

June 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians of Incoming Sixth Graders:

While your children are beginning what is sure to be a wonderful summer vacation after a great school year, we also want to make sure that our incoming 6th grade students are able to maintain all of the reading and thinking skills that they have strengthened during their 5th grade year. The best way to maintain these gains is through more engaging reading. We recognize that you also want to help prepare them for a successful start to their middle school years and the development of lifelong reading enjoyment.

The New York State Education Department recommends that all middle school students read a minimum of 25 books each year to achieve fluent literacy. We designed our summer reading program to encourage reading for pleasure and to help students develop and maintain reading proficiency. All incoming Sixth Graders to Orchard Park Middle School are expected to read at least one book from the 6th grade reading list (attached below) during the summer break. Summer reading report forms can be filled out by clicking on the link on the summer reading page on our school library webpage. Each child should fill out this form after every book she/he reads. **The form will be available only after mid-August when teacher placements are finalized.** Individual teachers may have additional requirements. We encourage and appreciate your support and involvement in your child's summer reading!

Thank you - your support makes a real difference!

Happy Reading,

OPMS Sixth Grade Teachers

Suggested Reading List for New 6th Graders June, 2024

GRL: Guided Reading Level (Fountas & Pinnell) *indicates text complexity A-Z*

[RR] – recommended for reluctant readers

Nonfiction

Finding Gobi: Young Reader's Edition, by Dion Leonard **Lexile: 680 GRL: n/a**

When Dion Leonard came across a stray dog while competing in a 155-mile race through the Gobi desert, he made an unexpected, furry friend who would travel alongside him through the desert for almost eighty miles. And when his pint-sized companion goes missing, Dion is determined to find the pup he named Gobi and bring her home with him.

Adventure

The 1,000 Year Old Boy by Ross Welford **Lexile: 720 GRL: V**

A heartstopping, poignant, epic adventure story about a boy destined to live forever, who only wants to grow up. Without death, life is just existence. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live forever? Well, Alfie Monk can tell you. He may seem like an ordinary eleven-year-old boy, but he's actually more than a thousand years old.

The Fear Place, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor - **Lexile: 810 GRL: S**

When he and his older brother Gordon are left camping alone in the Rocky Mountains, twelve-year-old Doug faces his fear of heights and his feelings about Gordon -- with the help of a cougar.

Maze of Bones (39 Clues Series, book #1), by Rick Riordan - **Lexile: 610 GRL: U**

When their beloved Aunt Grace dies, Dan, 11, and Amy, 14—along with other Cahill descendants — are faced with an unusual choice: inherit one million dollars or participate in a perilous treasure hunt. Cahills have steered the course of history for centuries and this quest's outcome will bring the victors unimaginable power and affect all of humankind.

Call Me Francis Tucket, by Gary Paulsen - **Lexile: 1050 GRL: W**

While on a wagon train headed for Oregon, fourteen-year-old Francis Tucket is kidnapped by Pawnee Indians and then falls in with a one-armed trapper who teaches him how to live in the wild. First in the Paulsen series: Tucket Adventures.

Far North, by Will Hobbs - **Lexile: 820 GRL: V**

After the destruction of their floatplane, sixteen-year-old Gabe and his Dene friend, Raymond, struggle to survive a winter in the wilderness of the Northwest Territories of Canada.

Jason's Gold, by Will Hobbs - **Lexile: 860 GRL: T**

In 1897, fifteen-year-old Jason embarks on a ten thousand-mile journey in hopes of striking it rich after hearing the news that gold has been discovered in Canada's Yukon Territory. This book has a sequel, *Down the Yukon*.

Fantasy

11 Birthdays, by Wendy Mass - **Lexile: 650 GRL: V**

Peculiar things begin to happen when Amanda and Leo plan to celebrate their eleventh birthday separately after celebrating their first nine same-day birthdays together.

Bob, by Wendy Mass and Rebecca Stead - **Lexile: 590 GRL: n/a**

Ten-year-old Livy hasn't visited her grandmother in Australia in five years, and when she returns, she gets the feeling she forgot something from her last visit. She then meets a small green creature named Bob, who reminds Livy that she promised to help him get home, and he's been waiting for her ever since.

The Boggart, by Susan Cooper - **Lexile: 1030 GRL: U**

After visiting the castle in Scotland which her family has inherited and returning home to Canada, twelve-year-old Emily finds that she has accidentally brought back with her a boggart, an invisible and mischievous spirit with a fondness for practical jokes.

Gregor the Overlander, by Suzanne Collins [RR] **Lexile: 630 GRL: V**

When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving humans, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders while on a quest foretold by ancient prophecy.

Grump, by Liesl Shurtliff - **Lexile: 630 GRL: W**

Borlen (nicknamed "Grump") has always dreamed of visiting the Surface, so when the opportunity to leave the dwarf caverns arises, he jumps at the chance. He befriends Queen Elfrida, who feeds him all the rubies he can eat and allows him to rule at her side in exchange for magic and information. But when Elfrida commands him to do something horrible to her stepdaughter, Snow White, Grump finds himself in a lot of trouble.

Island of the Aunts, by Eva Ibbotson - **Lexile: 890 GRL: U-V**

As they get older, several sisters decide that they must kidnap children and bring them to their secluded island home to help with the work of caring for an assortment of unusual sea creatures.

The Lost Years of Merlin, by T.A. Barron - **Lexile: 770 GRL: S**

A young boy who has no identity nor memory of his past washes ashore on the coast of Wales and finds his true name after a series of fantastic adventures.

The One and Only Ivan, by Katherine Applegate [RR] **Lexile: 570 GRL: S**

When Ivan, a gorilla who has lived for years in a down-and-out circus-themed mall, meets Ruby, a baby elephant that has been added to the mall, he decides that he must find her a better life.

Redwall Series, by Brian Jacques - **Lexile: 890 GRL: Z**

An epic saga by a master of the animal fantasy genre. In this first volume, the peaceful life of ancient Redwall Abbey is shattered by the arrival of the evil rat Cluny and his villainous hordes. Matthias, a young mouse, determines to find the legendary sword of Martin the Warrior which, he is convinced, will help Redwall's inhabitants destroy the enemy.

