

# Summer Reading Suggestions

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## **How To Use This Guide**

**Genre:** This guide is first organized by genre: science fiction, drama, etc. However, some books fit into, and there is also a lot of variety within each genre. To pick books they would enjoy, students should read the descriptions.

**Difficulty Level:** For each genre, the guide is divided into difficulty levels:

- *Low difficulty:* young adult books with a Lexile level below 800. These books would be suited to a struggling reader who is reading below grade level.
- *High/Low:* young adult books with an easy Lexile level (below 800) but are written for older teenagers' interests. These books are good for struggling or reluctant readers, but can contain some more mature/adult content.
- *Medium difficulty:* young adult books with a Lexile level between 800 and 1000. These books are suited for readers who are comfortable reading at grade level.
- *High difficulty:* young adult books with a Lexile level above 1000. These books are suited for advanced readers or average readers who wish to challenge themselves.
- *Adult:* books written for adults at any Lexile level. These books are suited for advanced readers. These often contain adult/mature content.

**Age Suggestion:** Whenever possible, this guide includes a suggested age so students can read appropriate material. The higher the age suggestion, the more mature content the book will contain. These age suggestions are taken from commonsensemedia.org and lexile.com, so there is no guarantee that the age suggestion is accurate. At times, these age suggestions can be conservative, so parents might decide their children can handle reading a book for somewhat older readers.

\*\*\*Disclaimer: the adult books on this list were chosen because they are likely to interest advanced middle school readers. Most adult-level books will have some adult/mature content and parents should choose accordingly.

**Descriptions:** The plot descriptions were all taken from amazon.com or goodreads.com

# Coming-of-Age

*Realistic stories about young people and teenagers.*

## Low Difficulty

- **Mexican White Boy** by Matt de la Peña. 15+. Danny' s brown. Half-Mexican brown. And growing up in San Diego that close to the border means everyone else knows exactly who he is before he even opens his mouth.
- **Orbiting Jupiter** by Gary Schmidt. 12+. 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.
- **The Crossover** by Kwame Alexander. 10+. A novel in poetry form. 12-year-old Josh and his twin Jordan have basketball in their blood. They're kings of the court, star players for their school team.

## High/Low

- **Akata Witch** by Nnedi Okorafor. 12+. Twelve-year-old Sunny lives in Nigeria, but she was born American. Her features are African, but she's albino.
- **Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe** by Benjamin Alire Saenz. 14+. Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world.
- **I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter** by Erika L. Sanchez. 14+. Perfect Mexican daughters do not go away to college. And they do not move out of their parents' house after high school graduation. Perfect Mexican daughters never *abandon* their family.
- **Mosquitoland** by David Arnold. 14+. Mim ditches her life and hops aboard a northbound Greyhound bus to her real home and her real mother, meeting a quirky cast of fellow travelers along the way.
- **Playlist for the Dead** by Michelle Falkoff. 15+. There was a party. There was a fight. The next morning, Sam's best friend, Hayden, was dead.
- **The Serpent King** by Jeff Zentner. 14+. Dill has had to wrestle with vipers his whole life—at home, as the only son of a Pentecostal minister who urges him to handle poisonous rattlesnakes, and at school, where he faces down bullies.

## Medium Difficulty

- **Dark Dude** by Oscar Hijuelos. 15+. In Wisconsin, Rico could blend in. His light hair and lighter skin wouldn't make him the "dark dude" or the punching bag for the whole neighborhood.
- **Turtles All the Way Down** by John Green. 14+. Sixteen-year-old Aza never intended to pursue the mystery of fugitive billionaire Russell Pickett, but there's a hundred-thousand-dollar reward at stake and her Best and Most Fearless Friend, Daisy, is eager to investigate.

## Adult

- **The Catcher in the Rye** by J.D. Salinger. 14+. Holden Caulfield leaves his prep school in Pennsylvania and goes underground in New York City for three days.

