



SUMMER READING LIST*

A Universe of Stories! ~ Grades 7-8

Suggested space-themed summer reading titles
compiled for the Connecticut State Department of Education
by Linda Williams, Connecticut State Library

FICTION

Honor Among Thieves by Rachel Caine & Ann Aguirre

A savvy young criminal with antisocial behavior is recruited to attend the Honors space program and joins a team on a sentient spaceship destined for the far reaches of the galaxy only to discover dangerous secrets hidden among the stars. | *Nutmeg* 2020 | Lexile: 720

Maggot Moon by Sally Gardner

Following a stray football to the other side of a wall where there is a secret, Standish Treadwell discovers astonishing truths about a moon landing that the overseeing Motherland, a ruthless regime, is determined to hide. | *ALA* | Lexile: 690

Defy the Stars by Claudia Gray

Teenaged soldier Noemi and an enemy robot, Abel, who is programmed to obey her commands, set out on an interstellar quest to save her home planet, Earth colony Genesis. | *Nutmeg* 2020 | Lexile: 830

Dangerous by Shannon Hale

When aspiring astronaut Maisie Danger Brown, who was born without a right hand, and the other space camp students get the opportunity to do something amazing in space, Maisie must prove how dangerous she can be and how far she is willing to go to protect everything she has ever loved. | *ILA* | Lexile: 680

Aurora Rising by Amie Kaufman & Jay Kristoff

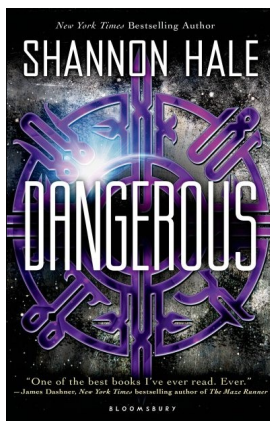
Told in separate voices, eighteen-year-old Tyler Jones, top graduate of Aurora Academy, and a group of misfits and troublemakers embark on their first mission with Auri, a stowaway from the distant past. | Lexile: 800

Illuminae by Amie Kaufman & Jay Kristoff

The planet Kerenza is attacked, and Kady and Ezra find themselves on a space fleet fleeing the enemy, while their ship's artificial intelligence system and a deadly plague may be the end of them all. | *ALA*, *Nutmeg* 2019 | Lexile: 780

Life in Outer Space by Melissa Keil

Sixteen-year-old Sam Kinnison is perfectly happy as a game



-playing, movie-obsessed geek until beautiful, friendly, and impossible to ignore Camilla Carter starts him wondering if he has been watching all the wrong movies. | *ALA* | Lexile: 740

What Goes Up by Katie Kennedy

Teenagers Rosa and Eddie, trainees in a top-secret space exploration and research program, must thwart the aliens' Earth-destroying mission by stealing their spacecraft and traveling extra-dimensionally to an alternate Earth. | Lexile: 650

The Diabolic by S. J. Kincaid

Nemesis is a Diabolic, a humanoid teenager and the galaxy's most deadly weapon, who masquerades as Sidonia, a senator's daughter, and becomes a hostage of the galactic court. | *ALA* | Lexile: 810

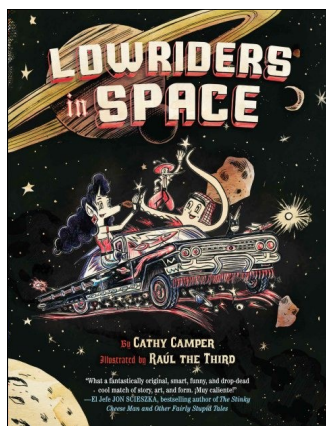
Exo by Fonda Lee

Donovan Reyes is a loyal member of an alien security force on Earth, but after a routine search and seizure goes bad, Donovan finds himself a captive of the human revolutionary group, Sapience, terrorists who seem to prefer war to alien rule. | *ALA* | Lexile: 810

