West Sound Academy
2017 Summer Reading Choices - Grades 6 and 7

Over the summer rising 6th and 7th graders are required to read TWO books from this list. Students will be expected to briefly summarize their free choice books in their English classes in the Fall.

Arcady's Goal, by Eugene Yelchin, 2014, 233 p. Historical fiction; Soccer stories; Sports fiction. KRL PTPL

For 12-year-old Arcady, soccer is more than just a game—after being sent to live in a children's home after his parents are declared enemies of the state, it is a means of survival and, ultimately, a chance to leave Soviet Russia if he's courageous enough to seize the opportunity. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

As Brave as You, by Jason Reynolds, 2011, 410 p. African American fiction; Humorous stories; Realistic fiction. KRL PTPL

When 11-year-old worrywart Genie and his big brother, Ernie, leave Brooklyn and go to their grandparents' home in rural Virginia, it seems as though they have been dropped on another planet. The city boys are introduced to another way of life and to their blind grandfather, who goes to extreme lengths to conceal his disability. The two brothers decide to prove how brave they are, and everything backfires -- literally! BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

Bella at Midnight: The Thimble, the Ring, and the Slippers of Glass, by Diane Stanley, 2006, 278 p. Fairy tale and folklore-inspired fiction; First person narratives; Historical fiction; Multiple perspectives. KRL PTPL

Bella's peasant life is changed when her real father, a knight who abandoned her when she was a baby, comes and reclaims her, moving her to his home where she lives with a resentful stepmother and two horrible stepsisters and learns about a plot to kill her friend, Prince Julian. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

Change-up: Mystery at the World Series, by John Feinstein, 2009, 304 p. Baseball stories; Mysteries; Sports fiction. (Steve and Susan Carol sports mysteries, Book 4) KRL PTPL

Teen reporters Stevie Thomas and Susan Carol Anderson are covering baseball's World Series, and during the course of an interview with a new hot pitcher, they discover more than a few contradictions in his life story. What's he hiding? An embarrassing secret? A possible crime? Let the investigation begin! BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 6-9. Or read one of the other five books in the series, such as, Rush for the Gold: Mystery at the Olympic Games, 2012.

Family Game Night and Other Catastrophes, by Mary E. Lambert, 2017, 245 p. Realistic fiction. KRL

Seventh-grader Annabelle's mother is a hoarder, and their whole house is full of canned goods, broken toys, fabric, and old newspapers--but when a pile of newspapers (organized by weather reports) falls on Annabelle's younger sister Leslie and their mother is more concerned about the newspapers, it sets off a chain of events that brings their fix-it-all grandmother in and Annabelle realizes that if there is any hope for change she can not isolate herself and keep her family's problems secret. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 4-7.
Hello There, We've Been Waiting for You, by Laurie B. Arnold, 2013, 171 p. Fantasy fiction. (Hello There trilogy, Book 1) KRL

Recently orphaned Madison McGee has trouble adjusting to her new life with her grandmother in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, until a MegaPix 6000 TV shows up on her doorstep and Madison finds herself transported into a magic world of lights, cameras, action, and peril. Or, read the sequel: Hello There, Do You Still Know Me?, 2017 (Book 2).

Author Visit: Laurie B. Arnold will be coming in September to talk to WSA 6th and 7th graders!


Everyone makes mistakes. Sometimes, epic failures even lead to super successes . . . sometimes they become deep dark secrets. But remember--to fail is human, to laugh about our shortcomings divine. This book takes a humorous look at the flaws and weaknesses of some of the most famous personalities of history, including such figures as Marco Polo, George Armstrong Custer, Thomas Edison, and Amelia Earhart. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-Up.


In this adaption of her same-titled adult book, scientist and dog-owner Alexandra Horowitz explains how dogs perceive their daily worlds, each other, and that other quirky animal, the human. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

It's Getting Hot in Here: The Past, Present, and Future of Climate Change, by Bridget Heos, 2016, 231 p. Narrative nonfiction; Science. KRL

This look at climate change tackles the past, present, and future of global warming, examining the effects it's having across the world, the politics behind denial, and the ways in which we can all work to lessen the harsh effects of our warming world. This is the perfect book for anyone looking for ways to take action against global warming. BL: Gr 4-8; SLJ: Gr 6-9.

Life As We Knew It, by Suzanne Beth Pfeffer, 2006, 347 p. Apocalyptic fiction; Diary novels; Science fiction. (Life As We Knew It series, Book 1) KRL PTPL

Through journal entries sixteen-year-old Miranda describes her family's struggle to survive after a meteor hits the moon, causing worldwide tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. BL: Gr 6-8; SLJ: Gr 7-10. Or, read the sequels: The Dead & the Gone, 2008 (Book 2); This World We Live In, 2010 (Book 3); or The Shade of the Moon, 2013 (Book 4).


Told in two stand-alone stories, the first nearly 400 pages of continuous pictures, and the second in text. In 1766, a boy, Billy Marvel, is shipwrecked, rescued, and goes on to found a brilliant family of actors that flourishes in London until 1900--and nearly a century later, Joseph Jervis, runs away from home, seeking refuge with his uncle in London, and is captivated by the Marvel house, with its portraits and ghostly presences. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 4-6.

