PCMS 2019 Summer Reading Book List and Assignment
For Rising 7th and 8th Graders

The goal of summer reading is to develop lifelong reading habits, while limiting the effects of *the summer slide*—the tendency to lose some of the achievement gains students make during the school year—particularly in literacy skills.

Below is an illustrated, reviewed, and coded list of suggested summer reading titles. These novels are listed by grade level, as their content aligns with the concepts and/or content covered in the Grade 7 or Grade 8 ELA curriculum. Included for those students who prefer to read historically accurate stories of adventure and survival, a list of nonfiction recommendations follows the Grade 8 novel choices. All students are expected to complete the following 2019 PCMS summer reading assignment.

Incoming 7th & 8th graders at PCMS are required to choose and read at least one book from their grade-level list. Then, they are expected to answer at least one question from each of the six categories in the list labeled “Questions for Any Book,” for a total of SIX questions. **We recommended that you read your book with the questions in your mind.** Many of the questions have two or three parts, so make sure to fully answer ALL of the questions with specific details and relevant information from the text. Enjoy and have a great summer!

**Questions for Any Book**

**Category 1: Characters (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)**
1. Was there one character who was similar to you? How would the story have been different if you were the main character, and how?
2. Which character could you relate to best, and why?
3. Explain an experience of your own that was similar to someone in the book?
4. Compare a character, the story, or a main event to another book.
5. List and explain of all the ways one of the characters changed in the book.
6. Explain what the main character learned in this book?
7. Choose two or three characters from the book and write what you think happens to them after the end. Be sure to include your reasoning.
Category 2: Plot and Conflict (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)
1. What was more important, the characters or the plot? Was this book more about what people were doing or what people were thinking? Explain your reasons.
2. Choose three events in the story and explain why these events stand out for you as memorable.
3. Was there foreshadowing and suspense? Or, did the author give things away at the beginning of the book? Was this effective? Explain how the use of suspense and/or foreshadowing affected your enjoyment of the book.
4. Explain how you would have resolved the conflict (problem) in the book.

Category 3: Point of View (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)
1. Did the author use multiple voices in telling the story? How did this affect the story and your appreciation of the book? Explain!
2. Whose voice was the story told in (from whose point of view is the story told)? Explain how you think it might have been different if another character was telling the story.
3. Did you feel like the narrator was being honest in telling the story? Did you feel manipulated? Include your reasoning.
4. Was the narrator involved in the story while it was happening, or were they looking back on the events from a distance? Why do you think the author structured it this way? Include your reasoning.

Category 4: Setting (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)
1. Did the setting (the time and place) of the story make a difference? Could it have taken place anywhere? Why do you think the author wrote the book with this setting? Include your reasoning.
2. Was the author’s description of the landscape/community well done? Could you visualize the landscape, rooms, town, etc.? Record a descriptive passage and draw a picture based on the author’s language.
3. Was the time period important to the story? Why or why not? Explain!
4. Explain how the author conveyed the era (time period). Include details.
5. Did the story involve a road trip? Explain how the journey advanced the plot of the story?

Category 5: Theme (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)
1. Explain a major theme in the book and how it was developed. Be sure to use details and include your reasoning.
3. Did you think the story was funny, sad, touching, disturbing, and/or moving? Provide details and reasoning as to why or why not.
4. Was the story realistic? Did it matter to the story line? Provide details and reasoning as to why you think the author wrote it this way.
5. Think about the book’s title. Provide details and your reasoning to explain why you think the author chose the words in this title.
Category 6: Your Thoughts! (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. Compare this book to others you have read. Is it similar to any of them? Did you like it more or less than other books you have read? Why or why not? Provide details and your reasoning.

2. What do you think will be your lasting impression of the book? What will be your most vivid memories of it a year from now? Provide details and your reasoning.

3. What “touched” you most about this book? Did you feel any emotions while you read this? Why or why not? Provide details and your reasoning.

4. If you could jump in at any point in this book, and become a part of the storyline, where would it be? Provide details and your reasoning.


6. Sometimes authors have notes at the end of the book explaining why they wrote the story. Is there information explaining why the author wrote this story or where they got their idea? What do you think? Provide details and your reasoning.

7. What do you think the author was trying to accomplish with this novel? Why? Provide details and your reasoning.


Ratings Advice—PLEASE READ

Summaries provided by Amazon.com.

