

2010 Newton Summer Reading

Compiled by Newton's Middle School Library Teachers

Lauren Italiano, Brown Middle School
Elizabeth Matera, Oak Hill Middle School
Randy Meyer, Day Middle School
Diane Montville, Bigelow Middle School

Just Like Real Life

Anything But Typical by Nora Baskin

Jason, a twelve-year-old autistic boy who wants to become a writer, relates what his life is like as he tries to make sense of his world.

Confessions of a Closet Catholic by Sarah Littman

Justine decides to give up Judaism for Lent as she searches for something to believe in. When her grandmother gets sick, she wonders if God is punishing her for losing faith.

Million-Dollar Throw by Mike Lupica

Eighth-grade star quarterback Nate Brodie's family is feeling the stress of the troubled economy, and Nate is frantic because his best friend Abby is going blind, so when he gets a chance to win a million dollars if he can complete a pass during the halftime of a New England Patriot's game, he is nearly overwhelmed by the pressure to succeed.

My One Hundred Adventures by Polly Horvath

Twelve-year-old Jane, who lives at the beach in a run-down old house with her mother, and siblings, has an eventful summer accompanying her pastor on Bible deliveries, meeting former boyfriends of her mother, and being coerced into babysitting for a family of ill-mannered children.

Shug by Jenny Han

Annemarie Wilcox, known to her family as Shug, is twelve-years old, skinny, tall, and nowhere near the type of girl she wants to be. She feels the aching hurt of exclusion in middle school, develops a crush on Mark, a boy who has been her friend since childhood, and discovers he's not interested in the same way. She begins to realize her friends and family are different from the way she used to perceive them. Will she overcome the pain of all of her new understanding?

Absolutely Maybe by Lisa Yee

When living with her mother, an alcoholic ex-beauty queen, becomes unbearable, almost seventeen-year-old Maybelline "Maybe" Chestnut runs away to California, where she finds work on a taco truck and tries to track down her birth father.

Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper

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.

The Juvie Three by Gordon Korman

Gecko, Arjay, and Terence, all in trouble with the law, must find a way to keep their halfway house open in order to stay out of juvenile detention.

Other Worlds

Leviathan by Scott Westerfeld

Germany and England are about to go to war in this steampunk mash-up of World War I that features walking warships and a flying blue whale.

The Hunchback Assignments by Arthur Slade

Modo, a shape-shifting hunchback joins forces with a pickpocket named Octavia and, together, the two teenage secret agents work to stop an evil plot against the British government.

Salt by Maurice Gee

Hari, a downtrodden underclass boy, and Pearl, a privileged girl, both develop a talent to speak to animals and humans through mind control, and find themselves thrown together on a quest to save mankind from a terrible weapon.

Incarceron by Catherine Fisher

Two teenagers--a girl living a life of privilege and a boy born in prison--communicate across space and time as she works to set him free.

The Roar by Emma Clayton

In an overpopulated world where all signs of nature have been obliterated and a wall has been erected to keep out plague-ridden animals, twelve-year-old Mika refuses to believe that his twin sister was killed after being abducted, and continues to search for her in spite of the dangers he faces in doing so.

Catching Fire by Suzanne Collins

By winning the Hunger Games, Katniss and Peeta have secured a life of safety and plenty for themselves and their families, but because they won by defying the rules, they unwittingly become the faces of an impending rebellion.

The Lost Conspiracy by Frances Hardinge

When a lie is exposed and their tribe turns against them, Hathin must find a way to save her sister Arilou--once considered the tribe's oracle--and herself.

Thirteenth Child by Patricia C. Wrede

Eff must finally get over believing she is bad luck and accept that her special training in Aphrikan magic, and being the twin of the seventh son of a seventh son, give her extraordinary power to combat evil magical creatures.

Back in Time

Al Capone Shines My Shoes by Gennifer Choldenko

Moose Flanagan, who lives on Alcatraz along with his family and the families of the other prison guards, is frightened when he discovers that gangster Al Capone wants a favor in return for the help that he secretly gave Moose.

Brooklyn Nine: A Novel in Nine Innings by Alan Gratz

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

The Red Necklace by Sally Gardner

Set against the backdrop of the French Revolution, a gypsy boy and a dwarf are on the run from an evil nobleman who wants the secret to their magical powers.

For Freedom: The Story of a French Spy by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

The Germans have taken over her village, so 13-year-old Suzanne choose to fight back by spying for the French Resistance. Based on a true story.

Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson

Orphaned and living in a British boarding school in 1910, Maia has always wanted a family of her own and now she's got one--so she's off to the Brazilian rainforest to meet them for the first time.

Morning in a Different Place by Mary Ann McGuigan

In 1963 in the Bronx, New York, eighth-graders Fiona and Yolanda help one another face hard decisions at home despite family and social opposition to their interracial friendship, but Fiona is on her own when popular classmates start paying attention to her and give her a glimpse of both a different way of life and a new kind of hatefulness.

Mystery & Adventure

The Unknowns by Benedict Carey

Di and Tom must solve a series of kidnappings using the mathematical clues left by the latest victim, a trail that leads them underground into a confusing series of tunnels.

Closed for the Season by Mary Downing Hahn

When Logan and his family move into a run-down old house in rural Virginia, he discovers that a woman was murdered there and becomes involved with his neighbor Arthur in a dangerous investigation to try to uncover the killer.

