

Hingham Public Schools Summer Reading
Students Entering Grade 8
Summer 2011



Author	Title	Synopsis
Avi	<i>Nothing But the Truth</i>	Ninth-grade student Philip Malloy was suspended from school for singing along to <i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i> in his homeroom, causing what his teacher called "a disturbance." But was he standing up for his patriotic ideals, only to be squelched by the school system? Was Ms. Narwin simply trying to be a good teacher? Or could it all be just a misunderstanding gone bad? Heroism, hoax, or mistake, what happened at Harrison High changes everything for everyone in ways no one -- least of all Philip -- could have ever predicted. Amazon.com
Suzanne Collins	<i>The Hunger Games</i> (First book in the trilogy)	Katniss is a 16-year-old girl living with her mother and younger sister in the poorest district of Panem, the remains of what used be the United States. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games." The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed. When Kat's sister is chosen by lottery, Kat steps up to go in her place. Amazon.com
Karen Hesse	<i>Witness</i>	In 1924 a small town in Vermont is falling under the influence of the Ku Klux Klan. Two girls, Leanora Sutter and Esther Hirsch, one black and the other Jewish, are among those who are no longer welcome. As the potential for violence increases, heroes and villains are revealed, and everyone in town is affected. As Karen Hesse tells her story in the voices of several characters, the true spirit of the town emerges. <i>Witness</i> is a story of poverty and prejudice, hope, and redemption. Amazon.com
Jennifer Holm	<i>Our Only May Amelia</i>	It isn't easy being a pioneer in the state of Washington in 1899, but it's particularly hard when you are the only girl ever born in the new settlement. With seven older brothers and a love of adventure, May Amelia Jackson just can't seem to abide her family's insistence that she behave like a Proper Young Lady. May is sure she could manage better if only there were at least one other girl living along the banks of the Nasel River. And now that Mama's going to have a baby, maybe there's hope. Amazon.com
Kimberly Willis Holt	<i>When Zachary Beaver Came to Town</i> Required for all students entering grade 8	Nothing ever happens in Toby's small Texas town. Nothing much until this summer that's full of big changes. It's tough for Toby when his mother leaves home to become a country singer. And Toby takes it hard when his best friend Cal's older brother goes off to fight in Vietnam. But now their sleepy town is about to get an even bigger jolt with the arrival of Zachary Beaver, billed as the fattest boy in the world. Toby is in for a summer unlike any other, a summer sure to change his life. Amazon.com

Julian Houston	<i>New Boy</i>	Fifteen-year-old Rob Garrett wants to escape the segregated South and prove himself. But in late 1950s Virginia, opportunity doesn't come easily to an African American. So Rob's parents take the unusual step of enrolling their son in a Connecticut boarding school. But times are changing. A movement is rising back home. In Rob's hometown, his friends are on the verge of taking action against segregation. There is even talk about sitting in at a lunch counter that refuses to serve black people. How can Rob hope to make a difference when he's a world away? Amazon.com
Ben Mikaelson	<i>Touching Spirit Bear</i>	After his involvement in an assault, Cole Matthews is offered Circle Justice, a system based on Native American traditions that attempts to provide healing for the criminal offender, the victim and the community. Cole receives a one-year banishment to a remote Alaskan island. There, he is mauled by a bear of Native American legend. As Cole waits for his death, his thoughts shift from anger to humility. To survive, he must stop blaming others and take responsibility for his life. Amazon.com
Clare Pastore	<i>Fiona McGilray's Story</i> (<i>Journey to America</i> series)	<i>Fiona McGilray's Story</i> is the first in the <i>Journey to America</i> series, and it tells the story of a young girl and her brother, who emigrate to escape the Irish potato famine. After being in America only a short time, Fiona is taken under the wing of a lonely, wealthy woman and shortly thereafter finds her own wealthy cousins. The story, which touches briefly on the more common and difficult experiences of Irish immigrants, is both engaging and well written. Amazon.com
Mark Pftzer	<i>Within Reach: My Everest Story</i>	In May 1996, Mark Pftzer at age 16 was the youngest climber on Mount Everest to reach 26,000 feet, and his gripping autobiography focuses exclusively on his mountain climbing achievements. Recounted in diary format, Pftzer's story opens during the 1996 Everest expedition. Even readers with no interest in rappelling will likely be swept up in the details of the people and places Pftzer meets in his travels. Publisher's Weekly
Ann Rinaldi	<i>A Break with Charity: A Story about the Salem Witch Trials</i>	Susanna desperately wants to join the circle of girls who meet every week at the parsonage. What she doesn't realize is that the girls are about to set off a torrent of false accusations leading to the imprisonment and execution of countless innocent people. Susanna faces a painful choice. Should she keep quiet and let the witch-hunt panic continue, or should she "break charity" with the group--and risk having her own family members named as witches? Amazon.com
James L. Swanson	<i>Chasing Lincoln's Killer</i>	This fast-paced thriller tells the story of the pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth and gives a day-by-day account of the wild chase to find this killer and his accomplices. Based on James Swanson's bestselling adult book <i>Manhunt: The Twelve-day Chase for Lincoln's Killer</i> , this young adult version is an accessible look at the assassination of a president, and shows readers how Lincoln's death impacted those closest to him. Amazon.com
Markus Zusak	<i>The Book Thief</i>	Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel survives by stealing and encounters something she can't resist--books. With the help of her foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement. This is an unforgettable story about the ability of books to feed the soul. Amazon.com