The grade level code and Clean Read designation are provided by Shauna Yusko, an award winning librarian and national presenter with Bureau of Education & Research. The Clean Read designation is used by Shauna Yusko to refer to books that include no excessive or graphic language, no extreme or graphic violence, and no sexual content, but may include kissing and discussion of sex. Ms. Yusko finds the following helpful when deciding if a book is appropriate for a child:

Common Sense Media reviews and guidelines: http://www.commonsensemedia.org

Compass Book Ratings http://www.compassbookratings.com

Parents’ Choice Awards
http://www.parents-choice.org/allawards.cfm

Thrifty and Thriving: clean reads for girls
http://www.thriftyandthriving.com/clean-books-for-teens-girls/
7th Grade Fiction

*Posted* – John David Anderson  *(MJ – clean read)*

With multiple starred reviews, don't miss this humorous, poignant, and original contemporary story about bullying, broken friendships, social media, and the failures of communication between kids. In middle school, words aren’t just words. They can be weapons. They can be gifts. The right words can win you friends or make you enemies. They can come back to haunt you. Sometimes they can change things forever.

When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well.

In the middle of this, a new girl named Rose arrives at school and sits at Frost’s lunch table. Rose is not like anyone else at Branton Middle School, and it’s clear that the close circle of friends Frost has made for himself won’t easily hold another. As the sticky-note war escalates and the pressure to choose sides mounts, Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same.

****

*Finding Langston* - Lesa Cline-Ransome  *(EMJ – clean read)*

It's 1946. Langston's mother has just died, and now he and his dad are leaving the rest of their family and friends in Alabama to start over in Chicago. Langston misses everything-- Grandma's Sunday suppers, the red dirt roads, and the magnolia trees his mother loved. In the city, they live in a small apartment surrounded by noise and chaos. It doesn't feel like a new start or a better life. At home he's lonely, his father always busy at work; at school he's bullied for being a country boy. But Langston's new home has one fantastic thing. Unlike the whites-only
library in Alabama, the Chicago Public Library welcomes everyone. There, hiding out after school, Langston discovers another Langston—a poet whom he learns inspired his mother enough to name her only son after him. Lesa Cline-Ransome, author of the Coretta Scott King Honor picture book *Before She Was Harriet*, has crafted a lyrical debut novel about one boy's experiences during the Great Migration. Includes an author's note about the historical context and her research.

*****

*Brave* – Svetlana Chmakova *(EMJ – clean read)*

In his daydreams, Jensen is the biggest hero that ever was, saving the world and his friends on a daily basis. But his middle school reality is VERY different—math is hard, getting along with friends is hard… Even finding a partner for the class project is a huge problem when you always get picked last. And the pressure is on even once the school newspaper's dynamic duo, Jenny and Akilah, draw Jensen into the whirlwind of school news, social-experiment projects, and behind-the-scenes club drama. Jensen has always played the middle school game one level at a time, but suddenly, someone's cranked up the difficulty setting. Will those daring daydreams of his finally work in his favor, or will he have to find real solutions to his real-life problems? The charming world of Berrybrook Middle School gets a little bigger in this highly anticipated follow-up to Svetlana Chmakova's award-winning *Awkward* with a story about a boy who learns his own way of being brave!

*****

*Rebound* – Kwame Alexander *(MJ – clean read)*

"An eminently satisfying story of family, recovery, and growing into manhood."—*Kirkus, starred review*


Before Josh and Jordan Bell were streaking up and down the court, their father was learning his own moves. In this prequel to Newbery Medal winner *The Crossover*, Chuck Bell takes center stage, as readers get a glimpse of his childhood
and how he became the jazz music worshiping, basketball star his sons look up to.

A novel in verse with all the impact and rhythm readers have come to expect from Kwame Alexander, *Rebound* will go back in time to visit the childhood of Chuck "Da Man" Bell during one pivotal summer when young Charlie is sent to stay with his grandparents where he discovers basketball and learns more about his family's past.

*****

*Halfway Normal* – Barbara Dee *(MJ – clean read)*

Norah Levy has just completed two years of treatment for leukemia and is ready to go back to the “real world” of middle school. She knows it'll be tricky—but like the Greek mythological characters she read about while she was sick, Norah’s up for any challenge.