# Drama

*Realistic stories on a wide range of meaningful topics.*

## Low Difficulty

- **Darius the Great is Not Okay** by Adib Khorram. 12+. Darius speaks better Klingon than Farsi, and he knows more about Hobbits than Iranians. He's about to take his first trip to Iran.
- **When I Was the Greatest** by Jason Reynolds. 12+. In Bed Stuy, New York, a small misunderstanding can escalate into having a price on your head—even if you're totally clean.

## High/Low

- **All American Boys** by Jason Reynolds. 14+. Two teens—one black, one white—grapple with the repercussions of a single violent act.
- **Devils Within** by S. F. Henson. 13+. After Nate Fuller kills his white supremacist father in self-defense, he must find a way to redefine what's right and wrong and learn to trust again.
- **On the Come Up** by Angie Thomas. 14+. Sixteen-year-old Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. Or at least win her first battle.

## Medium Difficulty

- **Conviction** by Kelly Gilbert. 14+. The arrest of Braden's father, a well-known Christian radio host has sparked national media attention. His fate lies in his son's hands; Braden is the key witness in his father's upcoming trial.
- **Faceless** by Alyssa Sheinmel. 12+. A gripping novel about a girl who gets a face transplant -- and has to rediscover her identity.
- **The Poet X** by Elizabeth Acevedo. 13+. Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Then, she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club.

# Mystery

*Books that will have you wondering until the end.*

## Low Difficulty

- **A Good Girl's Guide to Murder** by Holly Jackson. 13+. Story about a closed local murder case that doesn't add up, and a girl who's determined to find the real killer.
- **Skink: No Surrender** by Carl Hiaasen. 12+. When your cousin goes missing under suspicious circumstances, who do you call? There's only one man for the job: a half-crazed, half-feral, one-eyed ex-governor named Skink.

## High/Low

- **Bone Gap** by Laura Ruby. 14+. The story of Roza, a beautiful girl who is taken from a quiet midwestern town and imprisoned by a mysterious man.
- **The Diviners** by Libba Bray. 15+. Evie O'Neill has been exiled from her boring old hometown and shipped off to the bustling streets of New York City, and she's worried someone will discover her dark secret: a supernatural power.
- **Truly Devious** by Maureen Johnson. 14+. True-crime aficionado Stevie Bell is set to begin her first year at Ellingham Academy, and she has an ambitious plan: She will solve the cold case of the school's founding.
- **We Were Liars** by E. Lockhart. 13+. A beautiful and distinguished family. A private island. A brilliant, damaged girl; a passionate, political boy. A group of four friends—the Liars—whose friendship turns destructive.

## Medium Difficulty

- **More Than This** by Patrick Ness. 14+. A boy drowns, desperate and alone in his final moments. He dies. Then he wakes up, alive. How can this be? And what is this strange deserted place?
- **Murder is Bad Manners** by Robin Stevens. 10+. Daisy Wells and Hazel Wong are best friends at Deepdean School for Girls, and they both have a penchant for solving mysteries.
- **The Mysterious Benedict Society** by Trenton Lee Stewart. 10+. "Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" Dozens of children respond to this peculiar ad in the newspaper...
- **Paper Valentine** by Brenna Yovanoff. 13+. Someone in Hannah Wagner's peaceful suburban community is killing girls.
- **York: The Shadow Cipher** by Laura Ruby. 10+. In the 1800s, mysterious architects left New York the Old York Cipher—a puzzle laid into the shining city they constructed, at the end of which was promised a treasure beyond all imagining.

# Adventure and Thriller

*Edge-of-your-seat tales.*

## Low Difficulty

- **Gone** by Michael Grant. 14+. In the blink of an eye, everyone disappears. Gone. Except for the young.
- **The Limit** by Kristen Landon. 11+. In a world not too far removed from our own, kids are being taken away to special workhouses if their families exceed the monthly debt limit imposed by the government.
- **Superman: Dawnbreaker** by Matt de la Peña. 12+. Clark Kent has always been faster, stronger - better - than everyone around him. But he wasn't raised to show off, and drawing attention to himself could be dangerous.
- **Wake Up Missing** by Kate Messner. 11+. Einstein, Edison, DaVinci, Oppenheimer, Curie. The greatest minds in science are about to be illegally recreated—and Cat Grayson must stop it.

