

THE WASHINGTON LATIN SCHOOL
LOWER SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST

FICTION

Airborn by Kenneth Oppel

Fantasy and adventure combine in this imaginative tale that includes airships, sky pirates, cloud cats, and two realistic characters.

All Alone in the Universe by Lynne Raw Perkins

Debbie, 13, is devastated when her longtime best friend discovers a new best friend, leaving Debbie to feel "all alone in the universe."

Because of Winn Dixie by Kate DiCamillo

When Opal adopts a friendly dog she finds at the grocery store, she discovers a great way to connect with her new town.

Black Beauty by Anna Sewell

Black Beauty, a horse, tells the story of his life and adventures.

Blood on the River James Town 1607 by Elisa Carbone

Twelve-year-old Samuel Collier becomes the page of Captain John Smith and boards the ship bound for the New World with high hopes. But beginning with the stormy journey and his first contact with the native people, he realizes that the New World is nothing like he had ever imagined.

Boggart by Susan Cooper

An invisible, mischievous Boggart (shape changer) plays practical jokes on Emily's family as the creature tries to adjust to life in the modern world.

Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Patterson

Jess' life becomes much more interesting when Leslie and her huge imagination move into the area. Together they create a secret magical kingdom in the nearby forest, but their hidden world does not protect them from a tragic accident.

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis

Bud may be a motherless runaway trying to survive during the Great Depression, but that doesn't stop him from carefully following his own clever "rules of life" and the clues on an old jazz poster to search for his unknown Dad. You'll love every minute of Bud's adventures and the memorable characters he encounters while on his quest to find his father.

Bull Run by Paul Fleischman

The glory and the horror of the Civil War's first battle, as told from the Southern and Northern points of view, provides a close-up view of life on and behind the front lines.

Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliet

Fifth graders Petra and Calder connect the seemingly unrelated and strange events and solve the international art scandal involving a missing, and very precious, Vermeer painting.

Conch Bearer by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

12 year old Anand's compassionate gesture of sharing his tea with an old man leads to the boy embarking on a dangerous journey to return a magical conch shell to its proper home in the far-off Himalayas. If you like this, there's now a sequel, *Mirror of Fire and Dreaming*.

The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen

During a Passover Seder, Hannah is transported back in the world of a Polish village in the 1940's and living the Holocaust story.

Dragon Rider by Cornelia Funke

This exciting adventure story is also filled with magic as Firedrake learns that the peaceful valley where he and the other silver dragons live is threatened with danger of discovery by humans and sets out on a quest with his friend Sorrel to find a new home for all dragons.

Escaping the Giant Wave by Peg Kehret

Kyle and his younger sister struggle to escape the tsunami triggered by an earthquake at an Oregon beach resort .

Fairest by Gail Carson Levine

In a land where beauty and singing are valued above all else, Aza learns to accept herself for who she truly is.

Fantastic Voyage by Isaac Asimov

A team of miniaturized doctors enters the bloodstream of a prominent scientist to destroy a blood clot that threatens his life.

A Girl Named Disaster by Nancy Farmer

The humorous and heart-wrenching story of young girl who discovers her own courage and strength when she makes the dangerous journey from Mozambique to Zimbabwe after her family tries to force her into a marriage with a cruel man.

Give Me Liberty by Laura Elliott

Thirteen-year-old Nathaniel Dunn is an indentured servant in colonial Virginia. Life is hard, and it's about to get harder when Nathaniel is sold. But in a twist of luck, he meets Basil, a kind and elderly schoolmaster. Basil introduces Nathaniel to music, books, and philosophies that open his mind and heart to daring new attitudes on equality.

The Green Glass Sea by Ellen Klages

This work of historical fiction chronicles the life of Dewey Kerrigan, the 11-year old daughter of scientists, as she lives on the Los Alamos compound as her father works to develop the atomic bomb during World War II. Winner of 2007 Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction

The Higher Power of Lucky by Susan Patron

Aspiring scientist Lucky Trimble decides to run away from home in order to seek her Higher Power. 2006 Newbery Award winner.

Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelan

Thirteen-year-old Koly is getting married, not uncommon for girls her age in India. Although apprehensive, she knows this will lessen the financial burden on her family, and hopes for the best. What can the future hold for Koly?

Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell

This Newbery award-winner relates the survival tale of a Native American girl who used courage and self-reliance to survive alone for 18 years on an isolated island after she was left behind when her tribe emigrated.

Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes

Johnny Tremain, a young apprentice silversmith, is caught up in the danger and excitement of 1775 Boston, just before the Revolutionary War.

