

Northside Independent School District
Middle School Summer Reading List
English Pre-AP

Collier, Christopher, and James Lincoln Collier. *My Brother Sam Is Dead.*

Tragedy strikes the Meeker family during the American Revolution when one son joins the rebel forces while the rest of the family tries to stay neutral.

Daly, Maureen. *Seventeenth Summer.*

What better time than summer for a little romance? Except for Angie, who doesn't really date. *Didn't* date, that is—until she saw Jack Duluth's crew cut peeking out over a booth in McKnight's drugstore one night. “He looked over at me, smiled, and then sat down again.” Thus starts a summer Angie will never forget -- one full of spine chills, total bliss, heartache, and confusion...all the feelings that spell love.

Hobbs, Will. *River Thunder.*

Despite some reservations, sixteen-year-old Jessie joins her companions from the previous year's adventure on the Colorado River for a legal rafting trip through the Grand Canyon.

Holt, Kimberly Willis. *My Louisiana Sky.*

Tiger Ann Parker is bright in school and good at baseball, but she is forever being teased about her family by the girls in her class. Tiger knows that her folks are different from the others in their small town, Saitter, Louisiana, and that she will have to make the most important decision of her life.

---. *When Zachary Beaver Came To Town.*

Nothing ever happens in Toby's small Texas town. Nothing much, that is, until this summer. This summer everyone seems to be leaving. Toby's mother leaves home to be a country singer. His best friend Cal's older brother goes off to fight in Vietnam. But their sleepy town is about to get a jolt with the arrival of Zachary Beaver, billed as the fattest boy in the world.

Greene, Bette. *Summer of My German Soldier.*

The summer that Patty Bergen turns twelve is a summer that will haunt her forever. When her small hometown in Arkansas becomes the site of a camp housing German prisoners during World War II, Patty learns what it means to open her heart. Even though she's Jewish, she begins to see a prison escapee, Anton, not as a Nazi, but as a lonely, frightened young man with feelings not unlike her own.

Lewis C.S. *The Magician's Nephew.*

Digory's Uncle Andrew is a magician. but Digory and his friend Polly don't know this until Polly puts on one of Andrew's magic rings and disappears. When Digory follows her, their adventures take them to Narnia.

London, Jack. *White Fang.*

Part wolf and part dog, orphaned White Fang relies on his instincts as well as his inborn strength and courage to survive in the Yukon wilderness despite both animal and human predators.

Lowery, Lois. *Gathering Blue*.

“Kira saw that she was surrounded by hostile women who had come from their cottages and were watching Vandara for instructions and leadership. Several, she noticed, had rocks in their hands. If one rock were thrown, others would follow, she knew. They were all waiting for the first...” When Kira is summoned to judgment by the council of the Guardians to resolve a village conflict, Kira knows she is fighting for her life. Perhaps only her special, almost magical talent will save her now.

O’Brien, Robert. *Z for Zachariah*.

“There is not one left alive... I know, because after the war ended, and all the telephones went dead, my family went... to see what was happening. They never came back...” Ann Burden is sixteen and, as far as she knows, the only person left in the world. The nuclear radiation that destroyed the rest of the world has not touched the valley where she lives, and so she has remained, surviving as best she knows how, for the past year.

Paulsen, Gary. *The River*.

Because of his success surviving alone in the wilderness for fifty-four days, fifteen-year-old Brian, profoundly changed by his time in the wild, is asked to undergo a similar experience to help scientists learn more about the psychology of survival.

Taylor, Mildred D. *The Land*.

Mildred D. Taylor combines her personal family history with that of a country divided by racism, prejudice, and slavery. The events in *The Land* unfold through the eyes of Paul Logan, the son of a one-time slave and the white man who owned her. Paul's father treats him fairly and with kindness most of the time, frequently allowing him the same privileges he gives his legitimate sons. However, as Paul grows older, certain harsh realities make him realize that he will never be considered a true equal to his white brothers—or any white man, for that matter—even if his skin is so light that he might be able to “pass.”

---. *Let the Circle Be Unbroken*.