## High/Low

- **Girl, Stolen** by April Henry. 12+. Griffin hadn't meant to kidnap Cheyenne and once he finds out that not only does she have pneumonia, but that she's blind, he really doesn't know what to do.
- **I Hunt Killers** by Berry Lyga. 14+. Jazz is a likable teenager. A charmer, some might say. But he's also the son of the world's most infamous serial killer.
- **I am the Weapon** by Allen Zadoff. 14+. Body Nobody shows up in a new high school in a new town under a new name, makes a few friends, and doesn't stay long. Just long enough for someone in his new friend's family to die -- of "natural causes."
- **The Raft** by S.A. Bodeen. 14+. Bodie is in the water. Fighting for her life. Max pulls her onto the raft, and that's when the real terror begins. They have no water. Their only food is a bag of Skittles. There are sharks.
- **The Rule of Three** by Eric Walters. 12+. One shocking afternoon, computers around the globe shut down in a viral catastrophe.
- **The Prisoner of Cell 25** by Richard Paul Evans. 12+. To everyone at Meridian High School, Michael Vey is an ordinary fourteen-year-old. But Michael is anything but ordinary. Michael has special powers.

## Medium Difficulty

- **Batman: Nightwalker by Marie Lu. 13+.** Before he was Batman, he was Bruce Wayne. A reckless boy willing to break the rules for a girl who may be his worst enemy.
- **The Walls Around Us** by Nova Suma. 14+. A supernatural tale of guilt and of innocence, and of what happens when one is mistaken for the other.

# Horror

*Scary, spooky and creepy.*

## High/Low

- **Bad Girls Don't Die** by Katie Alender. 14+. Alexis thought she led a typically dysfunctional high school existence. But then she realizes that her sister is turning her life from dysfunction into danger.
- **The Enemy** by Charles Higginson. 14+. In the wake of a devastating disease, everyone sixteen and older is either dead or a decomposing, brainless creature with a ravenous appetite for flesh.
- **Hold Me Closer, Necromancer** by Lish McBride. 14+. Sam leads a pretty normal life, until a fast food prank brings him to the attention of Douglas, a creepy guy with an intense violent streak. Turns out Douglas is a necromancer who raises the dead for cash and sees potential in Sam.
- **Rot and Ruin** by Jonathan Maberry. 14+. In the zombie-infested, post-apocalyptic America where Benny Imura lives, every teenager must find a job by the time they turn fifteen or get their rations cut in half.
- **Slasher Girls and Monster Boys**. 12+. A host of the sharpest young adult authors come together in this collection of terrifying tales and psychological thrillers.

## Medium Difficulty

- **The Knife of Never Letting Go** by Patrick Ness. 14+. Todd Hewitt is the only boy in a town of men. Ever since the settlers were infected with the Noise germ, Todd can hear everything the men think, and they hear everything he thinks.
- **Shutter** by Courtney Alameda. 14+. As one of the last descendants of the Van Helsing lineage, Micheline has trained since childhood to destroy monsters both corporeal and spiritual.

## High Difficulty

- **The Monstrumologist** by Rick Yancey. 15+. In the short time he has lived with the monster hunter, Will has grown accustomed to dangerous business. But when one visitor comes with the body of a young girl and the monster that was eating her, Will's world is about to change forever.

# Romance

*Books with love as the main focus.*

## Low Difficulty

- **Love and Gelato** by Jenna Evans Welch. 12+. Lina is spending the summer in Tuscany, but she isn't in the mood for Italy's famous sunshine and fairy-tale landscape. She's only there because it was her mother's dying wish that she get to know her father.

