

Eighth Grade Required Reading List

Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko (30 copies)

A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935 when guards' families were housed there, and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister.

Bronx Masquerade by Nikki Grimes (31 copies)

While studying the Harlem Renaissance, students at a Bronx high school read aloud poems they have written, revealing their innermost thoughts and fears to their formerly clueless classmates.

Chanda's Secret by Allan Stratton (26 copies)

Sixteen-year-old Chanra struggles to care for her family in sub-Saharan Africa after the death of her father in the diamond mines and her mother's AIDS-related illness.

The Contender by Robert Lipsyte (35 copies)

Alfred Brooks wants something better than the inevitable crime and drugs of Harlem.

The Face on the Milk Carton by Caroline B. Cooney (27 copies)

A photograph of a missing girl on a milk carton leads Janie on a search for her real identity.

Fat Chance by Lesléa Newman (30 copies)

In a series of diary entries, thirteen-year-old Judi recounts her struggles to lose weight, hide her bulimia from her mother, find a boyfriend, and decide on a profession.

Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick (63copies)

At the beginning of eighth grade, learning disabled Max and his new friend Freak, whose birth defect has affected his body but not his brilliant mind, find that when they combine forces they make a powerful team.

Heartbeat by Sharon Creech (11 copies)

Everything in twelve-year-old Annie's life begins changing when her mother becomes pregnant. Her grandfather begins to falter, and her best friend becomes distant.

Joey Pigza Loses Control by Jack Gantos (16 copies)

Joey, who is taking medication to keep him from getting too wired, goes to spend the summer with the father he has never known. Dad insists that Joey stop taking his medication, and Joey loses control as he tries to help his baseball team. Book #2

Killing Mr. Griffin by Lois Duncan (27 copies)

A powerful novel about a group of high school students who plan to scare their tough, demanding English teacher into being more lenient. Their attempt brings on Mr. Griffin's fatal heart attack.

The Mailbox by Audrey Shafer (11 copies)

When twelve-year-old Gabe tries to hide his uncle's death from the local authorities, he is not prepared for what happens when this secret is discovered.

Nothing But the Truth by Avi (38 copies)

A ninth-grader's suspension for humming "The Star-Spangled Banner" during homeroom becomes a national news story.

Scorpions by Walter Dean Myers (25 copies)

After reluctantly taking on the leadership of the Harlem gang, the Scorpions, Jamal finds that his enemies treat him with respect when he acquires a gun-- until a tragedy occurs.

Slam! by Walter Dean Myers (41 copies)

Seventeen-year-old "Slam" Harris is counting on his noteworthy basketball talents to get him out of the inner city and give him a chance to succeed in life, but his coach sees things differently.

Star Girl by Jerry Spinelli (5 copies)

In this story about the perils of popularity, the courage of nonconformity, and the thrill of first love, an eccentric student named Stargirl changes Mica High School forever.

Tears of a Tiger by Sharon Draper (71 copies)

A young African-American boy has difficulty coming to terms with the death of a friend who died as a result of a car accident that resulted from drinking and driving.

Things Not Seen by Andrew Clements (26 copies)

When fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up and finds himself invisible, he and his parents and his new blind friend Alicia try to find out what caused his condition and how to reverse it..

Wolf Rider by Avi (27 copies)

After receiving an apparent crank call from a man claiming to have committed murder, fifteen-year-old Andy finds his close relationship with his father crumbling as he struggles to make everyone believe him.

A Year Down Yonder by Richard Peck (28 copies)

During the recession of 1937, fifteen-year-old Mary Alice is sent to live with her feisty, larger-than-life grandmother in rural Illinois and comes to a better understanding of this fearsome woman.

Young Man and the Sea by Rodman Philbrick (30 copies)

After his mother's death, twelve-year-old Skiff Beaman decides that it is up to him to earn money to take care of himself and his father.