Double Eagle by Sneed Collard

In 1973, Michael and Kyle's discovery of a rare Confederate coin near an old Civil War fort turns into a race against time as the boys try to find more coins before a hurricane hits Alabama's Gulf coast.

The Maze Runner by James Dashner

With his memory erased, Thomas arrives in an all-boys camp that is an experiment in survival. They must spend every day trying to find a way through the deadly maze that surrounds them.

Twisted Summer by Willo Davis Roberts

Back at her grandparents' summer home, Cici finds a good friend has been convicted of murder, but she is sure he's innocent.

Whiteout by Walter Sorrells

Chass and her mom are on the run from a killer, and each book in this series finds them in a different town and using different aliases. Chass thinks they're finally safe--until she stumbles across a dead body in the middle of a Minnesota blizzard.

The Real World

The Teen Vogue Handbook: An Insider's Guide to Careers in Fashion

Offers information and advice on careers in the fashion industry from "Teen Vogue," detailing the career paths of established professionals in the industry, and covering resumés, agencies, education, and other related topics.

Jim Thorpe: "There's no such thing as can't" by Michael Schuman

Explores the life of world class athlete Jim Thorpe, including his childhood and Native American background, his amateur and professional athletic career, and the legacy he left behind.

Generation Green: The Ultimate Teen Guide to Living an Eco-Friendly Life by Linda and Tosh Sivertsen

Recycling is great, but there are other things you can do to change your world.

Truce by Jim Murphy

On Christmas Day, 1914, during WW I, Allied and German soldiers on both sides of the Western Front called for an informal truce in the fighting. Soldiers met in No Man's Land to exchange greetings, gifts, food, and cigarettes, an experience some soldiers described as a "wonderful day," despite the ravages of war all around them.

Are You Afraid Yet? The Science behind Scary Stuff by Stephen James O'Meara

An illustrated discussion of the science behind various scary creatures, phenomenas, and medical conditions, covering viruses, real-life werewolves, haunted houses, UFOs, ghosts, vampires, and more, with fun facts and historical accounts.

The Magical Life of Long Tack Sam by Ann Marie Fleming

Long Tack was a Chinese acrobat who became a magician more famous around the world than Harry Houdini. Fleming is his great grand-daughter who wanted to know more about his amazing life. Here, in a graphic novel format, she describes his life, her search for information about his life including why no one today remembers him, and in the process tells the story of the 20th century!

The Mighty 12: Superheroes from Greek Myth by Charles R. Smith

Introduces an illustrated collection of twelve mythical gods and goddesses of ancient Greece including Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, Athena, and Dionysus.

Great Books Too Good to Miss

A Mango-shaped Space by Wendy Mass

Afraid that she is crazy, thirteen-year-old Mia, who sees a special color with every letter, number, and sound, keeps this a secret until she becomes overwhelmed by school, changing relationships, and the death of her beloved cat, Mango.

Dangerous Skies by Suzanne Fisher Staples

Best friends their whole lives, Buck and Tunes get pulled apart when Tunes is accused of murder.

The Revealers by Doug Wilhelm

Tired of being bullied and picked on, three seventh-grade outcasts join forces and, using scientific methods and the power of the Internet, begin to create a new atmosphere at Parkland Middle School.

Galax-Arena by Gillian Rubinstein

Peter, Joella, and Lianne are forced onto a spaceship and taken to the planet Vexa where they are made to perform death-defying stunts for their alien captors. Joella has never been a good gymnast and now she faces the unspeakable alternative--becoming a Vexan's pet. This leads her to a heart-stopping discovery.

Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblick

When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, his school life, and his desire to support his family.

The Dark Is Rising by Susan Cooper

On his eleventh birthday Will Stanton discovers that he is the last of the Old Ones, destined to seek the six magical Signs that will enable the Old Ones to triumph over the evil forces of the Dark.

Moving Up to 6th Grade**The Magician's Elephant by Kate DiCamillo**

When orphan Peter Augustus Duchene encounters a fortune teller in the marketplace one day who tells him that his sister, who is presumed dead, is in fact alive, he embarks on a remarkable series of adventures in an attempt to find her.

The Underneath by Kathi Appelt

An old hound that has been chained up at his hateful owner's run-down shack, and two kittens born underneath the house, endure separation, danger, and many other tribulations in their quest to be reunited and free.

The Amaranth Enchantment by Julie Berry

Orphaned at age five, Lucinda, now fifteen, stands with courage against the man who took everything from her, aided by a thief, a clever goat, and a mysterious woman called the Witch of Amaranth, while the prince she knew as a child prepares to marry, unaware that he, too, is in danger.

Icefire by Chris D'Lacey

While researching the existence of dragons for an essay that could win him a trip to the Arctic, Chris opens himself to the possibility that a great, ancient treasure exists there, guarded by bears, and that he has some role in its protection.

Emma Jean Lazarus Fell in Love by Lauren Tarshis

Seventh-grader Emma-Jean Lazarus uses her logical, scientific mind to navigate the mysteries of the upcoming Spring Fling, her friend Colleen's secret admirer, and other love-related dilemmas.

The Kind of Friends We Used to Be by Frances O'Roark Dowell

Twelve-year-olds Kate and Marylin, friends since preschool, draw further apart as Marylin becomes involved in student government and cheerleading, while Kate wants to play guitar and write songs, and both develop unlikely friendships with other girls and boys.