FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Summer 2013 Suggested Reading List
for
Rising Sixth Graders

This list includes a wide variety of books to appeal to the interests and reading levels of many students. Parents are encouraged to review book selections with their children in order to help them make appropriate choices. Students may select books from this list, or they may read a comparable book that is approved by their parents.

Additional suggestions can also be found in reading lists developed by Fairfax County Public Library at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library and Virginia Readers’ Choice at http://vsra.org/VRC.html

Amato, Mary. **THE NAKED MOLE-RAT LETTERS.** (Realistic Fiction) When her father begins a long-distance romance with a Washington, D.C. zookeeper, twelve-year-old Frankie sends e-mails advising the zookeeper to end the relationship. Frankie learns much about growing up.

Angleberger, Tom. **DARTH PAPER STRIKES BACK.** (Fiction) Harvey is upset when his Darth Paper finger puppet brings humiliation and gets Dwight suspended. Origami Yoda asks Tommy and Kellan, now in seventh grade, to make a new casefile to persuade the School Board to reinstate Dwight.

Angleberger, Tom. **STRANGE CASE OF ORGAMI YODA.** (Fiction) Sixth-grader Tommy and his friends describe their interactions with a paper finger puppet of Yoda, worn by their weird classmate Dwight. They try to figure out whether or not the puppet can really predict the future.

Applegate, Katherine. **HOME OF THE BRAVE.** (Fiction) Kek, an African refugee, is confronted by many strange things at the Minneapolis home of his aunt and cousin, as well as in his fifth grade classroom. He longs for his missing mother, but finds comfort in the company of a cow and her owner.

Applegate, Katherine. **THE ONE AND ONLY IVAN.** (Fiction) Ivan is a gorilla who has lived for years in a down-and-out circus-themed mall. When he meets Ruby, a baby elephant that has been added to the mall, he decides that he must find her a better life.

Armstrong, Alan. **WHITTINGTON.** (Fiction) This is the Newbery Honor-winning story of a legendary English cat and his extraordinary descendant that is woven through a family’s gripping generational story.

Balliet, Blue. **THE WRIGHT 3.** (Fiction) In the midst of a series of unexplained accidents and mysterious coincidences, sixth-graders Calder, Petra, and Tommy lead their classmates in an attempt to keep Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Robie House from being demolished.

Barrett, Tracy. **THE 100-YEAR-OLD SECRET.** (Mystery) An American brother and sister living in London for a year, discover that Sherlock Holmes was their great-great-great grandfather. They are inducted into the Society for the Preservation of Famous Detectives and given his unsolved casebook. They attempt to solve the case of a famous missing painting.

Bauer, Joan. **ALMOST HOME.** (Fiction) Sixth-grader Sugar and her mother lose their beloved house and experience the harsh world of homelessness.

Beard, Darleen Bailey. **ANNIE GLOVER IS NOT A TREE LOVER.** (Fiction) When her grandmother chains herself to the tree across from the school to save it from being cut down, fourth-grader Annie wants to die of humiliation. When she discovers the town's history, her attitude changes.

Berlin, Eric. **THE PUZZLING WORLD OF WINSTON BREEN: THE POTATO CHIP PUZZLES.** (Fiction) Puzzle-crazy, twelve-year-old Winston and his ten-year-old sister Katie find themselves involved in a dangerous mystery involving a hidden ring. Puzzles for the reader to solve are included throughout the text.

Birdsall, Jeanne. **THE PENDERWICKS.** (Realistic Fiction) This is the lighthearted, old fashioned story of a family of four sisters and a widowed botany professor and their summer adventures.
Birney, Betty G. **THE WORLD ACCORDING TO HUMPHREY.** (Fiction) With an engaging, hamster's-eye view of school, a class pet named Humphrey brings laughter and fun to the students and families who host him and gives great gifts in return.

Buyea, Rob. **BECAUSE OF MR. TERUPT.** (Fiction) Seven fifth-graders at Snow Hill School in Connecticut relate how their lives are changed for the better by "rookie teacher" Mr. Terupt.

