

Heritage Middle School Summer Reading List for Entering 5th Grade

Amina's Voice by Hena Khan (realistic fiction)

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.

House Arrest by K.A. Holt AR (realistic fiction)

Timothy is a good kid who did a bad thing. Now he's under house arrest for a whole year. He has to check in weekly with a probation officer and a therapist, keep a journal, and stay out of trouble. But when he must take drastic measures to help his struggling family, staying out of trouble proves more difficult than Timothy ever thought it would be.

Counting Thyme by Melanie Conklin (realistic fiction)

When eleven-year-old Thyme Owens' little brother, Val, is accepted into a new cancer drug trial, it's just the second chance that he needs. But it also means the Owens family has to move to New York, thousands of miles away from Thyme's best friend and everything she knows and loves. The island of Manhattan doesn't exactly inspire new beginnings, but Thyme tries to embrace the change for what it is- temporary. After Val's treatment shows real promise and Mr. Owens accepts a full-time position in the city, Thyme has to face the frightening possibility that the move to New York is permanent. All she can do is count the minutes, the hours, and days, and hope time can bring both a miracle for Val and a way back home.

Fish in a Tree by Lynda Hunt (realistic fiction)

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

**Samuel Blink and the Forbidden Forest* by Matt Haig (fantasy)

Samuel and Martha's new life with their Aunt Eda in Norway is filled with rules, but most important is rule number nine: NEVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, GO INTO THE FOREST. Sure their Uncle Henrik disappeared in the forest ten years ago, but it can't be the forest's fault, can it? Samuel is skeptical until he finds an unusual book, *The Creatures of Shadow Forest*, which describes the fantastic and sinister creatures supposedly living there. Could Aunt Eda be right? Samuel discovers the truth about the forest's dangerous secrets when Martha becomes lost in the forest, and it's up to him to save her.

Savvy by Ingrid Law (fantasy)

For generations, the Beaumont family has harbored a magical secret. They each possess a "savvy"—a special supernatural power that strikes when they turn thirteen. Grandpa Bomba moves mountains, her older brothers create hurricanes and spark electricity . . . and now it's the eve of Mibs's big day. As if waiting weren't hard enough, the family gets scary news two days before Mibs's birthday: Poppa has been in a terrible accident. Mibs develops the singular mission to get to the hospital and prove that her new power can save her dad. So she sneaks onto a salesman's bus . . . only to find the bus heading in the opposite direction. Suddenly Mibs finds herself on an unforgettable odyssey that will force her to make sense of growing up—and of other people, who might also have a few secrets hidden just beneath the skin.

***Skin I'm In* by Sharon Flake (realistic fiction)**

Maleeka suffers every day from the taunts of the other kids in her class. If they're not getting at her about her homemade clothes or her good grades, it's about her dark, black skin. When a new teacher, whose face is blotched with a startling white patch, starts at their school, Maleeka can see there is bound to be trouble for her too. But the new teacher's attitude surprises Maleeka. Miss Saunders loves the skin she's in. Can Maleeka learn to do the same?

***Miracle's Boys* by Jacqueline Woodson (realistic fiction)**

If things hadn't changed, their parents would still be alive. Charlie would never have gotten busted and sent to Rahway Correctional. Ty'ree would have gone to college instead of having to work fulltime to support them. And Lafayette wouldn't have all these questions, these whys, whens, and hows clattering around in his head. Why did Mama have to die? Why does Charlie hate him so much now, and when did he turn into such a stranger? And how are the three of them- Miracle's sons, her boys- supposed to survive these times together when so much seems to be set against them?

***MVP* by Douglas Evans (realistic fiction/ adventure)**

Every kid's dream is to be named as the most valuable player. But how many ever dream that the game is a race around the world (no flying allowed) in just forty days? That's the challenge Adam faces in the great Global game. As the player for the Magellan Voyage Project, he competes against others for a four-million dollar prize! Trackers with blowguns and a nefarious baron don't make things easy.

***Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes (realistic fiction/ historical fiction)**

Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing. Soon Jerome meets another ghost: Emmett Till, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances. Emmett helps Jerome process what has happened, on a journey towards recognizing how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. Jerome also meets Sarah, the daughter of the police officer, who grapples with her father's actions.

***Fred Korematsu Speaks Up* by Laura Atkins and Stan Yogi (nonfiction)**

Fred Korematsu liked listening to music on the radio, playing tennis, and hanging around with his friends—just like lots of other Americans. But everything changed when the United States went to war with Japan in 1941 and the government forced all people of Japanese ancestry to leave their homes on the West Coast and move to distant prison camps. This included Fred, whose parents had immigrated to the United States from Japan many years before. But Fred refused to go. He knew that what the government was doing was unfair. And when he got put in jail for resisting, he knew he couldn't give up.

Heritage Middle School Summer Reading List for Entering 6th Grade

The Stars Beneath Our Feet by David Barclay Moore (realistic fiction)

It's Christmas Eve in Harlem, but twelve-year-old Lolly Rachpaul and his mom aren't celebrating. They're still reeling from his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting just a few months earlier. Then Lolly's mother's girlfriend brings him a gift that will change everything: two enormous bags filled with Legos. Lolly's always loved Legos, and he prides himself on following the kit instructions exactly. Now, faced with a pile of building blocks and no instructions, Lolly must find his own way forward. His path isn't clear—and the pressure to join a "crew," as his brother did, is always there. When Lolly and his friend are beaten up and robbed, joining a crew almost seems like the safe choice. But building a fantastical Lego city at the community center provides Lolly with an escape—and an unexpected bridge back to the world.

Rebound by Kwame Alexander (realistic fiction written in verse)

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 worshipping, basketball star his sons look up to.

Rules by Cynthia Lord (realistic fiction)

Twelve-year-old Catherine just wants a normal life. Which is near impossible when you have a brother with autism and a family that revolves around his disability. She's spent years trying to teach David the rules from "a peach is not a funny-looking apple" to "keep your pants on in public"---in order to head off David's embarrassing behaviors. But the summer Catherine meets Jason, a surprising, new sort-of friend, and Kristi, the next-door friend she's always wished for, it's her own shocking behavior that turns everything upside down and forces her to ask: What is normal?

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Wonderstruck by Brian Selznick (historical fiction)

Ben and Rose secretly wish their lives were different. Ben longs for the father he has never known. Rose dreams of a mysterious actress whose life she chronicles in a scrapbook. When Ben discovers a puzzling clue in his mother's room and Rose reads an enticing headline in the newspaper, both children set out alone on desperate quests to find what they are missing.

**Percy Jackson's Greek Gods* by Rick Riordan (mythology)

The son of Poseidon adds his own magic--and sarcastic asides--to the classics. He explains how the world was created, then gives readers his personal take on a who's who of ancients, from Apollo to Zeus. Percy does not hold back. *"If you like horror shows, blood baths, lying, stealing, backstabbing, and cannibalism, then read on, because it definitely was a Golden Age for all that."*

***Orbiting Jupiter* by Gary Schmidt (realistic fiction)**

The shattering story of Joseph, a father at thirteen, who has never seen his daughter, Jupiter. After spending time in a juvenile facility, he's placed with a foster family on a farm in rural Maine. Here Joseph, damaged and withdrawn, meets twelve-year-old Jack, who narrates the account of the troubled, passionate teen who wants to find his baby at any cost. In this riveting novel, two boys discover the true meaning of family and the sacrifices it requires.

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***Money Hungry* by Sharon Flake (realistic fiction)**

Thirteen-year-old Raspberry Hill is starved for money. She will do just about anything legal to get her hands on the almighty dollar--wash cars, sell rotten candy, skip lunch, clean houses. She is obsessed. She is driven. She is afraid. Memories of being homeless, sleeping in the streets, and eating handouts keep Raspberry's eye on the only prize that matters to her: cold, hard cash.