The School Between Winter and Fairyland, by Heather Fawcett - **Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a**

As the beastkeeper for the Inglenook School of Magic, twelve-year-old Autumn Malog has a way with the school's assorted monsters who serve to train the students to be future monster hunters. When the school's prophesied dragon hunter, Cai Morrigan, approaches her for help in curing his fear of dragons, she in return asks for his help in finding her missing twin brother Winter, who disappeared a year ago and was said to be eaten by the notorious Hollow Dragon.

Secrets of Droon series, by Tony Abbott - **Lexile: 610 GRL: O**

Eric and his friends find entry into the mysterious world of Droon by using a staircase in Eric's basement. What fate awaits them there? The first volume in the series is, *The Hidden Stairs and the Magic Carpet*.

The Wishing Spell, by Chris Colfer - **Lexile: 720 GRL: U**

Through the mysterious powers of a cherished book of stories, twins Alex and Conner leave their world behind and find themselves in a foreign land full of wonder and magic where they come face-to-face with the fairy tale characters they grew up reading about.

Historical Fiction

Dear America series, by various authors **GRL: T and up**

Written in a diary format, each historical novel is extensively researched from actual

letters and diaries, allowing readers to experience the daily lives of girls from different times in American history.

***A Drowned Maiden's Hair: A Melodrama*, by Laura Amy Schlitz - Lexile: 690 GRL: R**

At the Barbary Asylum for Female Orphans, eleven-year-old Maud is adopted by three spinster sisters moonlighting as mediums who take her home and reveal to her the role she will play in their séances.

***Homeless Bird*, by Gloria Whelan - Lexile: 800 GRL: X**

Thirteen-year-old Koly enters into an ill-fated arranged marriage and must either suffer a destiny dictated by India's customs or find the courage to oppose tradition.

***My Louisiana Sky*, by Kimberly Willis Holt - Lexile: 770 GRL: T**

Growing up in Saitter, Louisiana, in the 1950s, twelve-year-old Tiger Ann struggles with her feelings about her stern, but loving grandmother, her mentally slow parents, and her good friend and neighbor, Jesse.

***My Name is America series*, by various authors GRL: U and up**

Adventure-based historical fiction series written in journal (diary) format and designed to appeal to boy readers.

***Nory Ryan's Song*, by Patricia Reilly Giff - Lexile: 600 GRL: T**

When a terrible blight attacks Ireland's potato crop in 1845, twelve-year-old Nory Ryan's courage and ingenuity helps her family and neighbors survive.

***Out of Left Field* by Ellen Klages Lexile: 640 GRL: M**

****Also appears in sports****

In 1957, inspired by what she is learning about civil rights and armed with knowledge of female ball players, ten-year-old Katy Gordon fights to be allowed to play Little League baseball.

***A Single Shard*, by Linda Sue Park - Lexile: 920 GRL: U**

Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge near a potters' village, and longs to learn how to throw the delicate celadon ceramics himself.

***Something Upstairs*, by Avi - Lexile: 580 GRL: T**

When he moves from Los Angeles to Providence, Rhode Island, Kenny discovers that his new house is haunted by the spirit of a black slave boy who asks Kenny to return with him to the early nineteenth century and prevent his murder by slave traders.

Turtle in Paradise, by Jennifer L. Holm. - **Lexile: 610 GRL: S**

In 1935, when her mother gets a job housekeeping for a woman who does not like children, eleven-year-old Turtle is sent to stay with relatives she has never met in far away Key West, Florida.

Walking with Miss Millie by Tamara Bundy **Lexile: 790 GRL: S**

Alice is angry at having to move to Rainbow, Georgia—a too small, too hot, dried-up place she's sure will never feel like home. Then she gets put in charge of walking her elderly neighbor's dog. But Clarence won't budge without Miss Millie, so Alice and Miss Millie walk him together. Strolling with Miss Millie quickly becomes the highlight of Alice's day, as she learns about the town's past and meets a mix of its catty and kind residents.

Humor

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, by Roald Dahl - **Lexile: 810 GRL: R**

Each of five children lucky enough to discover an entry ticket into Mr. Willy Wonka's mysterious chocolate factory takes advantage of the situation in his own way.

The Great Brain, by John D. Fitzgerald - **Lexile: 840 GRL: T**

The exploits of the Great Brain of Adenville, Utah, are described by his younger brother, frequently the victim of the Great Brain's schemes for gaining prestige or money.

Hank Zipzer Series, by Henry Winkler **[RR] GRL: ~O-R**

The first book in the Hank Zipzer series is *Niagara Falls, Or Does It?* However, the series has been restarted more recently with *The Crazy Classroom Cascade*. The series focuses on the antics of Hank, the "world's greatest underachiever" who suffers from dyslexia. It is based on the real life of Henry Winkler.

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key, by Jack Gantos - **Lexile: 970 GRL: T**

To the constant disappointment of his mother and his teachers, Joey has trouble paying attention or controlling his mood swings when his prescription medications wear off and he starts getting worked up and acting wired.

Knights of the Kitchen Table, by Jon Scieszka - **Lexile: 630 GRL: P**

One minute they're looking at pictures of knights in the book, a birthday gift from Joe's magician uncle, the next minute they're battling fire-breathing dragons and a foul-smelling giant in King Arthur's Britain. Will Joe, Fred, and Sam escape death from these only to die at the hands of a fearsome Black Knight?

Skinnybones, by Barbara Park - **Lexile: 590 GRL: P**

Alex's active sense of humor helps him get along with the school braggart, make the most of his athletic talents, and simply get by in a hectic world.

Zack Files Series by Dan Greenburg [RR] **Lexile: ~400 GRL: N**

The Zack Files contains 30 books, each of which is a humorous take on the main character, Zack, dealing with a supernatural issue. The first book, *Great-Grandpa's in the Litter Box*, focuses on what happens when Zack gets a talking cat from the animal shelter which claims to be his great grandpa. The series does not need to be read in order, but it may help with minor details from one book to the next.

Mystery

The Door to Time, by Pierdomenico Baccalario - **Lexile: 610 GRL: S**

After moving from London to an old mansion on the English coast, eleven-year-old twins Jason and Julia discover that their new home has twisting tunnels, strange artifacts from around the world, and a mysterious, locked door. This is the first book in the series, Ulysses Moore.