For the Logan family, it is a frightening and turbulent time. First, their friend T.J. must go on trial for murder—and confront an all white jury. Then Cousin Suzella tries to pass for white which results in humiliating consequences. And when Cassie’s neighbor Mrs. Lee Annie stands up for her right to vote, she and her family are driven from their home. Other neighbors are destroyed and shattered by the greed of landowners. But through it all, Cassie and the Logans proudly stand together—proving that courage, love, and understanding can defy even the deepest prejudice.

---. *The Road to Memphis*. (A Coretta Scott King Author Award Book)

Set in Mississippi in 1941, *The Road to Memphis* describes three harrowing, unforgettable days in the life of an African-American high school girl dreaming of law school. Caught up in the center of tense racial dramas, Cassie Logan is forced to confront the adult world as never before.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

Where there’s trouble, that’s where you’ll find Tom Sawyer. Who else would get out of the boring job of whitewashing a fence by tricking every boy in town to do it for him? And when Tom teams up with rascally Huck Finn, the trouble doubles.

Sebestyen, Ouida. *Words By Heart*.

Lena can recite the Scriptures by heart. Hoping to make her adored Papa proud of her and to make her white classmates notice her "Magic Mind," not her black skin, Lena vows to win the Bible-quoting contest. But winning does not bring Lena what she expected. Instead of honor, violence and death erupt and strike the one she loves most dearly. Lena, who once believed in vengeance, must now learn how to forgive.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*.

Leo Borlock follows the unspoken rule at Mica Area High School: don't stand out—under any circumstances! Then Stargirl arrives and everything changes—for Leo and for the entire school. After fifteen years of home schooling, Stargirl bursts into tenth grade in an explosion of color and a clatter of ukulele music, enchanting the Mica student body.

Voigt, Cynthia. *Dacey's Song*.

Keeping her family together is what thirteen-year-old Dacey does best. But now that all four Tillerman children have found a new home with their grandmother, Dacey has to learn to let go a little and let them live their own lives. She just can't solve all their problems anymore.

---. *Homecoming*.

"It's still true." That's the first thing James Tillerman says to his sister Dacey every morning. It's still true that their mother has abandoned the four Tillerman children somewhere in the middle of Connecticut. It's still true they have to find their way, somehow, to Great-aunt Cilla's house in Bridgeport, which may be their only hope of staying together as a family.

---. *A Solitary Blue*.

Jeff's mother, who deserted the family years before, reenters his life and widens the gap between Jeff and his father, a gap that only truth, love, and friendship can heal.

Paterson, Katherine. *Jacob Have I Loved*.

Sara Louise Bradshaw knows that she should be proud of her beautiful twin sister Caroline. But how can she? Ever since they were born, Caroline has done nothing but take from Louise: their parents' love, Louise's hopes for an education, even her best—and only—friend.

Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*.

Raised on a ranch in northern California, Jody is well-schooled in the hard work and demands of a rancher's life. Still, Jody discovers there are lessons he must learn about the ways of nature and, particularly, the ways of man.

Christi, Agatha. *Murder on the Orient Express*.

Detective extraordinaire Hercule Poirot never refused an interesting case—but his services were certainly not for sale. When Mr. Ratchett approached him in the dining-car, he spurned the American's generous offer. But when Ratchett was found dead the next morning, Poirot responded with eagerness. One thing was for sure—with the train trapped in a heavy Balkan snowdrift, the killer could not escape.

Wakatsuki Houston, Jeanne, and James Houston. *Farewell to Manzanar*.

This true story tells of one spirited Japanese-American family's attempt to survive the indignities of forced detention and of a native-born American child's discovery of what it is like to grow up behind barbed wire in the United States.

Ames, Mildred. *Anna to the Infinite Power*.

Anna Zimmerman Hart had always been different from other people. She was considered practically a genius—even for the 1990's. She never seemed to have much in common with her family, and she didn't have any friends. Anna didn't mind being different, though. She liked it that way, but Anna didn't realize how different she was. She didn't know she was being watched, and she never suspected she was part of a grand master plan that would take away her whole identity.