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Heritage Middle School Summer Reading List for Entering Grade 7

The Stars Beneath Our Feet by David Barclay Moore (realistic fiction)

It's Christmas Eve in Harlem, but twelve-year-old Lolly Rachpaul and his mom aren't celebrating. They're still reeling from his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting just a few months earlier. Then Lolly's mother's girlfriend brings him a gift that will change everything: two enormous bags filled with Legos. Lolly's always loved Legos, and he prides himself on following the kit instructions exactly. Now, faced with a pile of building blocks and no instructions, Lolly must find his own way forward.

His path isn't clear—and the pressure to join a “crew,” as his brother did, is always there. When Lolly and his friend are beaten up and robbed, joining a crew almost seems like the safe choice. But building a fantastical Lego city at the community center provides Lolly with an escape—and an unexpected bridge back to the world.

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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 worshipping, basketball star his sons look up to.

Piecing Me Together by Renee Watson (realistic fiction)

Jade believes she must get out of her poor neighborhood if she's ever going to succeed. Her mother tells her to take advantage of every opportunity that comes her way. And Jade has: every day she rides the bus away from her friends and to the private school where she feels like an outsider, but where she has plenty of opportunities. But some *opportunities* she doesn't really welcome, like an invitation to join Women to Women, a mentorship program for “at-risk” girls. Just because her mentor is black and graduated from the same high school doesn't mean she understands where Jade is coming from. She's tired of being singled out as someone who needs help, someone people want to fix. Jade wants to speak, to create, to express her joys and sorrows, her pain and her hope. Maybe there are some things she could show other women about understanding the world and finding ways to be real, to make a difference.

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House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros (realistic fiction)

In a series of vignettes, *The House on Mango Street* covers a year in the life of [Esperanza](#), a Chicana (Mexican-American girl), who is about twelve years old when the novel begins. During the year, she moves with her family into a house on Mango Street. The house is a huge improvement from the family's previous apartment, and it is the first home her parents actually own. However, the house is not what Esperanza has dreamed of, because it is run-down and small. The house is in the center of a crowded Latino neighborhood in Chicago, a city where many of the poor areas are racially segregated. Esperanza does not have any privacy, and she resolves that she will someday leave Mango Street and have a house all her own.

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The shattering story of Joseph, a father at thirteen, who has never seen his daughter, Jupiter. After spending time in a juvenile facility, he's placed with a foster family on a farm in rural Maine. Here Joseph, damaged and withdrawn, meets twelve-year-old Jack, who narrates the account of the troubled, passionate teen who wants to find his baby at any cost. In this riveting novel, two boys discover the true meaning of family and the sacrifices it requires.

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***Shakespeare's Secret* by Elise Broach (mystery)**

Starting sixth grade at a new school is never easy, especially when your name is Hero. Named after a character in a Shakespeare play, Hero isn't at all interested in this literary connection. But when she's told by an eccentric neighbor that there might be a million dollar diamond hidden in her new house and that it could reveal something about Shakespeare's true identity, Hero is determined to live up to her name and uncover the mystery.

***Romiette and Julio* by Sharon Draper (realistic fiction/ classic adaptation)**

When Romiette Cappelle meets Julio Montague, she feels as though she has met the soul mate who can rescue her from her recurring nightmare about fire and water. But like the Shakespearean characters whose names echo theirs, Romiette and Julio discover that not everyone approves of their budding romance. In their case, it is because Romiette is African-American and Julio is Hispanic, and the Devildogs, a dangerous local gang, violently oppose their interracial relationship. When the Devildogs threaten to teach them a lesson, Romiette and Julio come up with a risky plan to escape from the gang's fearsome shadow. But things go terribly awry, and the two find themselves caught up in a deadly reality more frightening than Romiette's nightmare -- and in a desperate struggle to avoid the tragic fate of Shakespeare's famous young lovers.