Clements, Andrew. **ABOUT AVERAGE.** (Fiction) As the end of sixth grade nears, Jordan Johnson, unhappy that she is only average in appearance, intelligence, and athletic ability, reveals her special skills when disaster strikes her central Illinois elementary school.

Clements, Andrew. **TROUBLE MAKER.** (Fiction) When his older brother gets in serious trouble, sixth-grader Clay decides to change his own mischief-making ways, but he cannot seem to shake his reputation as a troublemaker.

Coman, Carolyn. **THE BIG HOUSE.** (Fiction) When their parents are convicted of embezzlement, Ray and Ivy are sent to live the life of luxury with Marrieta Noland and her ancient husband, Lionel. Life at the Nolands' big house is not all it's cracked up to be as the book sheds light on family relationships.

Corbett, Sue. **FREE BASEBALL.** (Realistic Fiction) Eleven-year-old Felix is angry with his mother for having too little time for him. The boy from Florida takes advantage of an opportunity to become bat boy for a minor league baseball team, hoping to someday be like his father, a famous Cuban outfielder. Glossaries of baseball terms and Spanish words and phrases are included in the book.

Creech, Sharon. **THE GREAT UNEXPECTED.** (Fiction) Traces the parallel stories of estranged Irish sisters, Sybil and Nula, and American orphans, Naomi and Lizzie, whose respective explorations into their identities and struggles with misfortune are told in rotating voices.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. **THE MIGHTY MISS MALONE.** (Fiction) With love and determination befitting the "world's greatest family," Deza Malone, her brother Jimmie, and their parents endure tough times in Indiana and later Michigan, during the Great Depression.

DiCamillo, Kate. **THE MAGICIAN'S ELEPHANT.** (Fiction) When ten-year-old orphan Peter Augustus Duchene encounters a fortune teller in the marketplace, she tells him that his sister, who was presumed dead, is alive. He goes on a series of adventures to find her.

Dowell, Frances O'Roark. **CHICKEN BOY.** (Fiction) Since the death of his mother, Tobin's family life and school life have been in disarray. After he starts raising chickens with his seventh-grade classmate, Henry, everything starts to fall into place.

Draper, Sharon. **OUT OF MY MIND.** (Fiction) Considered by many to be mentally retarded, a brilliant, impatient fifth-grader with cerebral palsy discovers a technological device that will allow her to speak for the first time.

Erskine, Katherine. **MOCKINGBIRD.** (Fiction) Ten-year-old Caitlin, who has Asperger's Syndrome, struggles to understand emotions, show empathy, and make friends at school, while at home she seeks closure by working on a project with her father.

Fitzgerald, Dawn. **VINNIE AND ABRAHAM.** (Biography) Vinnie Ream was a small girl with a giant gift for sculpture. This story chronicles Vinnie's life from her arrival in Washington, D.C., at the start of the Civil War, through her apprenticeship with a famous sculptor, and friendship with Abraham Lincoln.

Fleischman, Sid. **THE WHITE ELEPHANT.** (Fiction) How can a beautiful white elephant be a terrible curse? A young elephant trainer discovers the answer when he incurs the anger of the prince. As the boy's punishment, he is given the gift of a white elephant. From that moment forward, the curse begins to reveal itself.
FLEMING, Candace. **AMELIA LOST.** (Biography) Tells the story of Amelia Earhart's life - as a child, a woman, and a pilot - and describes the search for her missing plane.

FREEDMAN, Russell. **ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND FREDRICK DOUGLASS.** (Nonfiction) Freedman tells the story of a friendship between two men who shared many characteristics. Lincoln and Douglass were both self-educated, born into poverty, and through relentless effort and hard work, reached great success.

FREEDMAN, Russell. **FREEDOM WALKERS.** (Nonfiction) The author breathes life into the key personalities and events that contributed to the yearlong civil rights struggle. The struggle became known as the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

FREEDMAN, Russell. **THE BOSTON TEA PARTY.** (Nonfiction) More than any other event, the Boston Tea Party of 1773 has come to stand for the determination of American colonists to control their own destinies. From the arrival of the ships full of tea in Boston Harbor, through the protest meetings at the Old South Church, to the act of dumping 226 chests of tea into the harbor, Freedman captures this exciting story.