The Last Dragon by Silvana de Mari

This magical journey tells the story of a world now plagued by intolerance and wickedness, and the elf and the dragon who together fight for its redemption. The author weaves a beautifully crafted tale, filled with humor, horror, desperation, and dreams.

Letters from a Slave Girl by Mary E. Lyons

Harriet Jacobs describes her life as a slave and her escape to freedom in a series of letters to family and friends.

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

Tomboyish Jo, beautiful Meg, fragile Beth, and romantic Amy come of age while their father is off to war. A classic story set in New England during the Civil War.

Mango-Shaped Space by Wendy Mass

Afraid that she is crazy, 13-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 Mango, her cat. Mia's condition, synesthesia, is a real one, and the novel gives insight into what it is like to live with this unusual disorder.

Monkey Town: The Summer of the Scopes Trial by Ronald Kidd

In a story rife with first love and the pain of growing up, master storyteller Ronald Kidd reincarnates the most enduring trial of the twentieth century.

The Mouse Rap by Walter Dean Myers

Teenagers in Harlem search for hidden treasures from the days of Al Capone.

The Once and Future King by T.H. White

Open this classic and begin an adventurous journey into medieval England and through King Arthur's remarkable life from birth to the end of his reign.

The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place by E.L. Konigsburg

Uncooperative? Unreasonable? According to the camp director, Margaret does not belong here. Fine with Margaret. Instead, she joins forces with her eccentric uncles and the young handyman from camp in a crusade to save their home of brightly painted towers from destruction.

The Penderwicks by Jeanne Birdsall

Winner of last year's National Book Award, you'll love this charming tale of four sisters and their adventures sharing a rented summer cottage with their Dad. Their summer includes a runaway, a first crush, a mean and snobby lady, and a boy in need of rescue from his domineering Mom.

Pictures of Hollis Woods by Patricia Reilly Giff

A foster child with a huge heart, artistic hands, and an unfortunate dose of skepticism worms her way into not one but two separate families.

Replay by Sharon Creech

Ever feel squished between siblings and overlooked in your family? Then you'll understand Leo's dilemma as he, a dreamer, tries not to get lost in the constant uproar of his big, noisy, Italian family. Will a role in the school play help Leo find his voice? If you like drama, the text of Leo's school play is included at the end of the book.

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe

A classic island survival tale.

The Saturdays by Elizabeth Enright

Meet the Melendys: Mona, thirteen, has decided to become an actress. Rush is twelve and a bit mischievous. Miranda, ten and a half, loves dancing and painting pictures. Oliver, six, is a calm and thoughtful person. The four New York City siblings decide to pool their allowances so that each Saturday, one of them can do something really special! The first in a delightful series.

Sea of Trolls by Nancy Farmer

Viking lore inspires this magical adventure story of Jack's attempt to survive a kidnapping by bloodthirsty Vikings, dragons, and an evil queen to get both himself and

his spoiled little sister back home safely to the British Isles, all while fulfilling his destiny as an apprentice bard.

Secret of Platform 13 by Eva Ibbotson

A forgotten door on an abandoned railway platform is the entrance to a magical kingdom--an island where humans live happily with feys, mermaids, ogres, and other wonderful creatures. Carefully hidden from the world, the Island is only accessible when the door opens for nine days every nine years. A lot can go wrong in nine days.

Shakespeare Stealer by Gary Blackwood

The tale of a 14-year-old Yorkshire orphan sent by a rival theater manager to steal the as-yet-unpublished Hamlet in 1601 London.

Shiloh Trilogy by Phyllis Reynolds Taylor

Three wonderful books about a boy, his dog, and a brutal, angry man who finds redemption.

Star in the Storm by Joan Hiatt Harlow

All non-shepherding dogs have been outlawed from the Newfoundland village where 12-year-old Maggie lives. But Maggie defies the law and hides Sirius, her beloved Newfoundland, until the day a large boat crashes on the coast. Will Maggie risk the loss of Sirius to help save the drowning passengers?

Star of Kazan by Eva Ibbotson

Annika, a foundling, is happy growing up in 1900 Vienna with her extended "family," but when a glamorous stranger arrives, claiming to be her mother, Annika tries to adjust to her new aristocratic life. But all is not as it seems, and adventures abound.

Sword of the Rightful King by Jane Yolen

A retelling of the classic King Arthur stories with some modern twists.

Thank You, Jackie Robinson by Barbara Cohen

A fatherless white boy and an elderly African-American man share an enthusiasm for the Brooklyn Dodgers and first baseman Jackie Robinson.

Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss

During World War II, Annie and her older sister, Sini, hid in a small farmhouse where a kind Dutch family ingeniously protected them, even when German soldiers occupied the home.

View from Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg

This plot of interweaving puzzle pieces centers on Mrs. Olinski's sixth-grade Academic Bowl team as they compete at the state finals. The story is revealed as each character tells the tale from his or her point of view. A Newbery Honor book

Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech

While Sal journeys with her eccentric grandparents from Ohio to Idaho to try to find her mother, she regales her grandparents with the story of her friend, Phoebe Winterbottom.

Westmark by Lloyd Alexander

Theo flees from criminal charges and meets up with an unlikely trio: a dwarf, an urchin girl, and a doctor who's not really a doctor at all.

Wolves of Willoughby Chase by Joan Aiken

Wicked wolves and a grim governess threaten Bonnie and her cousin Sylvia when Bonnie's parents leave Willoughby Chase for a sea voyage. How will they ever escape the clutches of the evil Miss Slighcarp?

The Wright 3 by Blue Balliet

Spring semester at the Lab School in Hyde Park finds Petra and Calder drawn into another mystery when unexplainable accidents and ghostly happenings throw a spotlight on Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle

One stormy night a strange visitor comes to the Murry house and beckons Meg, her brother, Charles Wallace, and their friend Calvin O'Keefe on a most dangerous and fantastic journey that will threaten their lives and our universe. The first in a series.

Year Down Yonder by Richard Peck

In this hilarious Newbery Honor book, Chicago-bred Mary Alice is sentenced to a year-long stay in the country with her rough and gruff grandmother. Soon, however, she becomes Grandma's partner in crime, helping carry out madcap schemes to benefit friends and avenge enemies.

The Young Man and the Sea by Rodman Philbrick

When 12-year-old Skiff Beaman realizes he must take care of himself and his father, he undertakes a dangerous trip alone out on the ocean off the coast of Maine to try to catch the huge bluefin tuna some have reported seeing. This novel strongly parallels Hemingway's famous book, *The Old Man and the Sea*.

NON-FICTION

1607 A New Look at Jamestown by Karen Lange

Scientists have unearthed important new evidence about the original Jamestown fort. This book incorporates those findings and offers new perspectives on life in the settlement. A good tie-in with the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement.

Adventures of Marco Polo by Russell Freedman

He claimed to have seen rocks burn, bandits command sandstorms, lions tamed with a look, and sorcerers charm sharks while divers gathered pearls on the ocean floor. Marco

Polo shook Europe with descriptions of the world he'd seen on his epic journey to the court of Kublai Khan. But was Marco Polo the world's most accomplished explorer or was he a charlatan who saw nothing more than the conjurings of his inventive mind?

Building Big by David MacCaulay

If you find yourself fascinated by how large structures are designed, built, and then endure through the ages, David Macauley's book certainly will capture your attention.

Cave Paintings to Picasso by Henry Sayre

Calling all art lovers! Here in one small award-winning volume is the entire history of art as shown through illustrations and explanations about 50 of the world's most famous works from all times and cultures.

Escape!: The Story of the Great Houdini by Sid Fleischman

Who was this man who could walk through brick walls and, with a snap of his fingers, vanish elephants? Meet the astonishing Houdini—magician, ghost chaser, daredevil, pioneer aviator, and king of escape artists.

Facing the Lion: Growing up Maasai on the African Savanna by Joseph Lekuton

A teacher from the Langley School in Virginia tells the story of his childhood in Africa.

Fields of Fury: The American Civil War by James M. McPherson

Pulitzer Prize award-winning historian James M. McPherson offers young readers a stirring account of the greatest conflict to happen on our nation's soil, the Civil War.

Fight for Freedom: the American Revolutionary War by Benson Bobrick

From the first stirrings of unrest under British rule at the Boston Tea Party, to the treachery of Benedict Arnold at West Point, to George Washington's Christmas Eve surprise attack at the Battle of Trenton, to the British surrender at the Battle of Yorktown, Fight for Freedom explores the war that created one independent nation out of thirteen diverse colonies.

Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement by Ann Bausam

This book explores the childhoods of John Lewis and James Zwerg in a way that helps young readers understand the segregated experience of our nation's past. It shows how a common interest in justice created the convergent path that enabled these young men to meet as Freedom Riders on a bus journey south.

G is for Googol: A Math Alphabet Book by David Schwartz

How does an abacus work? What is a binary system? Who was Fibonacci? How does one make shapes tessellate? Learn about a host of fascinating mathematical concepts in this informative book.