But seventh grade turns out to be trickier than she thought. Norah’s classmates don’t know what to make of her. Her best friend, Harper, tries to be there for her, but she doesn’t *get it*, really—and is hanging out with a new group of girls. Norah’s other good friend, Silas, is avoiding her. What’s that about, anyway?

When Norah is placed with the eighth graders for math and science, she meets Griffin, a cute boy who encourages her love of Greek mythology and art. And Norah decides not to tell him her secret—that she was “that girl” who had cancer. But when something happens to make secret-keeping impossible, Norah must figure out a way to share her cancer story. But how do you explain something to others that you can’t explain to yourself?

*****

*Amina’s Voice* – Hena Khan *(MJ – clean read)*

A Pakistani-American Muslim girl struggles to stay true to her family’s vibrant culture while simultaneously blending in at school after tragedy strikes her community in this sweet and moving middle grade novel from the award-winning author of *It’s Ramadan, Curious George,* and *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns*.

Amina has never been comfortable in the spotlight. She is happy just hanging out with her best friend, Soojin. Except now that she’s in middle school everything feels different. Soojin is suddenly hanging out with Emily, one of the “cool” girls in the class, and even talking about changing her name to something more “American.” Does Amina need to start changing too? Or hiding who she is to fit in? While Amina grapples with these questions, she is devastated
when her local mosque is vandalized.

*Amina’s Voice* brings to life the joys and challenges of a young Pakistani American and highlights the many ways in which one girl’s voice can help bring a diverse community together to love and support each other.

*****

**Restart** – Gordan Korman  (MJ – clean read)

Chase's memory just went out the window. Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, in fact, remember *anything*. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name. He knows he's Chase. But who *is* Chase? When he gets back to school, he sees that different kids have very different reactions to his return. Some kids treat him like a hero. Some kids are clearly afraid of him. One girl in particular is so angry with him that she pours her frozen yogurt on his head the first chance she gets. Pretty soon, it's not only a question of who Chase is--it's a question of who he *was* . . . and who he's going to be.

From the #1 bestselling author of *Swindle* and *Slacker*, *Restart* is the spectacular story of a kid with a messy past who has to figure out what it means to get a clean start. Told in the alternating voices of Chase and some of his classmates, including both friends and victims.

*****

**The Someday Birds** – Sally J. Pla  (MJ)

*The Someday Birds* is a debut middle grade novel perfect for fans of *Counting by 7s, Out of My Mind, Rain Reign*, and *Fish in a Tree*, filled with humor, heart, and chicken nuggets. Charlie’s perfectly ordinary life has been unraveling ever since his war journalist father was injured in Afghanistan.

When his father heads from California to Virginia for medical treatment, Charlie reluctantly travels cross-country with his boy-crazy sister, unruly brothers, and a mysterious new family friend. He decides that if he can spot all the birds that he and his father were hoping to see someday along the way, then everything might just turn out okay.
Debut author Sally J. Pla has written a tale that is equal parts madcap road trip, coming-of-age story for an autistic boy who feels he doesn’t understand the world, and an uplifting portrait of a family overcoming a crisis.

*****

*Ghost, Patina, Sunny, Lu* — Jason Reynolds (EMJ – clean read)  
A New York Times Notable Children’s 4-book Track series

Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves.

Running. That’s all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?

*****

*Harbor Me* - Jacqueline Woodson (MJ – clean read)
It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them--everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

*****

The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl – Stacy McAnulty (MJ – clean read)

A lightning strike gave her a super power...but even a super genius can't solve the problem of middle school. This smart and funny novel is perfect for fans of The Fourteenth Goldfish, Rain Reign, and Counting by Sevens.

Lucy Callahan was struck by lightning. She doesn't remember it, but it changed her life forever. The zap gave her genius-level math skills, and ever since, Lucy has been homeschooled. Now, at 12 years old, she's technically ready for college. She just has to pass 1 more test--middle school!

Lucy's grandma insists: Go to middle school for 1 year. Make 1 friend. Join 1 activity. And read 1 book (that's not a math textbook!). Lucy's not sure what a girl who does calculus homework for fun can possibly learn in 7th grade. She has everything she needs at home, where nobody can make fun of her rigid routines or her superpowered brain. The equation of Lucy's life has already been solved. Unless there's been a miscalculation?