Across the Universe by Beth Revis

Teenaged Amy, a cryogenically frozen passenger on the spaceship Godspeed, wakes up to discover that someone may have tried to murder her. | *ALA* | Lexile: 720

GRAPHIC NOVELS



Lowriders in Space by Cathy Camper

Lupe, Flapjack, and Elirio customize their car into a low rider for the Universal Car Competition to win the cash prize that will enable them to buy their own garage. | *ALA* | Lexile: 430

The Far Side of the Moon: The Story of Apollo 11's Third Man by Alex Irvine

This graphic retelling of the Apollo 11 moon-landing mission follows astronaut Michael Collins, commander of the lunar orbiter, to the far side of the moon. | *ALA* | Lexile: 920

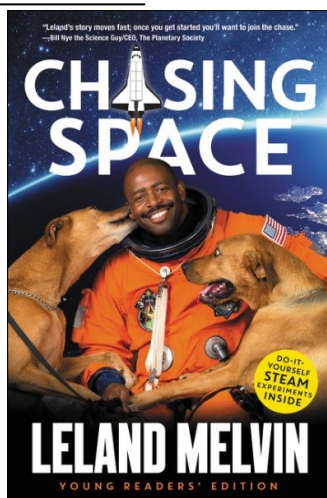


SUMMER READING LIST*

GRAPHIC NOVEL

Space Dumplins by Craig Thompson

For Violet Marlocke, family is the most important thing in the whole galaxy. So when her father goes missing while on a hazardous job, she can't just sit around and do nothing. To get him back, Violet throws caution to the stars and sets out with a group of misfit friends on a quest to find him. But space is big and dangerous, and she soon discovers that her dad has been swallowed by a giant, planet-eating whale. With her father's life on the line, nothing is going to stop Violet from trying to rescue him and keep her family together. | ALA | Lexile: 390



of 3 months and sending back invaluable images of the environmentally hostile planet. | ALA, NCTE, NSTA | Lexile: 950

Countdown: 2979 Days to the Moon by Suzanne Slade

Told in free verse, the story of the American effort to land the first man on the moon comes to life. | NSTA | Lexile: 940

Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon by Catherine Thimmesh

Culled from direct quotes from the people behind the scenes, NASA transcripts, national archives and NASA photos, the whole story of Apollo 11 and the first moon landing emerges. | ALA, NCTE, NSTA | Lexile: 1060

NONFICTION

Welcome to Mars: Making a Home on the Red Planet by Buzz Aldrin

The Apollo 11 astronaut invites curious youngsters to evaluate Mars as a potential planet for human colonization, describing what Mars residents might experience while traveling to and living on the Red Planet. | NSTA | Lexile: 900

Exploring Space: From Galileo to the Mars Rover and Beyond by Martin Jenkins

Presents a brief history of space exploration, covering such topics as the first human missions, life on the International Space Station, and settling on Mars. | NSTA

To the Moon!: The True Story of the American Heroes on the Apollo 8 Spaceship by Jeffrey Kluger

Recounts the first crewed spaceship to travel to the Moon, describing how the Cold War and the tragedy of Apollo 1 shaped the Apollo 8 mission and offering facts about living in a spaceship. | NCTM, NSTA | Lexile: 1180

The Mighty Mars Rovers: The Incredible Adventures of Spirit and Opportunity by Elizabeth Rusch

The story of the two robot vehicles, Spirit and Opportunity, that were sent to explore Mars, lasting far past their projected lives

BIOGRAPHY

Path to the Stars: My Journey from Girl Scout to Rocket Scientist by Sylvia Acevedo

The inspiring memoir for young readers about a Latina rocket scientist whose early life was transformed by joining the Girl Scouts and who currently serves as CEO of the Girl Scouts of the USA. | ALA | Lexile: 960

Endurance: My Year in Space and How I Got There (Young Readers Edition) by Scott Kelly