All the Lovely Bad Ones : A Ghost Story, by Mary Downing Hahn - **Lexile: 670 GRL: W**

Travis and his sister Corey decide to boost business at their grandmother's Vermont inn by staging a few "hauntings" that soon draw tourists from across the country, but when their antics awaken a dark force, they must find a way to put to rest the ghosts they have disturbed.

Wait Till Helen Comes: A Ghost Story, by Mary Downing Hahn - **Lexile: 750 GRL: U**

Molly and Michael dislike their spooky new stepsister Heather but realize that they must try to save her when she seems ready to follow a ghost child to her doom.

The Eyes of the Amaryllis, by Natalie Babbitt - **Lexile: 840 GRL: V**

The ship *Amaryllis* sinks in a hurricane, but for 30 years the captain's widow waits for him to send her a message from the bottom of the sea. With her granddaughter waiting with her, the story reveals that the line between reality and imagination is indefinable.

Who Was That Masked Man Anyway?, by Avi - **Lexile: 420 GRL: T**

When nearly everyone else is thinking about fighting World War II, sixth-grader Frankie Wattleson gets in trouble at home and at school because of his preoccupation with his favorite adventure programs on the radio.

***The Mystery of Black Hollow Lane*, by Julia Nobel - Lexile: 620 GRL: n/a**

Emmy's dad has disappeared, and her mom, too busy to take care of her, decides to send Emmy to a boarding school in England. Before Emmy leaves, she finds a box of strange medallions in her attic that may have belonged to her dad. At school, she finds the same strange markings from the medallions all over the school, etched in the walls and in the books. Could they lead to her missing dad?

Realistic Fiction

***Almost Home*, by Joan Bauer [RR] Lexile: 590 GRL: W**

Sixth-grader Sugar and her mother lose their beloved house and experience the harsh world of homelessness.

***Becoming Naomi León*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan - Lexile: 830 GRL: V**

When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father.

***Fish in a Tree*, by Lynda Mullaly Hunt - Lexile: 550 GRL: W**

Ally's greatest fear is that everyone will find out she is as dumb as they think she is because she still doesn't know how to read.

***The List of Things That Will Not Change* by Rebecca Stead Lexile: 680 GRL: T**

After her parents' divorce, Bea's life became different in many ways. But she can always look back at the list she keeps in her green notebook to remember the things that will stay the same. The first and most important: Mom and Dad will always love Bea, and each other. When Dad tells Bea that he and his boyfriend, Jesse, are getting married, Bea is thrilled.

***The Melting of Maggie Bean*, by Tricia Rayburn - Lexile: 1010 GRL: X**

Hoping to make new friends and gain the attention of her crush, Peter Applewood, overweight, straight-A student Maggie Bean, decides to try out for the synchronized swim team.

***Moo*, by Sharon Creech - Lexile: 790 GRL: T**

When Reena, her little brother, Luke, and their parents first move to Maine, Reena doesn't know what to expect. She's ready for beaches, blueberries, and all the lobster she can eat. Instead, her parents "volunteer" Reena and Luke to work for an eccentric neighbor named Mrs. Falala, who has a pig named Paulie, a cat named China, a snake named Edna and that stubborn cow, Zora.

My Life in Pink and Green, by Lisa Greenwald - **Lexile: 680 GRL: T**

Lucy's family's beloved pharmacy is in financial trouble. When she learns of a grant to help the store become more environmentally friendly -- and expand into an eco-spa, her dream business -- she's determined to get it.

The Perfect Score, by Rob Buyea - **Lexile: 710 GRL: Y**

Randi the gymnast, Gavin the football fanatic, Trevor the tough guy, Scott the brainiac, and Natalie the know-it-all are all in Mrs. Woods's sixth-grade class. When the time for statewide assessment tests arrives, these unlikely friends band together to put in motion a big idea that will have huge consequences.

Rain, Reign, by Ann M. Martin - **Lexile: 720 GRL: V**

Struggling with Asperger's syndrome, Rose shares a bond with her beloved dog, but when the dog goes missing during a storm, Rose is forced to confront the limits of her comfort levels, even if it means leaving her routines in order to search for her pet.

Secret Language of Girls, by Frances O'Roark Dowell - **Lexile: 870 GRL: V**

Marylin and Kate have been friends since nursery school, but when Marylin becomes a middle school cheerleader and Kate begins to develop other interests, their relationship is put to the test.

Shouting at the Rain, by Lynda Mullaly Hunt - **Lexile: HL560 GRL: X**

Delsie loves tracking the weather--lately, though, it seems the squalls are in her own life. She's always lived with her kindhearted Grammy, but now she's looking at their life with new eyes and wishing she could have a "regular family." Delsie observes other changes in the air, too--the most painful being a friend who's outgrown her.

A Week in the Woods, by Andrew Clements - **Lexile: 820 GRL: T**

The fifth grade's annual camping trip in the woods tests Mark's survival skills and his ability to relate to a teacher who seems out to get him.

Wink by Rob Harrell **Lexile: 580 GRL: L**

Ross Maloy just wants to be a normal seventh grader. He doesn't want to lose his hair, or wear a weird hat, or deal with the disappearing friends who don't know what to say to "the cancer kid." But with his recent diagnosis of a rare eye cancer, blending in is off the table.

You Go First, by Erin Entrada Kelly - **Lexile: 640 GRL: M**

Twelve-year-old Charlotte Lockard and eleven-year-old Ben Boxer live across the country from each other and know each other from an online Scrabble game. Although they are different in many ways, the two find friendship and connection as they face family issues and the turmoil of middle school.

Sports

Jake Maddox Series, by various authors [RR] GRL: ~M-Q

Often found under the author name Jake Maddox, each book in this series focuses on a sports theme and explores teamwork, fair play, and discipline. The books are mostly independent of one another and typically may be read in any order.

Out of Left Field by Ellen Klages Lexile: 640 GRL: M

****Also appears in historical fiction****

In 1957, inspired by what she is learning about civil rights and armed with knowledge of female ball players, ten-year-old Katy Gordon fights to be allowed to play Little League baseball.