A celebration of friendship, Stacy McAnulty's smart and thoughtful middle-grade debut reminds us all to get out of our comfort zones and embrace what makes us different.

*****

8th Grade Fiction

Crush – Svetlana Chmakova (EMJ – clean read)

Following the overwhelming success of AWKWARD and BRAVE, Svetlana Chmakova's award winning Berrybrook Middle School series continues with its next installment - CRUSH! Jorge seems to have it all together. He's big enough that nobody really messes with him, but he's also a genuinely sweet guy with a solid, reliable group of friends. The only time
he ever really feels off his game is when he crosses paths with a certain girl... But when the group dynamic among the boys starts to shift, will Jorge be able to balance what his friends expect of him versus what he actually wants?

*****

*Words in Deep Blue* – Cath Crowley  

A beautiful love story for fans of Jandy Nelson, John Green, and Nicola Yoon: two teens find their way back to each other in a bookstore full of secrets and crushes, grief and hope—and letters hidden between the pages.

Years ago, Rachel had a crush on Henry Jones. The day before she moved away, she tucked a love letter into his favorite book in his family’s bookshop. She waited. But Henry never came.

Now Rachel has returned to the city—and to the bookshop—to work alongside the boy she’d rather not see, if at all possible, for the rest of her life. But Rachel needs the distraction. Her brother drowned months ago, and she can’t feel anything anymore.

As Henry and Rachel work side by side—surrounded by books, watching love stories unfold, exchanging letters between the pages—they find hope in each other because life may be uncontrollable, even unbearable sometimes. But it’s possible that words, and love, and second chances are enough.

*****

*Backfield Boys* – John Feinstein (MJ – clean read)


Freshman footballers Jason Roddin and Tom Jefferson are a perfect pair: Jason is a blazing-fast wide-receiver, while his best friend Tom
has all the skills a standout quarterback needs. After summer football camp at an elite sports-focused boarding school, the boys are thrilled to be invited back with full-ride scholarships.

But on day one of practice, they’re shocked when the team's coaching staff makes Tom, a black kid, a receiver and Jason, a white kid, a quarterback. Confronted with mounting evidence of deep-seated racial bias, the boys speak out, risking their scholarships and chances to play. As tensions ratchet up with coaches and other players, Tom and Jason must decide how much they're willing to lose in a conflict with powerful forces that has nothing—and everything—to do with the game they love.

*****

Refugee – Alan Gratz (MJS – clean read)

JOSEF is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world . . . ISABEL is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America . . . MAHMOUD is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe . . . All three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers -- from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end. This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

Gratz’s newest bestseller Grenade is the story of two young WWII soldiers, an American Marine and a soldier in Japan’s Blood and Iron Student Corps.

*****

The Librarian of Auschwitz – Antonio Iturbi (S)

Based on the experience of real-life Auschwitz prisoner Dita Kraus, this is the incredible story of a girl who risked her life to keep the magic of books alive during the Holocaust.
Fourteen-year-old Dita is one of the many imprisoned by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Taken, along with her mother and father, from the Terezín ghetto in Prague, Dita is adjusting to the constant terror that is life in the camp. When Jewish leader Freddy Hirsch asks Dita to take charge of the eight precious volumes the prisoners have managed to sneak past the guards, she agrees. And so Dita becomes the librarian of Auschwitz. Out of one of the darkest chapters of human history comes this extraordinary story of courage and hope.

*****

*Long Way Down* – Jason Reynolds (JS - for more mature readers)

An ode to *Put the Damn Guns Down*, this is National Book Award finalist and *New York Times* bestseller Jason Reynolds’s fiercely stunning novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes a kid to decide whether or not he’s going to murder the guy who killed his brother.

A cannon. A strap.
A piece. A biscuit.
A burner. A heater.
A chopper. A gat.
A hammer

A tool for RULE

Or, you can call it a gun. That’s what fifteen-year-old Will has shoved in the back waistband of his jeans. See, his brother Shawn was just murdered. And Will knows the rules. No crying. No snitching. *Revenge*. That’s where Will’s now heading, with that gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, the gun that was his brother’s gun. He gets on the elevator, seventh floor, stoked. He knows who he’s after. Or does he? As the elevator stops on the sixth floor, on comes Buck. Buck, Will finds out, is who gave Shawn the gun before Will took the gun. Buck tells Will to check that the gun is even loaded. And that’s when Will sees that one bullet is missing. And the only one who could have fired Shawn’s gun was Shawn. Huh. Will didn’t know that Shawn had ever actually USED his gun. Bigger huh. BUCK IS DEAD. But Buck’s in the elevator? Just as Will’s trying to think this through, the door to the next floor opens. A teenage girl gets on, waves away the smoke from Dead Buck’s cigarette. Will doesn’t know her, but she knew him.
Knew. When they were eight. And stray bullets had cut through the playground, and Will had tried to cover her, but she was hit anyway, and so what she wants to know, on that fifth floor elevator stop, is, what if Will, Will with the gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, MISSES.