## High/Low

- **Lovely War** by Julie Berry. 13+. A critically acclaimed, multi-layered romance set in the perilous days of World Wars I and II, where gods hold the fates--and the hearts--of four mortals in their hands.
- **I'll Give You the Sun** by Jandy Nelson. 14+. At first, Jude and her twin brother are Noah and Jude; inseparable. Years later, they are barely speaking. A story of first love, family, loss, and betrayal.
- **Tell Me Three Things** by Julie Buxbaum. 13+. What if the person you need the most is someone you've never met?
- **The Upside of Unrequited** by Becky Albertalli. 15+. Seventeen-year-old Molly Peskin-Suso knows all about unrequited love. No matter how many times her twin sister, Cassie, tells her to woman up, Molly can't stomach the idea of rejection. So she's careful. Fat girls always have to be careful.

## Medium Difficulty

- **An Abundance of Katherines** by John Green. 14+. When it comes to relationships, Colin Singleton's type is girls named Katherine.
- **Since You've Been Gone** by Morgan Matson. 12+. Before Sloane, Emily didn't go to parties, she barely talked to guys, and she didn't do anything crazy. Enter Sloane, social tornado...

## High Difficulty

- **The Fortune of Carmen Navarro** by Jennifer Bryant. 13+. Carmen Navarro rings up customers at the Quikmart, bored to tears. It's a job, and she needs it. But Carmen's true love is music.
- **I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have to Kill You** by Ally Carter. 12+. Cammie Morgan is a student at the Gallagher Academy for Exceptional Young Women.



# Historical

*Stories set in interesting historical periods.*

## Low Difficulty

- **Fever 1793** by Laurie Halse Anderson. 11+. It's late summer 1793, and the streets of Philadelphia are abuzz with mosquitoes and rumors of fever.
- **A Moment Comes** by Jennifer Bradbury. 12+. Before India was divided, three teens, each from wildly different backgrounds, cross paths.
- **Never Fall Down** by Patricia MacCormick. 15+. The true story of Arn Chorn-Pond, who defied the odds to survive the Cambodian genocide of 1975-1979 and the labor camps of the Khmer Rouge

## High/Low

- **The Fountains of Silence** by Ruta Sepetys. 13+. Madrid, 1957. Under the fascist dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, Spain is hiding a dark secret.
- **Out of Darkness** by Ashley Hope Perez. 15+. The 1937 New London school explosion, the worst school disaster in American history, is the backdrop for a riveting novel about segregation, love, family and the forces that destroy people

## Medium Difficulty

- **The Cure For Dreaming** by Cat Winters. 13+. Olivia Mead is a headstrong, independent girl—a suffragist—in an age that prefers its girls to be docile.
- **Dread Nation** by Sandie Angulo Chen. 13+. An alt-history story about the civil war and zombies.
- **The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue** by Mackenzi Lee. 14+. Henry "Monty" Montague was born and bred to be a gentleman, but he was never one to be tamed.
- **The Things They Carried** by Tim O'Brien. 15+. Each of these 22 tales relate the exploits and personalities of a fictional platoon of American soldiers in Vietnam.

## High Difficulty

- **The Rifle** by Gary Paulsen. 11+. This tough, thought-provoking novel for young adults takes deadly aim at the oft-quoted notion: "Guns don't kill people, people kill people."
- **Code Name Verity** by Elizabeth Wein. 15+. Two young women from totally different backgrounds are thrown together during the Second World War.

## Adult

- **The Poisonwood Bible** by Barbara Kingsolver. A story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959.

# Fantasy

*Magical stories that can take place in imaginary worlds or our own.*

## Low Difficulty

- **The Girl of Fire and Thorns** by Rae Carson. 12+. Once a century, one person is chosen for greatness. Elisa is the chosen one. But she is also the younger of two princesses.
- **Graceling** by Kristen Cashore. 14+. Katsa has been able to kill a man with her bare hands since she was eight—she's a Graceling, one of the rare people in her land born with an extreme skill.
- **Harry Potter and the Cursed Child** by J.K. Rowling. 10+. Play. It was always difficult being Harry Potter and it isn't much easier now that he is an overworked employee of the Ministry of Magic.
- **Leviathan** by Scott Westerfeld. 12+. It is the cusp of World War I. The Austro-Hungarians and Germans have their Clankers, steam-driven iron machines loaded with guns and ammunition. The British Darwinists employ genetically fabricated animals as their weaponry.
- **Seraphina** by Rachel Hartman. 12+. Four decades of peace have done little to ease the mistrust between humans and dragons in the kingdom of Goredd.