Side Tracked by Diana Harmon - Lexile: 690 GRL: R

If middle school were a race, Joseph Friedman wouldn't even be in last place--he'd be on the sidelines. With an overactive mind and phobias of everything from hard-boiled eggs to gargoyles, he spends most of his time avoiding school bully Charlie Kastner and hiding out in the Resource Room. On the first day of seventh grade, two important things happen. First, his Resource Room teacher encourages (i.e., practically forces) him to join the school track team, and second, he meets Heather, a crazy-fast runner who isn't going to be pushed around by Charlie Kastner or anybody else.

Sports Story Series, by Fred Bowen [RR] GRL: ~N-R

Books in this series by Fred Bowen focus on a single sport. Each book is fast-paced and action packed. The books may be read in any order.

June 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians of Incoming Seventh Graders:

While your children are beginning what is sure to be a wonderful summer vacation, we also want to make sure that our students are able to maintain all of the reading and thinking skills that they have strengthened during this school year. The best way to maintain these gains is through consistent, engaged reading. We also know that you want to help prepare them for a successful start to the next academic year. Since reading is the foundation of all learning, we feel that it is essential for students to spend some time reading this summer. Therefore, to do our best to maintain reading stamina and foundational reading gains and strengths, we are requiring all incoming seventh graders to read at least one book from the attached list.

Although all of the books are worth considering, please make sure your child reads at least one. This **MUST** be a book that your child has not previously read. It is a good idea to take some notes while reading because students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the book upon returning to school in September.

Books may be found at area bookstores, the public library, our school Sora e-book system, or at Amazon.com. This letter and the summer reading lists may also be viewed on the OPMS library web page.

We hope you enjoy a safe, peaceful, and relaxing summer.

The OPMS English Department

Orchard Park Middle School - Summer Reading List – 2024-2025

Students Entering Grade 7

Please note the following abbreviations:

[RR] – recommended for reluctant readers

[M] - for mature readers; may contain mature themes, or may include occasional use of questionable language.

GRL: Guided Reading Level (Fountas & Pinnell) *indicates text complexity A-Z*

Adventure

Bailey, Linda. *Seven Dead Pirates* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

After his Great-Granddad dies, "terminally shy" Lewis Dearborn and his parents move into his dilapidated seaside mansion, where Lewis claims as his bedroom a cool tower overlooking the Atlantic. It isn't long before the ghosts of seven pirates, who had been living in that same room, make themselves known to Lewis. They want his help to retake their ancient ship, now restored in a museum. If he does, Lewis will get the room all to himself.

Bowling, Dusti. *Across the Desert* - Lexile: n/a Lexile GRL: n/a

Travel enthusiast Jolene uses the library computers to watch the livestream adventures of another twelve-year-old, Addie Earhart, who explores the Arizona deserts in an ultralight plane as "The Desert Aviator." While watching her livestream one day, Jolene sees Addie crash-land her plane and decides to use her knowledge of map making and desert topography to find her.

Gratz, Alan. *Code of Honor* - Lexile: 660 Lexile GRL: Z

Acclaimed author Alan Gratz (Prisoner B-3087) takes readers on a heart-pounding, nonstop adventure through underground intelligence bunkers and dangerous terrorist cells, weaving a gripping tale about the War on Terror—and the bond between brothers.

Wallace, Brandon. *Wilder Boys* - Lexile:750 GRL: n/a

After their father disappears, Jake and Taylor Wilder begin taking care of themselves, as their mother is too busy juggling them and her boyfriend, Bull. Jake and Taylor like spending time outdoors, especially with their dog, Cody. One night they discover a dangerous secret about Bull, one that hurts their mother. With nowhere else to go, Jake, Taylor, and Cody head out into the wilderness to search for their father.

Fantasy

Oh, Ellen. *Spirit Hunters* - Lexile: 680 GRL: n/a

A riveting ghost story and captivating adventure, this tale will have you guessing at every turn! Harper doesn't trust her new home from the moment she steps inside, and the rumors are that the Raine family's new house is haunted. Harper isn't sure she believes those rumors, until her younger brother, Michael, starts acting strangely.

Park, Linda Sue. *Forest of Wonders (Wing & Claw Book 1)* - Lexile: 700 GRL: W

When Raffa makes a cure from a rare crimson vine he finds deep in the forbidden forest, the bat he saves transforms into something much more.

Townsend, Jessica. *Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow* - Lexile: 790 GRA: X

Morrigan Crow is cursed. Having been born on Eventide, the unluckiest day for any child to be born, she's blamed for all local misfortunes, from hailstorms to heart attacks--and, worst of all, the curse means that Morrigan is doomed to die at midnight on her eleventh birthday. To stay in the safety of Nevermoor, Morrigan will need to find a way to pass the tests--or she'll have to leave Nevermoor for good.

Historical Fiction

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Fever, 1793* - Lexile: 580 GRL: Z

It is August, 1793, and in Philadelphia, the capital of the new United States, fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook wants to turn the family coffeehouse into the finest business in the city. Meanwhile, fever is spreading quickly from the docks and into the city's neighborhoods. Suddenly, Mattie's struggle to build a better life becomes a struggle to stay alive!

Gratz, Alan. *The Brooklyn Nine* - Lexile: 840 GRL: X

****Also appears in Sports****

Follows the fortunes of a German immigrant family through nine generations, beginning in 1845, as they experience American life and play baseball.

Hayles, Marsha. *Breathing Room* - Lexile: 800 GRL: W

In 1940, thirteen-year-old Evvy Hoffmeister and her newfound friends struggle to get well at Loon Lake Sanatorium, where they are being treated for tuberculosis.

Mystery

Delany, Rachelle. *Clara Voyant* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

Clara can't believe her no-nonsense grandmother has just up and moved to Florida, leaving Clara and her mother on their own for the first time. When a mystery unfolds at school, she finds herself in a strange situation: having an opportunity to prove herself as an investigative journalist . . . with the help of her mystical powers.