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***Refugee* by Alan Gratz (realistic/historical fiction)**

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.

***Trash* by Andy Mulligan (mystery)**

In an unnamed Third World country, in the not-so-distant future, three "dumpsite boys" make a living picking through the mountains of garbage on the outskirts of a large city. One unlucky-lucky day, Raphael finds something very special and very mysterious. So mysterious that he decides to keep it, even when the city police offer a handsome reward for its return. That decision brings with it terrifying consequences, and soon the dumpsite boys must use all of their cunning and courage to stay ahead of their pursuers. It's up to Raphael, Gardo, and Rat—boys who have no education, no parents, no homes, and no money—to solve the mystery and right a terrible wrong.

Heritage Middle School Summer Reading List for Entering 8th Grade

Rebound by Kwame Alexander (realistic fiction/ novel in verse)

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 worshipping, basketball star his sons look up to.

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**The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (classic)

No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends—true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on "greasers" like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect—until the night someone takes things too far.

**I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai (nonfiction/memoir)

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

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***Forged by Fire* by Sharon Draper (Hazelwood Trilogy) (realistic fiction)**

The second book in the Hazelwood Trilogy that began with *Tears of a Tiger*.

As a teenager, Gerald finds success as a member of the Hazelwood Tigers basketball team, while Angel develops her talents as a dancer. Trouble still haunts them, however, and Gerald learns, painfully, that young friends can die and old enemies must be faced. In the end he must stand up to his stepfather alone in a blazing confrontation.

***Darkness before Dawn* by Sharon Draper (Hazelwood Trilogy) (realistic fiction)**

The final book in the Hazelwood Trilogy that began with *Tears of a Tiger*. Keisha, Rhonda, Tyrone, Gerald, and BJ are all seniors this year. Gerald's little sister Angel and Rob's younger sister Kiara are both ninth-graders, excited to be in the first year of high school. Rhonda and Tyrone are still together and trying to deal with the closeness of their relationship. Keisha, lonely and still trying to cope with the loss of Andy, envies what they have.

***Anything but Typical* by Nora Baskin (realistic fiction)**

Jason Blake is an autistic 12-year-old living in a neurotypical world. Most days it's just a matter of time before something goes wrong. But Jason finds a glimmer of understanding when he comes across PhoenixBird, who posts stories to the same online site as he does. Jason can be himself when he writes and he thinks that PhoenixBird-her name is Rebecca-could be his first real friend. But as desperate as Jason is to meet her, he's terrified that if they do meet, Rebecca will only see his autism and not who Jason really is.

***Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor* by Caren Stelson (nonfiction/ memoir)**

This striking work of narrative nonfiction tells the true story of six-year-old Sachiko Yasui's survival of the Nagasaki atomic bomb on August 9, 1945, and the heartbreaking and lifelong aftermath. Having conducted extensive interviews with Sachiko Yasui, Caren Stelson chronicles Sachiko's trauma and loss as well as her long journey to find peace. This book offers readers a remarkable new perspective on the final moments of World War II and their aftermath.

***Romiette and Julio* by Sharon Draper (realistic fiction/ classic adaptation)**

When Romiette Cappelle meets Julio Montague, she feels as though she has met the soul mate who can rescue her from her recurring nightmare about fire and water. But like the Shakespearean characters whose names echo theirs, Romiette and Julio discover that not everyone approves of their budding romance. In their case, it is because Romiette is African-American and Julio is Hispanic, and the Devil Dogs, a dangerous local gang, violently oppose their interracial relationship. Things go terribly awry, and the two find themselves caught up in a deadly reality more frightening than Romiette's nightmare -- and in a desperate struggle to avoid the tragic fate of Shakespeare's famous young lovers.