## High/Low

- **An Ember in the Ashes** by Sabaa Tahir. 14+. Laia is a slave. Elias is a soldier. Neither is free. Under the Martial Empire, defiance is met with death.
- **Four Dead Queens** by Astrid Scholte. 13+. Four dead queens. Three days to catch a killer. Two forbidden romances. One shocking twist you won't see coming.
- **The Hazel Wood** by Melissa Albert. 13+. When Alice's grandmother, the reclusive author of a cult-classic book of pitch-dark fairy tales, dies alone on her estate, the Hazel Wood, Alice learns how bad her luck can really get.
- **Red Queen** by Victoria Aveyard. 13+. Mare Barrow's world is divided by blood—those with common, Red blood serve the Silver - blooded elite, who are gifted with superhuman abilities.
- **Shadowshaper** by Daniel Older. 14+. Sierra discovers a supernatural order called the Shadowshapers, who connect with spirits via paintings, music, and stories.
- **Shatter Me** by Tahereh Mafi. 14+. The last time Juliette touched someone, it was an accident, but The Reestablishment locked her up for murder. No one knows why Juliette's touch is fatal.

## Medium Difficulty

- **The Alchemyst** by Michael Scott. 11+. He holds the secret that can end the world. The truth: Nicholas Flamel was born in Paris on September 28, 1330. The records show that he died in 1418. But his tomb is empty.
- **Black Wings Beating** by Alex London. 13+. The people of Uztar have long looked to the sky with hope and wonder. Nothing in their world is more revered than the birds of prey and no one more honored than the falconers who call them to their fists.
- **Caraval** by Stephanie Garber. 13+. Scarlett Dragna has never left the tiny island where she and her sister live with their powerful, and cruel, father. Now Scarlett's father has arranged a marriage for her.
- **Kingdom of Back** by Marie Lu. 12+. Two siblings. Two brilliant talents. But only one Mozart. Born with a gift for music, Nannerl Mozart has just one wish--to be remembered forever.
- **Shadow and Bone** by Leigh Bardugo. 13+. Surrounded by enemies, the once-great nation of Ravka has been torn in two by the Shadow Fold, a swath of near impenetrable darkness crawling with monsters who feast on human flesh.

## High Difficulty

- **A Wizard of Earthsea** by Ursula K. Leguin. 10+. Ged was the greatest sorcerer in Earthsea, but in his youth he was the reckless Sparrowhawk.

- **Downsiders** by Neal Shusterman. 12+. Talon lives Downside, that is, underneath New York City. There is a strict code of secrecy among the Downsiders.

## **Adult**

- **The Belgariad** by David Eddings. It all begins with the theft of the Orb that for so long protected the West from an evil god.
- **The Color of Magic** by Terry Pratchett. On a world supported on the back of a giant turtle (sex unknown), a gleeful, explosive, wickedly eccentric expedition sets out.
- **The Sword of Shannara** by Terry Brooks. Shea knew little of the troubles that plagued the rest of the world. Then the giant, forbidding Allanon revealed that the supposedly dead Warlock Lord was plotting to destroy the world.

# Science Fiction

*Futuristic stories about society and technology.*

## Low Difficulty

- **The Eleventh Plague** by Jeff Hirsch. 12+. In the aftermath of a war, America's landscape has been ravaged and two-thirds of the population left dead from a vicious strain of influenza.
- **Life as We Know It** by Susan Pfeffer. 12+. High school sophomore Miranda's disbelief turns to fear in a split second when an asteroid knocks the moon closer to Earth.
- **Uglies** by Scott Westerfeld. 13+. Tally is about to turn sixteen, and she can't wait. In just a few weeks she'll have the operation that will turn her from a repellent ugly into a stunning pretty.