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**Moving Target**, by Christina Diaz Gonzalez, 2015, 248 p. Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction; Mysteries. (Moving Target series, Book 1) KRL PTPL

When her art history professor father is targeted by an assassin, Cassie Arroyo, an American studying in Rome, discovers her secret ancient bloodline that enables her to use a legendary weapon, a legacy that is challenged by a murderous organization. BL: Gr 6-9; SLJ: Gr 4-8. Or, read Book 2 in the series: **Return Fire**, 2016.

**The Other Boy**, by M. G. Hennessey, 2016, 234 p. LGBTQIA fiction; Realistic fiction. KRL

Twelve-year-old Shane Woods is just a regular boy. He loves pitching for his baseball team, working on his graphic novel, and hanging out with his best friend, Josh. Ever since Shane moved in to town, he has been concealing the fact he was born a girl, and when one of his classmates learns he is a transgender, Shane must deal with the reactions of his entire community. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 5-7.

**Pax**, by Sara Pennypacker, 2016, 276 p. Adventure stories; Multiple perspectives; Stories told by animals. KRL PTPL

When his father enlists in the military and makes him return his beloved pet fox to the wild, Peter, who has been sent to live with his grandfather hundreds of miles away, embarks on a journey filled with astonishing discoveries in order to be reunited with his fox. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 4-7.

**Poached**, by Stuart Gibbs, 2014, 329 p. First person narratives; Mysteries. (FunJungle series, Book 2) KRL PTPL

I would never have been accused of stealing the koala if Vance Jessup hadn't made me drop a human arm in the shark tank." That's Teddy Fitzroy's explanation for the mess he's in. He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time, and now he's the prime suspect in the theft of a koala from FunJungle, the zoo amusement park where his parents work. BL: Gr 5-7; SLJ: Gr 5-8. Or, read one of the other books in the series: **Belly Up**, 2010 (Book 1); **Big Game**, 2015 (Book 3); or **Panda-monium** (Book 4).


When London is overrun by malevolent spirits, a talented group of young psychic detectives compete against other ghostbusting agencies in the debut of a new series that finds three intrepid colleagues investigating one of England's most haunted houses. BL: Gr 4-7; SLJ: Gr 6-9. Or, read the sequels: **The Whispering Skull**, 2014 (Book 2); **The Hollow Boy**, 2015 (Book 3); **The Creeping Shadow**, 2016 (Book 4).

**Short**, by Holly Goldberg Sloan, 2017, 296 p. First person narratives; Realistic fiction; Theater fiction. KRL

Always considered short for her age, Julia is used to being picked last for sports teams in school, even by her closest friends, and is self-conscious enough of her height that she never uses the dreaded S-word. Her outlook changes, however, when her mother forces her to audition for the local university’s summer-theater production of The Wizard of Oz, in which she is cast as the lead Munchkin dancer. BL: Gr 3-7; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

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Surviving the Applewhites, by Stephanie S. Tolan, 2002, 216 p. Humorous stories; Realistic fiction; Theatre fiction. KRL PTPL

Jake, a budding juvenile delinquent, is sent for home schooling to the arty and eccentric Applewhite family's Creative Academy. Twelve-year-old E.D., the only non-artistic (and organized) person in the family, is wary of Jake. A screwball comedy that will keep you laughing! BL: Gr 6-9; SLJ: Gr 5-8. Or read the sequel, Applewhites at Wit's End, 2012.

The Thief, by Megan Whelan Turner, 1996, 311 p. (Queen's Thief series, Book 1.) Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction; High fantasy. KRL PTPL

In a time long ago and far away, a gifted young thief, imprisoned for life, is offered one chance to win his freedom. If Gen can steal for the king's magus a legendary stone hidden in a mysterious temple, the magus will set him free. BL: Gr 7-11; SLJ: Gr 7 Up. (Or, read one of the other four books in the series: The Queen of Attolia, 2000 (Book 2), The King of Attolia, 2006 (Book 3), A Conspiracy of Kings, 2010 (Book 4), or Thick as Thieves, 2017 (Book 5).

Things Too Huge to Fix by Saying Sorry, by Susan Vaught, 2016, 342 p. Mysteries; Parallel narratives. KRL PTPL

A family mystery leads Dani Beans to investigate the secrets of Ole Miss and the dark history of race relations in Oxford, Mississippi. The more Dani learns about her grandma's past, the more she learns about herself and her own friendships—and it's not all good news. History and present day collide in this mystery that explores how echoes of the past can have profound consequences. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-8.

The Tomorrow Code, by Brian Falkner, 2008, 349 p. Ecofiction; New Zealand fiction; Science fiction. KRL PTPL

New Zealand teens Tane and Rebecca hit upon a way to decode transmissions from the future and begin receiving messages--from themselves. The cryptic messages hint at an ecological global catastrophe, and the pair needs to decipher them before it's too late. BL: Gr 6-9; SLJ: Gr 7-Up.


When the eighth grade civics class of Miami's Culver Middle School goes on a trip to Washington, D.C., Wyatt Palmer finds himself in deep trouble before the plane even lands because his best friend, Matt, has decided the men sitting behind them are terrorists and it is up to the boys to stop them. BL: Gr 5-8; SLJ: Gr 5-7.

A Wrinkle in Time, by Madeleine L'Engle, 1962, 211 p. Books to movies; Classics; Science fiction. KRL PTPL

Meg Murry, her brother Charles, and their friend Calvin, embark on a journey through space and time, assisted by three otherworldly women, to find Meg's father, a physicist who disappeared while experimenting with time travel. Film (MPAA rating: unrated) to be released in theatres February 2018.