Frederick, Heather Vogel. *Absolutely Truly* - Lexile: 790 GRL: V

Unusually tall twelve-year-old Truly Lovejoy moves with her family to the tiny town of Pumpkin Falls, New Hampshire, and uncovers a mysterious letter in an old book at her family's bookstore that leads her and her friends on a dangerous treasure hunt around town.

Schusterman, Neal. *The Shadow Club* - [RR] Lexile: 760 GRL: S

When a middle school boy and his friends decide to form a club of "second-bests" and play anonymous tricks on each other's archrivals, the harmless pranks escalate until they become life-threatening.

Realistic Fiction

Arango, Andrea Beatriz. *Something Like Home* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

Laura Rodríguez Colón has a plan: no matter what the grown-ups say, she will live with her parents again. Can you blame her? It's tough to make friends as the new kid at school. So when Laura finds a puppy, it seems like fate. If she can train the puppy to become a therapy dog, then maybe she'll be allowed to visit her parents.

Carr, Cathy. *365 Days to Alaska* - Lexile: n/a GRL: U

Eleven-year-old Rigel Harman's life changed forever when her parents got divorced. She's grown

up in the Alaskan wilderness, and now she has to move to the suburbs of Connecticut with her mother. Her father promises her that if she can stick it out for a year, she can go back to Alaska. But surviving middle school proves to be harder than living off the grid.

Connor, Leslie. *Waiting for Normal* - Lexile: 570 GRL: X

Twelve-year-old Addie tries to cope with her mother's erratic behavior and being separated from her beloved stepfather and half-sisters when she and her mother go to live in a small trailer by the railroad tracks on the outskirts of Schenectady, New York.

Fipps, Lisa. *Starfish* - Lexile: n/a GRL: W

Ellie, a plus-size teenager, has been bullied and fat-shamed for her weight since she was five years old. As a result, she's developed rules for public behavior to avoid embarrassment, such as, walking slowly to avoid jiggling and not eating in public. The one place Ellie truly feels at home is in her swimming pool where she feels weightless and can spread out as far as she wants. With the help of her supportive therapist and father, Ellie grows tired of feeling shame and endeavors to live unapologetically.

Gemeinhart, Dan. *The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise* - Lexile: 730 GRL: W

Five years. That's how long Coyote and her dad, Rodeo, have lived on the road in an old school bus, crisscrossing the nation. It's also how long ago Coyote lost her mom and two sisters in a car crash. Over the course of thousands of miles, Coyote will learn that going home can sometimes be the hardest journey of all...but that with friends by her side, she just might be able to turn her "once upon a time" into a "happily ever after."

Johnson, Varian. *Playing the Cards You're Dealt* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

****Also appears in Sports****

Ten-year-old Anthony "Ant" Joplin is now old enough to participate in the Oak Grove annual spades tournament, a tradition in his South Carolina family. Ant is feeling the pressure to get better and some day win the tournament to make his father and brothers proud of him. It also wouldn't hurt to stick it to those who are constantly teasing him about his height--or lack thereof.

Korman, Gordon. *The Fort* - Lexile: n/a GRL: W

In the aftermath of Hurricane Leo, five friends discover a strange trapdoor in the middle of the woods, one that leads to an old bomb shelter. Inside, they find a completely intact underground lair with electricity, food, and even a TV. The boys claim it as their own secret clubhouse, but when the shelter becomes a place for one of the boys to escape his abusive stepfather, the friends are faced with an impossible decision.

Korman, Gordon. *Schooled* - [RR] Lexile: 740 GRL: V

Capricorn Anderson lives in isolation with his grandmother, a former hippie. When she falls from a tree and breaks her hip, Cap is sent to a foster home where he has his first experience in a public school.

Mass, Wendy. *Every Soul a Star* - Lexile: 740 GRL: U

Ally, Bree, and Jack meet at Moon Shadow, an isolated campground, to watch a total eclipse of the sun. Soon they begin to learn a great deal about themselves, each other, and the universe.

McAnulty, Stacy. *Millionaires for a Month* - Lexile: 570 GRL: W

Seventh graders Benji and Felix learn life lessons about money after they "borrow" twenty dollars from a wallet they find while on a field trip, as the billionaire owner challenges them to spend over five million dollars in thirty days.

McAnulty, Stacy. *The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl* - Lexile: 530 GRL: W

A lightning strike made twelve-year-old Lucy a math genius, but after years of homeschooling, her grandmother enrolls her in middle school, and she learns that life is more than numbers.

Saeed, Aisha *Amal Unbound* - Lexile: 600 GRL: n/a

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. 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.

Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Counting by 7's* - Lexile: 770 GRL: X

Twelve-year-old genius and outsider Willow Chance must figure out how to connect with other people and find a surrogate family for herself after her parents are killed in a car accident.

Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *The Elephant in the Room* - Lexile: n/a GRL: V

Missing her mother who has returned to Turkey to resolve an immigration problem, sixth-grader Sila welcomes a very large distraction in her life when she helps a surprising new friend rescue a circus elephant.

Sloan, Holly Goldberg and Meg Wolitzer. *To Night Owl From Dogfish* - Lexile: 770 GRL: n/a

Unhappy about being sent to the same summer camp after their fathers start dating, Bett and Avery, eleven, eventually begin scheming to get the couple back together after a break-up. Told entirely through emails.

Stokes, Paula. *This is How it Happened* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

After waking up from a coma, Genevieve Grace can't remember the car crash that killed her boyfriend Dallas, a YouTuber turned teen music idol. Genevieve knows she was driving, but because of what's been reported in the media, everyone assumes the other driver, Brad Freeman, is guilty. As she slowly pieces together the night of the accident, Genevieve is hit with a sickening sense of dread--what if she's the one at fault?

Weeks, Sarah. *So B It*. [RR] Lexile: 860 GRL: ~X

After spending her young life with her mentally disabled mother and agoraphobic neighbor, twelve-year-old Heidi sets out from Reno, Nevada, to New York City, on a journey of self-discovery.