And so it goes, the whole long way down, as the elevator stops on each floor, and at each stop someone connected to his brother gets on to give Will a piece to a bigger story than the one he thinks he knows. A story that might never know an END…if WILL gets off that elevator.

****

Geekerella – Ashley Poston (MJS – clean read)

Cinderella goes to the con in this fandom-fueled twist on the classic fairy tale romance.

Part romance, part love letter to nerd culture, and all totally adorbs, Geekerella is a fairy tale for anyone who believes in the magic of fandom. Geek girl Elle Wittimer lives and breathes Starfield, the classic sci-fi series she grew up watching with her late father. So when she sees a cosplay contest for a new Starfield movie, she has to enter. The prize? An invitation to the ExcelsiCon Cosplay Ball, and a meet-and-greet with the actor slated to play Federation Prince Carmindor in the reboot. With savings from her gig at the Magic Pumpkin food truck (and her dad’s old costume), Elle’s determined to win…unless her stepsisters get there first.

Teen actor Darien Freeman used to live for cons—before he was famous. Now they’re nothing but autographs and awkward meet-and-greets. Playing Carmindor is all he’s ever wanted, but the Starfield fandom has written him off as just another dumb heartthrob. As ExcelsiCon draws near, Darien feels more and more like a fake—until he meets a girl who shows him otherwise.

****

Amal Unbound - Aisha Saeed (MJ – clean read)

Life is quiet and ordinary in Amal's Pakistani village, but she had no complaints, and besides, she's busy pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher one day. Her dreams are temporarily dashed when--as the eldest daughter--she must stay home from school to take care of her siblings.
Amal is upset, but she doesn't lose hope and finds ways to continue learning. Then the unimaginable happens—after an accidental run-in with the son of her village's corrupt landlord, Amal must work as his family's servant to pay off her own family's debt.

Life at the opulent Khan estate is full of heartbreak and struggle for Amal—especially when she inadvertently makes an enemy of a girl named Nabila. Most troubling, though, is Amal's growing awareness of the Khans' nefarious dealings. When it becomes clear just how far they will go to protect their interests, Amal realizes she will have to find a way to work with others if they are ever to exact change in a cruel status quo, and if Amal is ever to achieve her dreams.

*****

**Dear Martin** - Nic Stone  *(JS – for more mature readers)*

Raw, captivating, and undeniably real, Nic Stone joins industry giants Jason Reynolds and Walter Dean Myers as she boldly tackles American race relations in this stunning *New York Times* bestselling debut, a William C. Morris Award Finalist.

Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates.

Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.

Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

*****

**The Hate U Give** - Angie Thomas  *(JS – for more mature readers)*

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is
shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a white police officer. Khalil was unarmed.

Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil’s name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.

But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

*****

**Eliza and Her Monsters** – Francesca Zappia (JS – clean read)

Eighteen-year-old Eliza Mirk is the anonymous creator of *Monstrous Sea*, a wildly popular webcomic, but when a new boy at school tempts her to live a life offline, everything she’s worked for begins to crumble.

In the real world, Eliza Mirk is shy, weird, smart, and friendless. Online, Eliza is Lady Constellation, the anonymous creator of a popular webcomic called *Monstrous Sea*. With millions of followers and fans throughout the world, Eliza’s persona is popular. Eliza can’t imagine enjoying the real world as much as she loves her digital community. Then Wallace Warland transfers to her school, and Eliza begins to wonder if a life offline might be worthwhile. But when Eliza’s secret is accidentally shared with the world, everything she’s built—her story, her relationship with Wallace, and even her sanity—begins to fall apart.
7th and 8th Grade Nonfiction

Survivors Club: The True Story of a Very Young Prisoner of Auschwitz – Michael Bornstein (MJS – clean read)