Hale, Shannon. **PALACE OF STONE.** (Fiction) Miri returns to Asland and calls upon all of her knowledge of rhetoric and other useful lessons learned at the Princess Academy when she and the other girls face strong opposition while working for a new, fair charter. This is the sequel to *Princess Academy*.

HALL, Alvin D. **SHOW ME THE MONEY.** (Nonfiction) Filled with games, puzzles, and fun facts, this bright, visual resource exposes young readers to basic concepts of currency and finance. Topics include the barter system, supply and demand, and how money works differently around the world.

HIAASEN, Carl. **CHOMP.** (Fiction) When filming an episode of the reality television show "Expedition Survival" in the Florida Everglades, the difficult star disappears. Wahoo and classmate, Tuna Gordon, set out to solve the mystery.

HOPKINSON, Deborah. **ANNIE AND HELEN.** (Biography) This book describes the relationship between Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan, and includes excerpts from letters written by Annie about her work with Helen.

IBBOTSON, Eva. **THE STAR OF KAZAN.** (Historical Fiction) Twelve-year-old Annika, an orphan living in late nineteenth-century Vienna, inherits a trunk of costume jewelry. A woman claiming to be her aristocratic mother arrives and takes her to live in a strange old mansion in Germany.

KENEDY, Marlane. **DOG DAYS OF CHARLOTTE HAYES.** (Realistic Fiction) Eleven-year-old Charlotte is not a dog person but does not like it that the rest of her family neglects their Saint Bernard puppy. With a lot of determination and a little sneakiness, she works on finding a good home for the gentle giant.

KLISE, Kate. **DYING TO MEET YOU: 43 OLD CEMETERY ROAD.** (Fiction) In this story told mostly through letters, children's book author, I.B. Grumply, gets more than he bargained for when he rents a quiet place to write for the summer.

KORMAN, Gordon. **UNGIFTED.** (Fiction) After pulling a major prank in school and due to an administrative mix-up, troublemaker Donovan Curtis is sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction.

LAFAYE, A. **WORTH.** (Historical Fiction) After breaking his leg, eleven-year-old Nate feels useless because he cannot work on the family farm in nineteenth-century Nebraska. When his father brings home an orphan boy to help with the chores, Nate feels even worse.

LOMBARD, Jenny. **DRITA, MY HOMEGIRL.** (Realistic Fiction) When ten-year-old Drita and her family move from Kosovo to New York, Drita is teased about not speaking English well. A popular student named Maxine is forced to learn about Kosovo as a punishment for teasing Drita and the two girls soon bond. Their developing friendship is revealed through alternating chapters and voices of the two girls.
Lord, Cynthia. **RULES.** (Fiction) Catherine just wants a normal life, which is nearly 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 in order to head off his embarrassing behaviors. The summer Catherine meets Jason and Kristi, it's her own shocking behavior that turns everything upside down and forces her to ask: What is normal?

Lourie, Peter. **THE POLAR BEAR SCIENTISTS.** (Nonfiction) Young readers can follow scientists as they scan the Alaskan wilderness for these magnificent creatures. Full color.

Lubar, David. **PUNISHED!** (Fiction) While Logan and his friend Benedict are playing tag in the library, Logan runs into a mysterious man. As punishment, the man causes Logan to speak in puns. To return to normal, Logan must now find examples of oxymorons, anagrams, and palindromes.

Lubar, David. **DOG DAYS.** (Fiction) Larry has to work hard to try to earn money to buy food to feed three stray dogs. Now his brother has taken him to an alley where another dog is staying. How can he afford to take care of another dog?

Lupica, Mike. **HEAT.** (Realistic Fiction) Pitching sensation Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball. Rival coaches doubt he is only twelve years old, and he has no parents to offer them proof.

Mass, Wendy. **11 BIRTHDAYS.** (Fiction) After celebrating their first nine same-day birthdays together, Amanda and Leo, had a falling out on their tenth birthday and have not spoken since. Since not speaking to each other for the last year, they prepare to celebrate their eleventh birthday separately. Soon peculiar things begin to happen as the day of their birthday begins to repeat itself over and over again.