## High/Low

- **The House of the Scorpion** by Nancy Farmer. 11+. This modern classic takes on an iron-fisted drug lord, clones bred for their organs, and what it means to be human.
- **Internment** by Samira Ahmed. 13+. Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens.
- **Landscape with Invisible Hand** by M.T. Anderson. 13+. When the vuvv first landed, it came as a surprise to aspiring artist Adam and the rest of Earth — but not necessarily an unwelcome one. Can it really be called an invasion when the vuvv generously offered free advanced technology?
- **Legend** by Marie Lu. 12+. 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.
- **Ship Breaker** by Paolo Bacigalupi. 13+. A gritty, high-stakes adventure set in a futuristic world where oil is scarce, but loyalty is scarcer.
- **Steelheart** by Brandon Sanderson. 12+. How far would you go for revenge if someone killed your father? If someone destroyed your city?
- **Unwind** by Neal Shusterman. 13+. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called "unwinding."

## Medium Difficulty

- **Aurora Rising** by Amie Kaufmann. 14+. The year is 2380, and the graduating cadets of Aurora Academy are being assigned their first missions. Star pupil Tyler Jones is ready to recruit the squad of his dreams
- **The Prom Goer's Interstellar Excursion** by Chris McCoy. 12+. Bennett pulls off something he never imagined possible: his dream girl, Sophie, agrees to be his date... then Sophie get abducted by aliens
- **Scythe** by Neal Shusterman. 12+. A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery. Humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control.
- **Warcross** by Marie Lu. 13+. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down players who bet on the game Warcross illegally.

## Adult

- **The Long Earth** by Terry Pratchett and Stephen Baxter. 16+. A box containing some wiring, a three-way switch and a...potato. It is the prototype of an invention that will change the way Mankind views his world forever.
- **The Passage** by Justin Cronin. When an experiment goes terribly wrong, terror is unleashed.
- **Virtual Light** by William Gibson. 2005: Welcome to NoCal and SoCal, the uneasy sister-states of what used to be California.
- **Wool** by Hugh Howey. The world outside has grown unkind, the view of it limited, talk of it forbidden.

# Graphic Novels

*Thought-provoking stories, these are more than simple comics.*

## Low Difficulty

- **Anya's Ghost** by Vera Brosgol. 12+. Of all the things Anya expected to find at the bottom of an old well, a new friend was not one of them. Especially not a new friend who's been dead for a century.
- **Ghostopolis** by Doug TenNapel. 9+. Imagine Garth Hale's surprise when he's accidentally zapped to the spirit world by Frank Gallows, a washed-out ghost wrangler.
- **The Rise of Renegade X.** 11+. Sixteen-year-old Damien Locke has a plan: major in messing with people at the local supervillain university and become a professional evil genius, just like his supervillain mom.

## Medium Difficulty

- **American Born Chinese** by Gene Luen Yang. 13+. Jin Wang starts at a new school where he's the only Chinese-American student.
- **The Phantom Twin** by Michael Berry. 14+. A young woman is haunted by the ghost of her conjoined twin.
- **The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees** by Don Brown. 13+. A graphic novel about the Syrian refugee crisis, exposing the harsh realities of living in, and trying to escape, a war zone.

## High Difficulty

- **March: Book One** by John Lewis. 12+. March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights.

## Adult

- **Maus** by Art Spiegelman. The story of Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and his son, a cartoonist coming to terms with his father's story.

