

REQUIRED READING

Entering seventh and eighth graders are to read one required title and one suggested. Entering seventh graders have four choices for required reading (see below); **all entering eighth graders will read *The Giver***, by Lois Lowry. Students must read the novel version by Lois Lowry and may also read the graphic version by P. Craig Russell as a supplement. Each required text will be used in the fall to begin the school year. Students may want to purchase their own copies to mark up.

Suggested titles for seventh and eighth graders are listed at the end of this document. The choice of this title is up to students and parents. Students may use the audio version of a book to enhance their understanding.

SEVENTH GRADE CHOICES FOR REQUIRED READING

Starfish* by Lisa FippsPublisher's Summary*

"Ever since Ellie wore a whale swimsuit and made a big splash at her fifth birthday party, she's been bullied about her weight. To cope, she tries to live by the Fat Girl Rules — like "no making waves," "avoid eating in public," and "don't move so fast that your body jiggles." She's found her safe space — her swimming pool — where she feels weightless in a fat-obsessed world. In the pool, she starfishes. Stretches out. Takes up all the room she wants, instead of living by the fat girl rules society taught her. The pool is also where she can get away from her pushy mom, who thinks criticizing Ellie's weight will motivate her to diet. Fortunately, Ellie has allies in her dad, her therapist, and her new neighbor, Catalina, who love Ellie for who she is. With this support buoying her, Ellie might finally be able to cast aside the Fat Girl Rules and starfish in real life — by unapologetically being her own fabulous self."

This might be the book for you if you like themes of gaining confidence, family relationships, friendship, and characters you care about.

Legend* by Marie LuPublisher's Summary*

"What was once the western United States is now home to the Republic, a nation perpetually at war with its neighbors. Born into an elite family in one of the Republic's wealthiest districts, fifteen-year-old June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic's highest military circles. Born into the slums, fifteen-year-old Day is the country's most wanted criminal. But his motives may not be as malicious as they seem.

"From very different worlds, June and Day have no reason to cross paths - until the day June's brother, Metias, is murdered and Day becomes the prime suspect. Caught in the ultimate game of cat and mouse, Day is in a race for his family's survival, while June seeks to avenge Metias's death. But in a shocking turn of events, the two uncover the truth of what has really brought them together, and the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets."

This might be the book for you if you like *The Hunger Games* and other action-packed, sci-fi novels.

A Wish in the Dark* by Christina SoontornvatPublisher's Summary*

"All light in Chattana is created by one man — the Governor, who appeared after the Great Fire to bring peace and order to the city. For Pong, who was born in Namwon Prison, the magical lights represent freedom, and he dreams of the day he will be able to walk among them. But when Pong escapes from prison, he realizes that the

world outside is no fairer than the one behind bars. The wealthy dine and dance under bright orb light, while the poor toil away in darkness. Worst of all, Pong’s prison tattoo marks him as a fugitive who can never be truly free.

Nok, the prison warden’s perfect daughter, is bent on tracking Pong down and restoring her family’s good name. But as Nok hunts Pong through the alleys and canals of Chattana, she uncovers secrets that make her question the truths she has always held dear. Set in a Thai-inspired fantasy world, Christina Soontornvat’s twist on Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables* is a dazzling, fast-paced adventure that explores the difference between law and justice — and asks whether one child can shine a light in the dark.”

This might be the book for you if you like compelling fantasy that looks at issues of privilege, protest, and justice.

***Becoming Muhammad Ali* by Alexander, Kwame and Patterson, James**

Publisher’s Summary

“Before he was a household name, Cassius Clay was a kid with struggles like any other. Kwame Alexander and James Patterson join forces to vividly depict his life up to age seventeen in both prose and verse, including his childhood friends, struggles in school, the racism he faced, and his discovery of boxing. Readers will learn about Cassius’ family and neighbors in Louisville, Kentucky, and how, after a thief stole his bike, Cassius began training as an amateur boxer at age twelve. Before long, he won his first Golden Gloves bout and began his transformation into the unrivaled Muhammad Ali.

Fully authorized by and written in cooperation with the Muhammad Ali estate, and vividly brought to life by Dawud Anyabwile’s dynamic artwork, *Becoming Muhammad Ali* captures the budding charisma and youthful personality of one of the greatest sports heroes of all time.”

This might be the book for you if you like humor, sports-related books, and friendship issues.

SUGGESTED READING FOR BOTH GRADES

The following list includes fiction and non-fiction (*) which may appeal to a wide variety of readers. This list is meant to encourage students to read during summer vacation. Children should consult parents, friends, and librarians about these and other books when looking for suggestions. This list is distributed to students entering grades seven and eight in the fall of 2023. This list is also posted on the district’s website and the Belmont Public Library’s teen page, belmontpubliclibrary.net/teens-at-the-library/.