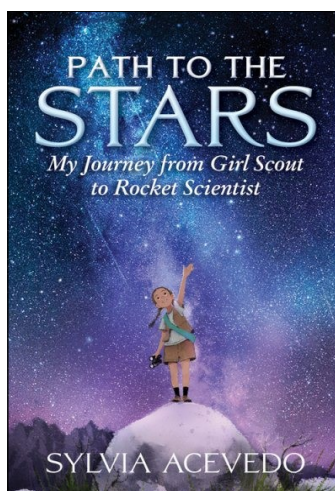
Adapted from the memoir of NASA astronaut Scott Kelly, who spent a record-breaking year in space. | NSTA | Lexile: 1070

Chasing Space (Young Readers Edition) by Leland Melvin

A memoir by the former NASA astronaut and NFL wide receiver traces his personal journey from the gridiron to the stars, examining the intersecting roles of community, perseverance, and grace that create opportunities for success. | NSTA | Lexile: 1020

Sally Ride: A Photobiography of America's Pioneering Woman in Space by Tam O'Shaughnessy

A biography of the famous astronaut drawing on personal and family photographs from her childhood, school days, college, life in the astronaut corps, and afterward. | NSTA | Lexile: 870



*Many of the listed books were selected as exemplary books by one or more of the following organizations: the American Library Association (ALA), the International Literacy Association (ILA), the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) or the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY). Other awards as noted.



SUMMER READING

New Favorites & Classics

For Grades 7 & 8

READ NUTMEG AWARD NOMINEES!

Find the Middle School Nutmeg list at: <http://nutmegaward.org>

FAVORITES & CLASSICS

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson

When their owner dies at the start of the Revolution, Isabel and her younger sister are sold to Loyalists in New York, where Isabel is offered the chance to spy for the Patriots. | Lexile: 780

City of Orphans by Avi

In 1893 New York, thirteen-year-old Maks, a newsboy, teams up with Willa, a homeless girl, to clear his older sister, Emma, from charges that she stole from the brand new Waldorf Hotel, where she works. Includes historical notes. | Lexile: 570

Zombie Baseball Beatdown

by Paolo Bacigalupi

While practicing for their next baseball game, thirteen-year-old friends Rabi, Miguel, and Joe discover that the nefarious activities of the Delbe, Iowa, meatpacking plant have caused cows to turn into zombies. | Lexile: 650

Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis

In 1859, eleven-year-old Elijah Freeman, the first free-born child in Buxton, Canada, which is a haven for slaves fleeing the American south, uses his wits and skills to try to bring to justice the lying preacher who has stolen money that was to be used to buy a family's freedom. | Lexile: 1070

Eva by Peter Dickinson

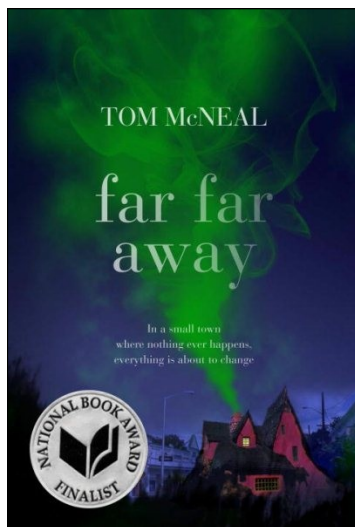
After a terrible accident, a young girl wakes up to discover that she has been given the body of a chimpanzee. | Lexile: 1010

Whirligig by Paul Fleischman

While traveling to each corner of the country to build a whirligig in memory of the girl whose death he caused, sixteen-year-old Brian finds forgiveness and atonement. | Lexile: 760

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman

After the grisly murder of his entire family, a toddler



wanders into a graveyard where the ghosts and other supernatural residents agree to raise him as one of their own. | Lexile: 820

Chomp by Carl Hiaasen

When the difficult star of the reality television show "Expedition Survival" disappears while filming an episode in the Florida Everglades using animals from the wildlife refuge run by Wahoo Crane's family, Wahoo and classmate Tuna Gordon set out to find him while avoiding Tuna's gun-happy father. | Lexile: 800