In 1945, in a now-famous piece of World War II archival footage, four-year-old Michael Bornstein was filmed by Soviet soldiers as he was carried out of Auschwitz in his grandmother’s arms. Survivors Club tells the unforgettable story of how a father’s courageous wit, a mother’s fierce love, and one perfectly timed illness saved his life, and how others in his family from Zarki, Poland, dodged death at the hands of the Nazis time and again with incredible deftness. Working from his own recollections as well as extensive interviews with relatives and survivors who knew the family, Michael relates his inspirational Holocaust survival story with the help of his daughter, Debbie Bornstein Holinstat. Shocking, heartbreaking, and ultimately uplifting, this narrative nonfiction offers an indelible depiction of what happened to one Polish village in the wake of the German invasion in 1939.

*****

Alexander Hamilton, Revolutionary – Martha Brockenbrough (MJS)

Complex, passionate, brilliant, flawed—Alexander Hamilton comes alive in this exciting biography.

He was born out of wedlock on a small island in the West Indies and orphaned as a teenager. From those inauspicious circumstances, he rose to a position of power and influence in colonial America.

Discover this founding father's incredible true story: his brilliant scholarship and military career; his groundbreaking and enduring policy, which shapes American government today; his salacious and scandalous personal life; his heartrending end.

Richly informed by Hamilton's own writing, with archival artwork and new work.

*****
Hey Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction - Jarrett J. Krosoczka (JS - for more mature readers)

In kindergarten, Jarrett Krosoczka's teacher asks him to draw his family, with a mommy and a daddy. But Jarrett's family is much more complicated than that. His mom is an addict, in and out of rehab, and in and out of Jarrett's life. His father is a mystery -- Jarrett doesn't know where to find him, or even what his name is. Jarrett lives with his grandparents -- two very loud, very loving, very opinionated people who had thought they were through with raising children until Jarrett came along. Jarrett goes through his childhood trying to make his non-normal life as normal as possible, finding a way to express himself through drawing even as so little is being said to him about what's going on. Only as a teenager can Jarrett begin to piece together the truth of his family, reckoning with his mother and tracking down his father. Hey, Kiddo is a profoundly important memoir about growing up in a family grappling with addiction and finding the art that helps you survive.

*****

42 Is Not Just a Number – Doreen Rappaport (MJ)

An eye-opening look at the life and legacy of Jackie Robinson, the man who broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball and became an American hero.

Baseball, basketball, football — no matter the game, Jackie Robinson excelled. His talents would have easily landed another man a career in pro sports, but such opportunities were closed to athletes like Jackie for one reason: his skin was the wrong color. Settling for playing baseball in the Negro Leagues, Jackie chafed at the inability to prove himself where it mattered most: the major leagues. Then in 1946, Branch Rickey, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, recruited Jackie Robinson. Jackie faced cruel and sometimes violent hatred and discrimination, but he proved himself again and again, exhibiting courage, determination, restraint, and a phenomenal ability to play the game. In this compelling biography, award-winning author Doreen Rappaport chronicles the extraordinary life of Jackie Robinson and how his achievements won over — and changed — a segregated nation.

*****
Girls Who Code - Reshma Saujani (MJ) NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER!

Part how-to, part girl-empowerment, and all fun, from the leader of the movement championed by Sheryl Sandberg, Malala Yousafzai, and John Legend.

Since 2012, the organization Girls Who Code has taught computing skills to and inspired over 40,000 girls across America. Now its founder, Reshma Saujani, wants to inspire you to be a girl who codes! Bursting with dynamic artwork, down-to-earth explanations of coding principles, and real-life stories of girls and women working at places like Pixar and NASA, this graphically animated book shows what a huge role computer science plays in our lives and how much fun it can be. No matter your interest—sports, the arts, baking, student government, social justice—coding can help you do what you love and make your dreams come true. Whether you’re a girl who’s never coded before, a girl who codes, or a parent raising one, this entertaining book, printed in bold two-color and featuring art on every page, will have you itching to create your own apps, games, and robots to make the world a better place.

*****

Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team – Steve Sheinkin (MJS)

Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team is an astonishing underdog sports story—and more. It’s an unflinching look at the U.S. government’s violent persecution of Native Americans and the school that was designed to erase Indian cultures. Expertly told by three-time National Book Award finalist Steve Sheinkin, it’s the story of a group of young men who came together at that school, the overwhelming obstacles they faced both on and off the field, and their absolute refusal to accept defeat.