Mass, Wendy. **13 GIFTS.** Shortly before her thirteenth birthday, shy and withdrawn Tara is sent to stay with her aunt, uncle, and cousin in her parents' hometown of Willow Falls. While there, she makes friends and becomes involved with an elderly buyer and seller of collectibles, who seems to be trying to give Tara some kind of mysterious message.

McDonough, Yona Zeldis. **THE DOLL WITH THE YELLOW STAR.** (Historical Fiction) When France falls to Germany at the start of World War II, a nine-year-old Jewish girl named Claudine must leave her parents and friends to stay with relatives in America. There she will be safe. Her doll, Violette, accompanies her on her journey.

Mills, Claudia. **HOW OLIVER OLSON CHANGED THE WORLD.** (Realistic Fiction) Oliver has a problem...his parents are way too protective and to top it off, they won’t even let him do school projects by himself. When his teacher proclaims that anyone can change the world with a good idea, Oliver is skeptical but hopeful that it is true.

Morpurgo, Michael. **AN ELEPHANT IN THE GARDEN.** (Fiction) Devastated to learn that an orphan elephant in the Dresden zoo, where their mother works, is to be euthanized in anticipation of an upcoming bombing, Lizzie and Karl persuade the zoo director to let them keep the elephant in their garden.

Nelson, Pete. **LEFT FOR DEAD: A YOUNG MAN'S SEARCH FOR JUSTICE FOR THE USS INDIANAPOLIS.** (Nonfiction) The story recalls the sinking of the U.S.S. Indianapolis at the end of World War II, the navy cover-up, and unfair court martial of the ship's captain. The book tells how a young boy helped the survivors set the record straight fifty-five years later.

Nielsen, Jennifer. **THE FALSE PRINCE.** (Fiction) In the country of Carthya, a devious nobleman engages four orphans in a competition to be selected to impersonate the king's long-missing son.

Palacio, R. J. **WONDER.** (Fiction) Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school in Manhattan. There he endures the taunting and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student.

Park, Linda Sue. **ARCHER'S QUEST.** (Fiction) Twelve-year-old Kevin Kim helps Koh Chu-mong, a Great Archer of ancient Korea, return to his own time.
Pastis, Stephan. **TIMMY FAILURE.** (Fiction) Resolving to earn so much money that his mother will no longer stress out over the bills, eleven-year-old Timmy Failure launches a detective business with a lazy polar bear partner named Total. The partners find their enterprise "Total Failure, Inc." challenged by a college-bound spy and a four-foot-tall girl whom Timmy refuses to acknowledge.

Patent, Dorothy Henshaw. **DOGS ON DUTY.** (Nonfiction) The invaluable contributions of Military Working Dogs are well documented in this book. Patent discusses their special attributes such as the night vision and sense of smell that help these dogs keep their human partners safe. The roles they have played in World Wars I and II, in Vietnam, and in Iraq and Afghanistan are highlighted. Brief histories of individual dogs such as Stubby from World War I and Eli in Afghanistan are told.

Patterson, James and Chris Grabenstein. **I FUNNY.** (Fiction) Wheelchair-bound Jamie Grimm resolves to become the world's greatest stand-up comedian despite less-than-funny challenges in his life. He endures bullying from his mean-spirited cousin and hopes he will be fairly judged when he enters a local comedy contest.

Peck, Richard. **THE SECRETS AT SEA.** (Fiction) In 1887, the social-climbing Cranston’s voyage from New York to London, where they hope to find a husband for their awkward older daughter, is secretly accompanied by Helena and her mouse siblings. The journey is both terrifying and wondrous as they meet an array of titled humans despite their best efforts at remaining hidden.

Pitchford, Dean. **CAPTAIN NOBODY.** (Realistic Fiction) Newt Newman has always been in his big brother’s shadow. When a football injury sends his brother into a coma, Newt is noticed even less by his too-busy parents. Along with some quirky friends, Newt creates a Halloween costume that creates an alter ego for him – Captain Nobody – the defender of the little guy.