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***Hey, Kiddo* by Jarrett Krosoczka (graphic novel/ memoir)**

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. *Book contains mature themes.*

***Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds (novel in verse/ realistic fiction)**

Jason Reynolds's electrifying 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. As fifteen-year-old Will sets out to avenge his brother Shawn's fatal shooting, seven ghosts who knew Shawn board the elevator and reveal truths that Will needs to know. *Book contains mature themes.*

***Trash* by Andy Mulligan (mystery)**

In an unnamed Third World country, in the not-so-distant future, three “dumpsite boys” make a living picking through the mountains of garbage on the outskirts of a large city. One unlucky-lucky day, Raphael finds something very special and very mysterious. So mysterious that he decides to keep it, even when the city police offer a handsome reward for its return. That decision brings with it terrifying consequences, and soon the dumpsite boys must use all of their cunning and courage to stay ahead of their pursuers. It's up to Raphael, Gardo, and Rat—boys who have no education, no parents, no homes, and no money—to solve the mystery and right a terrible wrong.

Heritage Middle School Special Education Summer Reading Lists

Summer Reading List for 0.5- 1.9 Readers

***Elephant and Piggie* by Mo Willems AR 0.6-1.3**

(Any book in the series)

Enjoy the funny adventures of friends Elephant and Piggie. Stories are written in word bubbles that make a conversation and are perfect for two readers.

***Harry Goes to Day Camp* by James Ziefert AR 1.5**

A perfect book for summer. This story tells of Harry's time at a summer camp.

***The Nuts* by Eric Litwin AR 1.4-1.8**

(Any book in the series)

Read about lives of Hazel Nut and Wally Nut. Written by the author of the *Pete the Cat* books.

***Fly Guy* by Tedd Arnold AR 1.2-2.1)**

(Any book in this series except the Fly Guy Presents nonfiction books)

Read about the adventures of a boy named Buzz and his pet fly.

Summer Reading List for 2.0 -2.9 Readers

***Real Friends* by Shannon Hale AR 2.6**

This graphic memoir follows Shannon's life from kindergarten through fifth grade, during which she

experiences the joy of making first friends while navigating the tricky waters of cliques, bullies, and the popular crowd.

Bad Island by Doug TenNapel AR 2.3

When Reese is forced to go on a boating trip with his family, the last thing he expects is to be shipwrecked on an island, especially one teeming with weird plants and animals.

Big Nate by Lincoln Peirce AR 2.8-3.3

Supremely confident middle school student Nate Wright manages to make getting detention from every one of his teachers in the same day seem like an achievement.

Choose any of the eight novels in this series.

Fly Guy Presents by Tedd Arnold AR 2.8-4.0

Did you enjoy the Fly Guy series before? Ready for a little bit of a challenge? Pick one of the 11 nonfiction texts to learn more about something such as sharks, castles, dinosaurs, or the White House.

Summer Reading List for 3.0-3.9 Readers

Stink by Megan McDonald AR 3.0-3.7

Stink, Judy Moody's little brother, is now the star of his very own series.

Choose any of the ten Stink books in the series.

Salt in His Shoes by Deloris Jordon and Roslyn Jordon AR 3.1-3.7

Young Michael Jordan, who is smaller than the other players, learns that determination and hard work are more important than size when playing the game of basketball.

Choose any of the three books in this series.

Big Nate by Lincoln Peirce AR 2.8-3.3

Supremely confident middle school student Nate Wright manages to make getting detention from every one of his teachers in the same day seem like an achievement.

Choose any of the eight novels in this series.

Andrew Lost by J.C. Greenburg AR 3.3-4.0

When ten-year-old Andrew invents a shrinking machine, he does not expect to be sucked into the machine along with his cousin Judy, only to end up in a dog's nose.

Choose any of the eighteen books in this series.

Summer Reading Lists for AR 4.0+ readers

If you are at a AR 4.0 or higher reading level, you must select a book off of your grade level's regular list of books. The books vary in difficulty and length. Please consider carefully which books would be most appropriate for you.