Standing Against the Wind by Traci L. Jones

As she tries to escape her poor Chicago neighborhood by winning a scholarship to a prestigious boarding school, shy and studious eighth-grader Patrice discovers that she has more options in life than she previously realized. | Lexile: 780

Hey, Kiddo* by Jarrett Krosoczka

The powerful, unforgettable graphic memoir from Jarrett Krosoczka, about growing up with a drug-addicted mother, a missing father, and two unforgettably opinionated grandparents. | ALA | Lexile: 510

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Given his lifetime assignment at the Ceremony of Twelve, Jonas becomes the receiver of memories shared by only one other in his community and discovers the terrible truth about the society in which he lives. | Lexile: 760

Far Far Away* by Tom McNeal

When Jeremy Johnson Johnson's strange ability to speak to the ghost of Jacob Grimm draws the interest of his classmate, Ginger Boltinghouse, the two find themselves at the center of a series of disappearances in their hometown. | ALA, Nutmeg 2017 | Lexile: 790





SUMMER READING

New Favorites & Classics

For Grades 7 & 8

Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelson

After his anger erupts into violence, Cole, in order to avoid going to prison, agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the native American Circle Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island where an encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life. | Lexile: 670

Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell

Left alone on a beautiful but isolated island off the coast of California, a young Indian girl spends eighteen years, not only merely surviving through her enormous courage and self-reliance, but also finding a measure of happiness in her solitary life. | Lexile: 1000

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen

After a plane crash, thirteen-year-old Brian spends fifty-four days in the Canadian wilderness, learning to survive with only the aid of a hatchet given him by his mother, and learning also to survive his parents' divorce. | Lexile: 1020

The River Between Us by Richard Peck

During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled New Orleans to come north to Illinois. | Lexile: 740

The Wee Free Men by Terry Pratchett

Tiffany, a young witch-to-be in the land of Discworld, teams up with the Wee Free Men, a clan of six-inch-high blue men, to rescue her baby brother and ward off a sinister invasion from Fairyland. | Lexile: 680

Counting by 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Twelve-year-old genius and outsider Willow Chance must figure out how to connect with other people and find a surrogate family for herself after her parents are killed in a car accident. | ALA, NCTE, *Nutmeg* | Lexile: 770

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

In this story about the perils of popularity, the courage of

nonconformity, and the thrill of first love, an eccentric student named Stargirl changes Mica High School forever. | Lexile: 590

Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind by Suzanne

Fisher Staples

When eleven-year old Shabanu, the daughter of a nomad in the Cholistan Desert of present-day Pakistan, is pledged in marriage to an older man whose money will bring prestige to the family, she must either accept the decision, as is the custom, or risk the consequences of defying her father's wishes. | Lexile: 970

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred

D. Taylor

A black family living in the South during the 1930s are faced with prejudice and discrimination which their children don't understand. | Lexile: 920

The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien

Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit, lives comfortably in his hobbit-hole until the day the wandering wizard Gandalf chooses him to take part in an adventure from which he may never return. | Lexile: 1000

Howl's Moving Castle by Diana Wynne

Jones

Eldest of three sisters in a land where it is considered to be a misfortune, Sophie is resigned to her fate as a hat shop apprentice until a witch turns her into an old woman and she finds herself in the castle of the greatly feared wizard Howl. | Lexile: 800

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Death tells the story of a young German girl, Liesel, whose book-stealing and story-telling talents during World War II help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors. | Lexile: 730

FAVORITE SERIES

The Princess Diaries by Meg Cabot

Artemis Fowl by Eoin Colfer

Young Wizards by Diane Duane

The Rangers Apprentice by John Flanagan

Lunar Chronicles by Marissa Meyer

The Squire's Tales by Gerald Morris

The News Crew by Walter Dean Myers

Song of the Lioness quartet by Tamora Pierce

His Dark Materials by Phillip Pullman

Divergent trilogy by Veronica Roth

Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel by Michael Scott

The Tillermans by Cynthia Voigt

Leviathan by Scott Westerfield