Pullman, Philip. **SCARECROW AND HIS SERVANT.** (Fantasy) A scarecrow and his boy servant, Jack, set off on a dangerous adventure. They try to outwit the dishonest Buffaloni family and stake a claim to valuable Spring Valley.

Ray, Jennifer. **YELLOW STAR.** (Fiction) From 1939, when Sylvia is four and a half years old, to 1945 when she has just turned ten, a Jewish girl and her family struggle to survive in Poland's Lodz ghetto during the Nazi occupation.

Rinaldi, Ann. **SARAH'S GROUND.** (Historical Fiction) In 1861, eighteen-year-old Sarah Tracy, from New York state, comes to work at Mount Vernon, the historic Virginia home of George Washington. While there she tries to protect the safety and neutrality of the site during the Civil War. She also meets her future husband, Upton Herbert, the plantation superintendent. Historical notes are included

Ryan, Pam Munoz. **BECOMING NAOMI LEON.** (Realistic Fiction) When Naomi's absent mother reappears to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico. Naomi, along with her great-grandmother and younger brother, set out to search for her father.

Sandler, Martin. **THE IMPOSSIBLE RESCUE: THE TRUE STORY OF AN AMAZING ARCTIC ADVENTURE.** (Nonfiction) In the dead of an Arctic winter, whaling ships full of men are stranded in ice. Follow three rescuers in a race against time in this heart-pounding true adventure.

Schmidt, Gary D. **LIZZIE BRIGHT AND THE BUCKMINISTER BOY.** (Historical Fiction) In 1911, Turner Buckminster hates his new home of Phippsburg, Maine. Things improve when he meets Lizzie Bright Griffin, a girl from a poor, nearby island community founded by former slaves.

Schmidt, Gary D. **OKAY FOR NOW.** (Fiction) As a fourteen-year-old who just moved to a new town, Doug Swieteck has no friends, an abusive father, and a louse for an older brother. He finds an ally in Lil Spicer—a fiery young lady. Together, they find a safe haven in the local library, inspiration in learning about the plates of John James Audubon's birds, and a hilarious adventure on a Broadway stage.
Selznick, Brian. **THE INVENTIONS OF HUGO CABRET.** (Fiction) Orphan, clock keeper, and thief, Hugo lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station. There his survival depends on secrets and anonymity. His world suddenly interlocks with an eccentric, bookish girl and a bitter old man who runs a toy booth in the station, and Hugo's undercover life is put in jeopardy.

Selznick, Brian. **WONDERSTRUCK.** (Fiction) Having lost his mother and his hearing in a short time, twelve-year-old Ben leaves his Minnesota home in 1977 to seek the father he never knew in New York City. There he meets Rose, who is also longing for something missing from her life. Ben's story is told in words; Rose's in pictures.

Senzai, N. H. **SHOOTING KABUL.** (Fiction) Escaping from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, eleven-year-old Fadi and his family immigrate to the San Francisco Bay Area, where Fadi schemes to return to the Pakistani refugee camp where his little sister was accidentally left behind.

Scieszka, Jon. **GUYS READ: FUNNY BUSINESS.** Ten stories guaranteed to delight and amuse, from the following writers: Mac Barnett, Christopher Paul Curtis, Kate DiCamillo & Jon Scieszka, Paul Feig, Jack Gantos, Jeff Kinney, David Lubar, Adam Rex, and David Yoo.

Scieszka, Jon. **GUYS READ: THRILLER** A series of short stories that are full of mystery, intrigue, and nefarious activity. Featuring some of the best writers around, it is a pulse-pounding collection of brand-new short stories, each one guaranteed to keep you riveted until the final page.

Scott, Elaine. **BURIED ALIVE.** (Nonfiction) This book describes the 2010 mining accident in San José, Chile, in which thirty-three men became trapped underground for over sixty days and details the rescue efforts and the worldwide media coverage of the event.

Silverstein, Shel. **EVERY THING ON IT.** (Poetry) This poetry collection, published since Silverstein’s death, includes more than one hundred and thirty never-before-seen poems and drawings completed by the cherished American artist.

