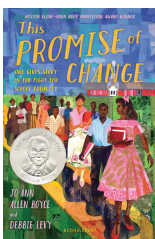
Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly (Young Readers' Edition)

Before John Glenn orbited the earth, or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as “human computers” used pencils, slide rules, and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. ★3 starred reviews



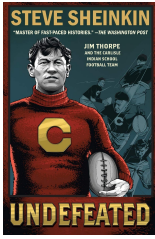
Killers of the Flower Moon (Adapted for Young Readers) by David Grann

In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma, thanks to the oil that was discovered beneath their land. Then, one by one, the Osage began to die under mysterious circumstances, and anyone who tried to investigate met the same end. ★2 starred reviews



This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality by Jo Ann Allen Boyce

In 1956, one year before federal troops escorted the Little Rock Nine into Central High School, fourteen-year-old Jo Ann Allen was one of twelve African-American students who broke the color barrier and integrated Clinton High School in Tennessee. This is the heartbreaking and relatable story of her four months thrust into the national spotlight and as a trailblazer in history. ★5 starred reviews 🏳️ Robert F. Silbert Informational Book Honor

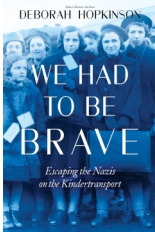


Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian High School Football Team
by Steve Sheinkin

Before they became legends, Jim Thorpe and Pop Warner met at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in American football history. ★5 starred reviews

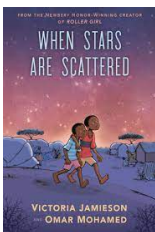
Author speaking about the book:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/169REgoB79jsxWKj9lfA7leryh0bUbKM5/view?usp=sharing>



We Had to Be Brave by Deborah Hopkinson

Looks at the role of the Kindertransport during World War II, a rescue effort that sent children to other countries in order to escape the Nazis. Includes first-person accounts by survivors and rescuers. ★1 starred review



When Stars Are Scattered by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson

Omar and his younger brother Hassan live in a refugee camp. When an opportunity for Omar to get an education comes along, he must decide between going to school every day or caring for his nonverbal brother in this intimate and touching portrayal of family and daily life in a refugee camp. Graphic format.

★6 starred reviews 🧡 Schneider Family Book Honor

Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=111ztD-2QaU>

Starred Reviews are from the following publications:

Booklist

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

Horn Book Guide

Horn Book Magazine

Kirkus

Publisher's Weekly

School Library Connection

School Library Journal

Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)