Abdel-Fattah, Randa	<i>Does My Head Look Big in This?</i>
Adams, Douglas	<i>Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy</i>
Adeyemi, Toni	<i>Children of Blood and Bone</i>
Alcott, Louisa May	<i>Little Women</i>
Alexander, Kwame and Patterson, James	<i>Becoming Muhammad Ali</i>
Angleberger, Tom	<i>The Strange Case of Origami Yoda</i>
Balliett, Blue	<i>Chasing Vermeer; Hold Fast</i>
Bieschke, Marke	<i>Into the Streets</i>
Bloor, Edward	<i>Tangerine</i>
Bradley, James with Ron Powers	<i>Flags of Our Fathers: The Story of Iwo Jima*</i>
Braff, Joshua	<i>The Unthinkable Thoughts of Jacob Green</i>
Callahan, Steven	<i>Adrift *</i>
Cartaya, Pablo	<i>The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora</i>
Colbert, Brandy	<i>The Voting Booth</i>
Colfer, Eoin	<i>The Reluctant Assassin (series)</i>
Cooper, Susan	<i>Dark Is Rising (series)</i>
Crane, Stephen	<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>

Creech, Sharon	<i>Absolutely Normal Chaos, Ruby Holler</i>
Curtis, Christopher Paul	<i>Bucking the Sarge</i>
Dickens, Charles	<i>Oliver Twist; David Copperfield</i> (adapted versions available)
Dowd, Siobhan	<i>London Eye Mystery</i>
Doyle, Arthur Conan	<i>Adventures of Sherlock Holmes</i>
DuPrau, Jeanne	<i>City of Ember</i>
Ende, Michael	<i>The Neverending Story</i>
Farmer, Nancy	<i>The Lord of Opium</i> (sequel to <i>House of the Scorpion</i>), <i>The Sea of Trolls</i> trilogy
Ferris, Jean	<i>Love Among the Walnuts</i>
Gantos, Jack	<i>Hole in My Life*</i> , Norvelt series
Hickam, Homer	<i>Rocket Boys: A Memoir*</i>
Hobbs, Will	<i>Bearstone; Downriver; Far North</i>
Holt, K.A.	<i>House Arrest</i>
Holt, Kimberly Willis	<i>When Zachary Beaver Came to Town</i>
Houston, Julian	<i>New Boy</i>
Hughes, Dean	<i>Soldier Boys</i>
Jenn Bigelow, Lisa	<i>Drum Roll, Please</i>
Johnson, Angela	<i>Toning the Sweep</i>
Johnson, Leah	<i>You Should See Me in a Crown</i>
Jones, Diana Wynne	<i>Howl's Moving Castle, Dark Lord of Derkholm, Chrestomanci</i> series
Katz, Jon	<i>Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet out of Idaho*</i>
Key, Watt	<i>Alabama Moon</i>
Kherdian, David	<i>The Road Home: The Story of an Armenian Girl*</i>
Konigsburg, E.L.	<i>Silent to the Bone</i>
Knowles, Jo	<i>See You at Harry's</i>
Krakauer, Jon	<i>Into Thin Air*</i>
Lee, Stacey	<i>Outrun the Moon</i>
LeGuin, Ursula	<i>The Wizard of Earthsea</i> (series)
Lobel, Anita	<i>No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War*</i>
Lord, Cynthia	<i>Rules</i>
Maetani, Valynne E.	<i>Ink and Ashes</i>
Magoon, Kekla	<i>The Rock and the River; How It Went Down</i>
Mah, Adeline Yen	<i>Chinese Cinderella: True Story of an Unwanted Daughter*</i>
McCall, Guadalupe Garcia	<i>Summer of the Mariposas</i>
McCormick, Patricia	<i>Never Fall Down: A Boy Soldier's Story of Survival</i>
Meyer, Marissa	<i>Cinder</i>
Mikaelsen, Ben	<i>Tree Girl</i>
Myers, Walter Dean	<i>The Greatest: Muhammed Ali*;</i> <i>Bad Boy*</i>
Naidoo, Beverley	<i>The Other Side of Truth</i>
Nye, Naomi Shihab	<i>Tree is Older than You Are; Habibi</i>
O'Reilly, Bill	<i>Hitler's Last Days*</i>
Paolini, Christopher	<i>Eragon; Eldest</i> (Inheritance series)
Parks, Rosa	<i>Rosa Parks: My Story*</i>
Paterson, Katherine	<i>The Same Stuff</i>
Perkins, Lynne Rae	<i>Criss Cross</i>
Perkins, Mitali	<i>You Bring the Distant Near</i>
Pierce, Tamora	<i>Protector of the Small</i> (series)
Philbrick, Rodman	<i>Freak the Mighty; The Last Book of the Universe</i>
Pullman, Philip	<i>His Dark Materials</i> trilogy; Sally Lockhart trilogy
Reeve, Philip	<i>Mortal Engines</i> (series)
Rinaldi, Ann	<i>The Fifth of March; Hang a Thousand Trees with Ribbons</i>
Salisbury, Graham	Prisoners of the Empire series
Sanderson, Brandon	<i>Steelheart</i>
Senzai, N.H.	<i>Shooting Kabul</i>
Sheinkin, Steve	<i>Bomb: The Race to Build—and Steal—the World's Most Dangerous Weapon*</i>
Smith, Betty	<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>
Smith, Roland	<i>Edge</i> (sequel to <i>Peak</i>), <i>Beneath</i>
Sonnenblick, Jordan	<i>Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie; Zen and the Art of Faking It</i>
Spinelli, Jerry	<i>Crash</i>

Staples, Suzanne Fisher	<i>Under the Persimmon Tree</i>
Stone, Nic	<i>Clean Getaway</i>
Tolkien, J.R.R.	<i>The Hobbit</i>
Van Draanen, Wendelin	<i>Running Dream</i>
Volponi, Paul	<i>The Final Four</i>
Williams, Michael	<i>Now Is the Time for Running</i>
Yang, Gene Luen	<i>The Shadow Hero</i>
Yolen, Jane	<i>Briar Rose; Sword of the Rightful King</i>

This list was compiled by English teachers and reviewed by librarians at Chenery Middle School and Belmont Public Library. These and other books are available from the school library, the public library, and bookstores.