Smith, Jeff. **OUT FROM BONEVILLE.** (Fiction – Graphic Novel) The books in the BONE adventure series tell the story of three cousins who are banned from their homeland of Boneville. When the cousins find themselves trapped in a wonderful, but often terrifying, land filled with secrets and danger they are soon caught up in adventures beyond their wildest dreams.

Stanley, Diane. **BELLA AT MIDNIGHT.** (Fantasy) Raised by peasants, Bella discovers that she is actually the daughter of a knight. She finds herself caught up in a terrible plot that will change her life and the kingdom forever.

Stephens, John. **THE EMERALD ATLAS.** (Fiction) Kate, Michael, and Emma have passed from one orphanage to another in the ten years since their parents disappeared to protect them. Now they learn that they have special powers, a quest to find a magical book, and a fearsome enemy.

Stewart, Trenton. **THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY.** (Fiction) Reynie, Kate, Sticky, and Constance are all graduates of the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened and members of the Benedict Society. They embark on a scavenger hunt that turns into a desperate search for their missing benefactor, Mr. Benedict. (The first book in a series.)

Stone, Phoebe. **THE ROMEO AND JULIET CODE.** (Historical Fiction) During World War II, eleven-year-old Felicity is sent from London to Bottlebay, Maine, to live with her grandmother, aunt, uncle, and a reclusive boy. He helps her decode mysterious letters that contain the truth about her missing parents.

Telgemeier, Raina. **DRAMA.** (Fiction – Graphic Novel) Callie rides an emotional roller coaster while serving on the stage crew for a middle school production of Moon Over Mississippi as various relationships start and end, and others never quite get going.

Telgemeier, Raina. **SMILE.** (Fiction – Graphic Novel) After an accident at Girl Scouts severely injures her two front teeth, Raina copes with a variety of dental problems that affect her appearance and how she feels about herself.
Thimmesh, Catherine and Melissa Sweet. **GIRLS THINK OF EVERYTHING: STORIES OF INGENIOUS INVENTIONS BY WOMEN.** (Biography) This book tells how women throughout the ages have responded to situations confronting them in daily life by inventing such items as correction fluid, space helmets, and disposable diapers.

Turnage, Shelia. **THREE TIMES LUCKY.** (Fiction) Mo LoBeau was washed ashore as a baby in tiny Tupelo Landing, North Carolina. Now eleven, Mo and her best friend turn detective when the co-owner of a café and his cook appear to be implicated in a murder.

Wadsworth, Ginger. **FIRST GIRL SCOUT EVER.** (Nonfiction) Juliette (Daisy) Gordon Low was a remarkable woman with ideas that were ahead of her time. She witnessed important eras in U.S. history, from the Civil War and Reconstruction to westward expansion to post-World War I. She made history by founding the first national organization to bring girls from all backgrounds into the out-of-doors.

Walker, Sally. **SECRETS OF A CIVIL WAR SUBMARINE: SOLVING THE MYSTERIES OF THE H. L. HUNLEY.** (Nonfiction) For more than one hundred years, a submarine lay buried beneath the ocean floor near Charleston, South Carolina. The H.L. Hunley made history in 1864 as the first submarine ever to sink an enemy ship. Something went wrong during that daring mission and the Hunley never returned to port.

Weeks, Sarah. **PIE.** (Fiction) Polly Portman’s award-winning put the town of Ipswich, Pennsylvania, on the map. After Polly’s death, her devoted niece Alice and Alice's friend investigate who is going to extremes to find Aunt Polly's secret pie crust recipe. Includes fourteen pie recipes.

Wiles, Deborah. **EACH LITTLE BIRD THAT SINGS.** (Realistic Fiction) Comfort Snowberger is well acquainted with death since her family runs the funeral parlor in their small southern town. Even so the ten-year-old is unprepared for the series of heart-wrenching events that begin on the first day of Easter vacation with the sudden death of her beloved great-uncle Edisto.

Williams-Garcia, Rita. **ONE CRAZY SUMMER.** (Fiction) In the summer of 1968, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters travel from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to spend a month with the mother they barely know. They arrive to a cold welcome as they discover that their mother, a dedicated poet and printer, is resentful of the intrusion of their visit and wants them to attend a nearby Black Panther summer camp.