Jim Thorpe (super athlete, Olympic gold medalist) and Glenn Pop Warner (indomitable coach, football mastermind) - Before these men became legends, they met in 1907 at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in American
football history. Called "the team that invented football," they took on the best opponents of their day, defeating much more privileged schools such as Harvard and the Army in a series of breathtakingly close calls, genius plays, and bone-crushing hard work.

*****

**Becoming Kareem: Growing Up On and Off the Court** – Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (MJS)

At one time, Lew Alcindor was just another kid from New York City with all the usual problems: He struggled with fitting in, with pleasing a strict father, and with overcoming shyness that made him feel socially awkward. But with a talent for basketball and an unmatched team of supporters, Lew Alcindor was able to transform and to become Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

From a childhood made difficult by racism and prejudice to a record-smashing career on the basketball court as an adult, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's life was packed with "coaches" who taught him right from wrong and led him on the path to greatness. His parents, coaches Jack Donahue and John Wooden, Muhammad Ali, Bruce Lee, and many others played important roles in Abdul-Jabbar's life and sparked him to become an activist for social change and advancement. The inspiration from those around him, and his drive to find his own path in life, are highlighted in this personal and awe-inspiring journey.

Written especially for young readers, *Becoming Kareem* chronicles how Kareem Abdul-Jabbar become the icon and legend he is today, both on and off the court.

*****

**Brazen** – Pénélope Bagieu (JS)

Throughout history and across the globe, one characteristic connects the daring women of *Brazen*: their indomitable spirit.

With her characteristic wit and dazzling drawings, celebrated graphic novelist Pénélope Bagieu profiles the lives of 29 feisty female role models – renowned female artists, scientists, athletes, explorers, activists, and warriors, some world famous, some little known. From Nellie Bly to Mae Jemison or Josephine Baker to Naziq al-Abid, the stories in this graphic biography are sure to inspire the next generation of rebel ladies.
Each entry covers the subject's life from birth to period of activity and, where applicable, death, across about six pages of delicately drawn panels with colorful highlights and washes. The work features humorously anachronistic props, such as modern books, as well as accurate depictions (smoking, drinking).

*****

**Attucks! Oscar Robertson and the Basketball Team that Awakened a City** – Phillip Hoose (MJS)

By winning the state high school basketball championship in 1955, ten teens from an Indianapolis school meant to be the centerpiece of racially segregated education in the state shattered the myth of their inferiority. Their brilliant coach had fashioned an unbeatable team from a group of boys born in the South and raised in poverty. Anchored by the astonishing Oscar Robertson, a future college and NBA star, the Crispus Attucks Tigers went down in history as the first state champions from Indianapolis and the first all-black team in U.S. history to win a racially open championship tournament—an integration they had forced with their on-court prowess.

From native Hoosier and award-winning author Phillip Hoose comes this true story of a team up against impossible odds, making a difference when it mattered most.

*****

**Fierce** – Aly Raisman (JS)

Discover Aly Raisman's inspiring story of dedication, perseverance, and learning to think positive even in the toughest times on her path to gold medal success in two Olympic Games--and beyond.

Aly Raisman first stepped onto a gymnastics mat as a toddler in a "mommy & me" gymnastics class. No one could have predicted then that sixteen years later, she'd be standing on an Olympic podium, having achieved her dreams.

Aly's road to success was full of hard work, perseverance, and victories, but not without its hardships. Aly faced many obstacles, from naysayers who said she'd never make it in gymnastics to classmates who shamed her for her athletic body to a devastating betrayal of trust. Through it all, Aly surrounded herself with supportive family, friends, and
teammates and found the inner strength to remain positive and believe in herself. Now, in her own words, Aly shows what it takes to be a champion on and off the floor, and takes readers on a behind-the-scenes journey before, during, and after her remarkable achievements in two Olympic Games--through her highest highs, lowest lows, and all the moments in between.

Honest and heartfelt, frank and funny, Aly's story is enhanced with never-before-published photos, excerpts from the personal journals she's kept since childhood that chronicle memorable moments with her teammates, and hard-won advice for readers striving to rise above challenges, learn to love themselves, and make their own dreams come true.