# Non-Fiction

*Interesting informational texts on a wide range of topics.*

## Medium Difficulty

- **The 57 Bus** by Dashka Slater. 13+. One teenager in a skirt. One teenager with a lighter. One moment that changes both of their lives forever.
- **Bomb** by Steve Sheinkin. 12+. In December of 1938, a chemist in a German laboratory made a shocking discovery.
- **The Boys Who Challenged Hitler** by Phillip Hoose. 12+. Fifteen-year-old Knud Pedersen resolved with his brother and a handful of schoolmates to take action against the Nazis if the adults would not.
- **The Faithful Spy** by Jon Hendrix. 10+. Adolf Hitler's Nazi party is gaining strength and becoming more menacing every day. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a pastor upset by the inaction of the German church, forms a breakaway church to speak out against the established political and religious authorities.
- **The Great and Only Barnum** by Candace Fleming. 8+. P.T. Barnum, known far and wide for his jumbo elephants, midgets, and three-ring circuses. The man behind the Greatest Show on Earth
- **How They Croaked: The Awful Ends of the Awfully Famous** by Georgia Bragg. 11+. *How They Croaked* relays all the gory details of how nineteen world figures gave up the ghost.
- **I am Malala (young readers edition)** by Malala Yousafzai. 10+. Malala Yousafzai was only ten years old when the Taliban took control of her region. They said music was a crime. They said women weren't allowed to go to the market. They said girls couldn't go to school.
- **Most Dangerous** by Steve Sheinkin. 14+. Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War.
- **The Port Chicago 50** by Steven Sheinkin. 11+. On July 17, 1944, a massive explosion rocked the segregated Navy base at Port Chicago, California, killing more than 300 sailors.
- **The Pregnancy Project** by Gaby Rodriguez. 15+. When Gaby faked a pregnancy to challenge stereotypes, she also changed her life.

## High Difficulty

- **Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition** by Karen Blumenthal. 12+. It began with the best of intentions...
- **Chew On This** by Eric Schlosser. 12+. Kids love fast food. And the fast food industry definitely loves kids. It couldn't survive without them.
- **Courage Has No Color** by Tanya Lee Stone. 11+. They became America's first black paratroopers. Why was their story never told?
- **The Dark Game: True Spy Stories** by Paul Janeczko. 11+. From clothesline codes to surveillance satellites and cyber espionage, Paul B. Janeczko uncovers two centuries' worth of true spy stories in U.S. history.
- **The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion and the Fall of Imperial Russia** by Candace Fleming. 12+. Here is the tumultuous, heartrending, true story of the Romanovs.
- **Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow** by Susan Campbell Bartoletti. 12+. By the time Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, 3.5 million children belonged to the Hitler Youth.
- **Laughing at My Nightmare** by Shane Burcaw. 12+. Shane Burcaw's *Laughing at My Nightmare* describes the challenges he faces as a twenty-one-year-old with spinal muscular atrophy.
- **The Nazi Hunters** by Neal Bascomb. 12+. A spy mission, a Holocaust tale, and a first-class work of nonfiction.
- **Quiet Power** by Susan Cain. 10+. The secret strengths of introverts.
- **Sabotage** by Neal Bascomb. 13+. Armed with little more than skis, explosives, and great courage, they will survive months in the snowy wilderness, elude a huge manhunt, and execute two dangerous missions. The result? The greatest act of sabotage in all of World War II.
- **Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different** by Karen Blumenthal. 12+. Steve Jobs was given up for adoption at birth, dropped out of college after one semester, and at the age of twenty, created Apple in his parents' garage with his friend Steve Wozniack.

- **Sugar Changed the World** by Marc Aronson. 11+. The globe-spanning story of the sweet substance and to seek out the voices of those who led bitter sugar lives.
- **Team Moon** by Catherine Thimmesh. 11+. Here is a rare perspective on a story we only thought we knew. For Apollo 11, the first moon landing, is a story that belongs to many, not just the few and famous.
- **They Called Themselves the KKK** by Susan Campbell Bartoletti. 11+. This is the story of how a secret terrorist group took root in America's democracy.
- **Tracking Trash** by Loree Burns. 10+. Aided by an army of beachcombers, oceanographer Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer tracks trash in the name of science.
- **Wheels of Change: How Women Rode the Bicycle to Freedom** by Sue Macy. 14+. Take a lively look at women's history from aboard a bicycle, which granted females the freedom of mobility and helped empower women's liberation.
- **Who Was First? Discovering the Americas** by Russell Freedman. Many generations of American schoolchildren were taught that Columbus discovered America, and a holiday reminds us every October. But historical investigation in recent years has shown us otherwise.
- **Witches! The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem** by Rosalyn Schanzer. 10+. In the little colonial town of Salem Village, Massachusetts, two girls began to twitch, mumble, and contort their bodies into strange shapes.