Wolkenstein, M. Evan. *Turtle Boy* Lexile: 640 GRL: n/a

Seventh grade is not going well for Will Levine. Kids at school bully him because of his funny-looking chin. His science teacher finds out about the turtles he spent his summer collecting from the marsh behind school and orders him to release them back into the wild. And for his bar mitzvah community service project, he has to go to the hospital to visit RJ, an older boy struggling with an incurable disease. Unfortunately, Will hates hospitals.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Before the Ever After*. - [RR] Lexile: 780 GRL: n/a

For as long as ZJ can remember, his dad has been everyone's hero. As a charming, talented pro football star, he's as beloved to the neighborhood kids he plays with as he is to his millions of adoring sports fans. But lately life at ZJ's house is anything but charming. His dad is having trouble remembering things and seems to be angry all the time.

Science Fiction

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Found (The Missing, Book 1)* [RR] Lexile: 750 GRL: X

Thirteen-year-old Johan and Chip, who are both adopted, learn they were discovered in a plane that appeared out of nowhere, full of babies with no adults on board. They realize they are in the middle of a mystery involving time travel and two opposing forces that are trying to repair the fabric of time.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *The Strangers (The Greystone Secrets, Book 1)* [RR] Lexile: 730 GRL: n/a

What makes you *you*? The Greystone kids thought they knew. Chess has always been the protector over his younger siblings, Emma loves math, and Finn does what Finn does best—acting silly and being adored. But everything changes when reports of three kidnapped children—who share the same first and middle names, ages, and exact birth dates as the Greystone kids—reach the Greystone family. Before Chess, Emma, and Finn can question their mom about it, she takes off on a mysterious work trip.

Holm, Jennifer L. *The Lion of Mars* - Lexile:530 GRL: T

Eleven-year-old Mars colonist Bell, lives with his American family in a self-sustaining, but isolated community. Warned numerous times by the adults not to interact with colonies from other countries, Bell has obeyed, content with caring for his cat and eating cake. When the adults suddenly get sickened with an unknown ailment, Bell and the other kids living in the community must decide how important breaking the rules are in order to survive.

Sports

Gratz, Alan. *The Brooklyn Nine* - Lexile: 840 GRL: X

****Also appears in Historical Fiction****

Follows the fortunes of a German immigrant family through nine generations, beginning in 1845, as they experience American life and play baseball.

Johnson, Varian. *Playing the Cards You're Dealt* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

****Also appears in Realistic Fiction****

Ten-year-old Anthony "Ant" Joplin is now old enough to participate in the Oak Grove annual spades tournament, a tradition in his South Carolina family. Ant is feeling the pressure to get better and some day win the tournament to make his father and brothers proud of him. It also wouldn't hurt to stick it to those who are constantly teasing him about his height--or lack thereof.

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Checked* - Lexile: 760 GRL: T/U

To help his dog through cancer treatment, Conor gives up hockey and finds himself considering who he is without the sport that has defined him, and connecting more with his family and best friend.

Lupica, Mike. *Heat* [RR] - Lexile: 940 GRL: V

Pitching prodigy Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball because rival coaches doubt he is only twelve years old, and he has no parents to offer them proof.

Reynolds, Jason. *Ghost* - [RR] Lexile: 730 GRL: Z

Ghost, a naturally talented runner and troublemaker, is recruited for an elite middle school track team. He must stay on track literally and figuratively, to reach his full potential.

Rhodes, Jewell Parker. *Black Brother, Black Brother* - Lexile: n/a GRL: V

Donte, twelve, considers himself an outsider at his mostly white school, where he's regularly bullied and alienated by the other kids. Framed for misbehaving at school, Donte is arrested and suspended. After he joins a local youth center, he meets a former Olympic fencer named Arden Jones and begins competing, hoping to take down the school's fencing captain, Alan, the boy who caused Donte to be suspended.

Rivera, Lilliam. *Barely Floating* - Lexile: n/a GRL: Y

Twelve-year-old Natalia loves to swim and regularly challenges peers to swimming races at her local public pool, knowing they underestimate her abilities because of her curves. When the pool showcases a performance by the synchronized swimming team, the L.A. Mermaids, Nat is smitten and wants to join. Her parents tell her no, but Nat disobeys them and joins the club in secret, making new friends and learning the moves and routines.

June 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians of Incoming Eighth Graders:

While your children are beginning what is sure to be a wonderful summer vacation, we also want to make sure that our students are able to maintain all of the reading and thinking skills that they have strengthened during this school year. The best way to maintain these gains is through consistent, engaged reading. We also know that you want to help prepare them for a successful start to the next academic year. Since reading is the foundation of all learning, we feel that it is essential for students to spend some time reading this summer. Therefore, to do our best to maintain reading stamina and foundational reading gains and strengths, we are requiring all incoming eighth graders to read at least one book from the attached list.

Although all of the books are worth considering, please make sure your child reads at least one. This **MUST** be a book that your child has not previously read. It is a good idea to take some notes while reading because students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the book upon returning to school in September.

Books may be found at area bookstores, the public library, our school Sora e-book system, or at Amazon.com. This letter and the summer reading lists may also be viewed on the OPMS library web page.

We hope you enjoy a safe, peaceful, and relaxing summer.

The OPMS English Department

Orchard Park Middle School - Summer Reading List – 2024-2025

Students Entering Grade 8

Please note the following abbreviations:

[RR] – recommended for reluctant readers

[M] - for mature readers; may contain mature themes, or may include occasional use of questionable language.

GRL: Guided Reading Level (Fountas & Pinnell) *indicates text complexity A-Z*

Nonfiction

Reynolds, Jason and Ibram X. Kendi. *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*. - Lexile: 1000 GRL: Z+

This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Brown Girl Dreaming* - Lexile: 990 GRL: Z

The author shares her childhood memories and reveals the first sparks that ignited her writing career in free-verse poems about growing up in the North and South.

Adventure

Freeman, Megan. *Alone* - Lexile: 690 GRL: Z

Twelve-year-old Maddie had schemed to host a harmless sleepover, but instead finds herself in a nightmare adventure when she wakes up all alone--not just without her friends, but without anyone in her town at all. Not knowing why everyone was evacuated, Maddie and her only companion--George the Rottweiler--forage for food and find out what happened.

Marshall, Kate Alice. *I Am Still Alive* - Lexile: HL690 GRL: n/a

After a car crash kills her mother, Jess goes to live with her survivalist, off-the-grid father--whom she hasn't seen in a decade--in the Canadian wilderness. But just as the two begin to reconnect, a secret from his past arrives leaving him dead and the cabin burned to the ground. Suddenly, Jess finds herself abandoned in the cold Canadian wilderness. With only her dog for company, Jess must find a way to survive the harsh environment if she is to seek revenge on the person who killed her father.

Fantasy

Bayron, Kalynn. *Cinderella is Dead* Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

It's 200 years after Cinderella found her prince, but the fairy tale is over. Teen girls are now required to appear at the Annual Ball, where the men of the kingdom select wives based on a girl's display of finery. If a suitable match is not found, the girls not chosen are never heard from again.

Keller, Tae. *When You Trap a Tiger* - Lexile: 590 GRL: V

When Lily and her family move in with her sick grandmother, a magical tiger straight out of her halmoni's Korean folktales arrives, prompting Lily to unravel a secret family history. Long, long ago, Halmoni stole something from the tigers. Now they want it back.

Soontornvat, Christina. *The Last Mapmaker*- Lexile: n/a GRL: Y

As the Mangkon royal navy Master Mapmaker's apprentice, twelve-year-old Sai keeps her lowly born status a secret. If anyone found out her father is a conman from the Fens, she'd lose her position. Though, that's likely to happen anyway, as her thirteenth birthday is approaching and that's when all high-born receive a gold bracelet denoting their lineage.

Historical Fiction

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *The War That Saved My Life* - Lexile: 580 GRL: Z

A young disabled girl and her brother are evacuated from London to the English countryside during World War II, where they find life to be much sweeter away from their abusive mother.

Bruchac, Joseph. *Code Talker* [RR] Lexile: 910 GRL: W

Sixteen-year-old Ned enlists in the U.S Marines during World War II. He calls upon his Navajo language, traditions, and consciousness to survive the battlefield and radio top secret information by code.

Elliott, L. M. *Walls* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

In 1960, army brat Drew moves with his family to a post in West Berlin, where he learns his cousin Matthias and relatives are living on the east side of the city. Fifteen-year-old Drew has strong opinions about America's positions and learns they are the opposite opinions of his cousin when they begin spending time together. Over time though, the two forge common ground in music, even though Matthias could be taken away if he was ever caught with it.

Gratz, Alan. *Ground Zero*. - Lexile: 690 GRL: T

It's September 11, 2001. Brandon, a 9-year-old boy, goes to work for the day with his dad . . . at the World Trade Center in New York City. When two planes hit the towers, Brandon and his father are trapped inside a fiery nightmare as terror and confusion swirl around them.

In present-day Afghanistan, Reshmina is an 11-year-old girl who is used to growing up in the shadow of war, but she has dreams of peace and unity. When she ends up harboring a wounded young American soldier, she and her entire family are put in mortal danger.

Hiranandani, Veera. *The Night Diary*. Lexile: 700 GRL: Y

It's 1947, and India, newly independent of British rule, has been separated into two countries: Pakistan and India. The divide has created much tension between Hindus and Muslims, and hundreds of thousands are killed crossing borders.

Half-Muslim, half-Hindu twelve-year-old Nisha doesn't know where she belongs, or what her country is anymore. When Papa decides it's too dangerous to stay in what is now Pakistan, Nisha and her family become refugees.

Hughes, Dean. *Search and Destroy* [M] Lexile: 740 GRL: W

Recent high school graduate Rick Ward, undecided about his future and eager to escape his unhappy home life, joins the Army and experiences the horrors of the war in Vietnam.

Palacio, R.J. *Pony* Lexile: 740 GRL: Y

****Challenging read not similar to *Wonder*.****

Twelve-year-old Silas is left scared and shaken by himself after three mysterious horsemen take his father away in the night. Left with no companionship except that of Mittenwool, a ghost, Silas decides to wait, as instructed, for his father to return in a week. However, when a strange pony one of the men was riding shows up at his door, Silas sees it as a sign from his father to go find him.

Toalson, R.L. *The Colors of the Rain* [M] Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

Ten-year-old Paulie Sanders shares his name with his father, who killed a man and crashed his car. Mama is unable to cope, so Paulie and his sister Charlie must move in with Aunt Bee and start at a new school in the Houston School District. However, because it is 1972, desegregation struggles are

at their height, and Paulie finds himself picking fights with a black boy at his new school. Written in free verse.

Wolk, Lauren. *Echo Mountain* - Lexile: 690 GRL: Z

A young heroine in Depression-era Maine is navigating the rocky terrain of her new life on Echo Mountain. There is little joy, for Ellie and her family, as they all struggle with the sorrow and aftermath of an accident that left her father in a coma. Urgent for a cure to bring her father back, Ellie is determined to try anything. Following her heart, and the lead of a scruffy mutt, Ellie will make her way to the top of the mountain, in search of the healing secrets of a woman known only as "the hag."

Horror

Liparulo, Robert. *The House of Dark Shadows* - Lexile: 580 GRL: Y

Fifteen-year-old Xander and his family move into an old, abandoned house in the middle of a dense forest outside of a small California town. They soon discover that not only are some of the rooms portals into other places, but that malevolent forces are also at work.

Salisbury, Melinda. *Hold Back the Tide* - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

When Alva was nine, her father killed her mother, but lack of evidence prevented him from being convicted. Alva has kept a low profile around her father until she can run away, helping him with his duties monitoring the water levels of Loch Lake. When water levels drop too low, deadly creatures emerge from the caves, and her father does nothing to stop them, leaving Alva to warn the villagers and find a way to destroy them.

Schwab, Victoria. *Gallant* Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

Even though she's lived there her whole life, the Merilance School for Independent Girls has never felt like home to fourteen-year-old Olivia. The other girls ridicule her because she speaks with sign language, and the teachers treat her as though she's stupid, just because she's mute. And for just as long, she's been seeing the ghouls prowling the school. When a letter arrives from her uncle Arthur Prior, inviting her to live with him at his manor, Gallant, Olivia is thrilled and imagines her life will only get better.

Mystery

Barnes, Jennifer Lynn. *The Inheritance Games* Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

Homeless teen Avery Grambs is summoned to the will reading of Tobias Hawthorne, a man she's never heard of. Curious, she attends and learns she will inherit the bulk of the billionaire's estate, much to the chagrin of his daughters and grandsons. The only catch is that she will have to live in his mansion, alongside his family, for one year.

Bowler, Tim. *Storm Catchers* [M] Lexile: 560 GRL: V

Filled with guilt over his younger sister Ella's kidnapping, Fin tries to rescue her and in the process learns about a dark family secret. Fin comes to realize that Ella is not the only victim and that the real villain may be closer to home than he thought.

Key, Watt. *Hideout* Lexile: 630 GRL: n/a

While out exploring the bayou around his home, twelve-year-old Sam finds a lone boy named Davey mysteriously repairing a rundown shack deep in the woods. As the two get to know each other, danger increases for both boys when long-hidden truths come to light.

Priest, Cherie. *I Am Princess X* - Lexile: 790 GRL: Z+

Years after writing stories about a superheroine character she created with a best friend who died in a tragic car accident, 16-year-old May is shocked to see stickers, patches and graffiti images of the superheroine appearing all over town.

Realistic Fiction

Mass, Wendy. *A Mango-shaped Space* - Lexile: 770 GRL: V

Teenaged Mia has a secret ability that makes her feel like a freak. She embarks on an intense journey of self-discovery, but by the time she realizes she has isolated herself from everyone who cares about her, it's almost too late. This is realistic fiction with an unusual twist.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* - Lexile: 940 GRL: Y

When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, 13-year-old Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, his school life, and his desire to support his family. Readers will love both brothers, laughing, crying, and rooting for both of them!

Standish, Ali. *The Ethan I Was Before* - Lexile: 730 GRL: n/a

Twelve-year-old Ethan Truitt and his family have relocated from Boston to a small town in Georgia after a tragic accident involving his best friend Kacey—an incident that leaves him haunted by guilt. He thinks he might never find joy again until he meets Coralee, a daring girl who helps him feel alive again. But there's more to Coralee than meets the eye—and her secrets could put both their lives at risk.

Swinarski, Claire. *What Happened to Rachel Riley?* [M] - Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

Anna Hunt may be the new girl at East Middle School, but she can already tell there's something off about her eighth-grade class. Rachel Riley, who just last year was one of the most popular girls in school, has become a social outcast. But no one, including Rachel Riley herself, will tell Anna why.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Runaway* - Lexile: 740 GRL: W

After running away from her fifth foster home, Holly, a twelve-year-old orphan, travels across the country, keeping a journal of her experiences and struggle to survive.

Williams, Alicia. *Genesis Begins Again* - Lexile: 670 GRL: Y

Thirteen-year-old Genesis keeps a list of all the things she hates about herself--she's up to ninety-six--the last of which is her very dark skin. Her gambling-addict father has once again lost their rent money, so Genesis moves in with her grandmother who claims that none of this would've happened if her mother had married a light-skinned man.

Science Fiction

Evans, Richard Paul. *Michael Vey: The Prisoner of Cell 25* - Lexile: 500 GRL: Z

Fourteen-year-old Michael discovers he has special electric powers, and with the help of his best friends, realizes there are other teens with similar powers. Then his mother gets kidnapped, and Michael and his friends begin a quest to rescue his mom and save themselves.

Higuera, Donna Barba. *The Last Cuentista* Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

As the daughter of prominent scientists, twelve-year-old Petra Peña is among the select few boarding a spaceship to another planet before Earth is decimated by a comet. Petra doesn't take after her

parents though, she wants to be a professional storyteller like her grandmother. When she wakes centuries later, she realizes that her family and other passengers have no recollections of Earth or what life was like there.

Lu, Marie. *Skyhunter* - Lexile: 870 GRL: n/a

Talin is a Striker, a member of an elite fighting force that stands as the last defense for the only free nation in the world: Mara. A refugee, Talin knows firsthand the horrors of the Federation, a world-dominating war machine responsible for destroying nation after nation with its terrifying army of mutant beasts known only as Ghosts.

Riordan, Rick. *Daughter of the Deep*- Lexile: n/a GRL: n/a

As a freshman at the prestigious marine and aquatics science high school Harding-Pencroft, fourteen-year-old orphan Ana Dakkar and her classmates find themselves the school's only survivors when an attack destroys their school while they were en route to their end-of-year trials. Regrouping on a hidden island outpost, the freshmen learn from their teacher that the attack was perpetrated by their rival school, the Land Institute, and that the key to their survival lies in unlocking the technology of Captain Nemo's "Nautilus."

Sanderson, Brandon. *Steelheart* - Lexile: 680 GRL: Z

At age eight, David watched as his father was killed by an Epic, a human with superhuman powers, and now, ten years later, he joins the Reckoners- the only people who are trying to kill the Epics and end their tyranny.

Sports

Green, Tim. *Left Out*. - Lexile: 800 GRL: V

Landon Dorch has always felt left out due to his deafness that affects his speech and requires him to have cochlear implants. He finally secures a place on the seventh-grade football team, but it proves harder than he thought. Then Landon gets some help from star players who know all about being different, and he digs deep into himself to fight his way off the bench.

Morrison, Laura. *Up for Air* - Lexile: 900 GRL: Z

Thirteen-year-old Annabelle struggles in school, no matter how hard she tries. But as soon as she dives into the pool, she's unstoppable. She's the fastest girl on the middle school swim team, and when she's asked to join the high school team over the summer, everything changes. Suddenly, she's got new friends, and a high school boy starts treating her like she's somebody special—and Annabelle thinks she'll finally stand out in a good way.

Roberts, Barbara Carroll. *Nikki On the Line* - Lexile: 840 GRL: X

Nikki has been the best point guard on her team and dreams of becoming a basketball star. But when she is selected for an elite-level team, she finds she isn't the best point guard; she's not any kind of point guard. With the stress of basketball and a family tree project at school and taking care of her younger brother, Nikki finds that she is losing confidence in herself.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Curveball: The Year I Lost My Grip* [M] Lexile: 800 GRL: X

After an injury ends star pitcher Peter Friedman's athletic dreams, he concentrates on photography, which leads him to a girlfriend, new fame as a sports photographer and a deeper relationship with his aging grandfather, who is developing Alzheimer's.