Gandhi, Great Soul by John Severance

This excellent biography not only tells the story of Gandhi's inspirational public life, but also includes fascinating details about his personal life, such as his arranged marriage at age 13, his student years, and the experiences that led him to become one of the world's great peacemakers.

George Washington, Spymaster by Thomas Allen

This fascinating account of espionage during the Revolutionary War should be gobbled up by history buffs and anyone delighted by codes, ciphers, and spies. "One if by land, two if by sea" is only the most famous of the Revolutionary War's exploits of espionage used by accomplished spymasters such as Washington

Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women by Catherine Thinmesh

Many famous products were invented by women and girls, such as windshield wipers, Kevlar, Scotchgard, and paper bags. The book also includes information about how to patent your own invention!

Hidden Worlds: Looking Through a Scientist's Microscope by Stephen Kramer

There are hidden worlds in nature, places you can visit only with a microscope. The amazing photography in this book takes you to those worlds and also on the scientist's journeys as he collects specimens from lava tubes, rainforests, and beaches.

An Inconvenient Truth: The Crisis of Global Warming by Al Gore

This young readers' version of the recent documentary film's companion, Gore documents the steeply rising carbon dioxide levels in our atmosphere and the link that to accelerating changes in temperature and precipitation patterns worldwide.

In Defense of Liberty by Russell Freedman

This timely discussion of the Constitution and civil liberties includes a history of the Bill of Rights, a chapter on each subsequent amendment, and an analysis of the contemporary scene, including the conflicts now raging about national security and individual freedom in post-911 America.

Maritcha: A Nineteenth Century American Girl by Tonya Bolden

Life was good for Maritcha Lyon's free-born African American family in the 1850's in New York City. But when things took a turn for the worse during the 1863 draft riots, Maritcha's family relocated to Providence, RI, where she successfully petitioned the state legislature for permission to attend the all-white high school.

Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science by John Fleischman

Phineas Gage was truly a man with a hole in his head. A railroad construction foreman, Phineas was blasting rock near Cavendish, Vermont, in 1848 when a thirteen-pound iron rod was shot through his brain. Miraculously, he survived another eleven years and became a textbook case in brain science.

Race to Save the Lord God Bird by Phillip Hoose

This fascinating award-winner chronicles the attempt to save from extinction the ivory-billed woodpecker, once prevalent in the southeastern United States, but last spotted in Cuba in 1987. You'll be riveted by this true environmental tale full of mystery and suspense.

Rosa Parks: My Story by Rosa Parks

In this compelling autobiography, Rosa Parks talks candidly about the civil rights movement and her active role in it. Her dedication is inspiring and her story is unforgettable.

A Strong Right Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson by Michell Green

One of only three women to ever play professional baseball, tiny Mamie Johnson earned her nickname in the Negro League when a batter told the crowd she was "no bigger than a peanut" and he wasn't afraid of her. She proceeded to strike him out with a curve ball taught to her by Satchel Paige himself!

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

Drawn from personal interviews and published sources, this richly illustrated book tells the story of putting a man on the moon through the stories of some of the 17,000 behind-the-scenes workers at Kennedy Space Center, the 7500 Grumman employees who built the lunar module, the 500 designers and seamstresses who actually constructed the space suits, and other low-profile contributors who made the historic flight possible

Tutankhamun : the Mystery of the Boy King

Isn't it remarkable that all these centuries later we remain so fascinated by this ancient pharaoh who was crowned when he was only a boy and who died under mysterious circumstances when he was only about 19? Here's new and fascinating information from a leading Egyptian archaeologist who even sent Tut for a CT scan to determine if he truly was murdered.

Voice that Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights by Russell Freedman

This insightful account of the great African American vocalist considers her life and musical career in the context of the history of civil rights in this country.

Walt Whitman: Words for America by Barbara Kerley

Brian Selznick brilliantly illustrates this moving and informative biography of one of America's most celebrated poets, revealing lesser known aspects of Whitman's life, such as his selfless service as a Civil War nurse and his deep love and hope for the renewal of his divided country.

Yellow Star by Jennifer Roy

Only 12 children survived the Lodz ghetto, and Roy's aunt Sylvia was one of them. Roy tells the story of her aunt in the first-person viewpoint of a child, Sylvia, in simple, urgent

free verse in the present tense. Each section begins with a brief historical introduction, and there is a detailed time line at the end of the book.

POETRY

19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems from the Middle East by Naomi Shihab Nye

This collection of poems offers a celebration of Nye's Arab-American heritage, as well as a call for peace in the troubled region.

Dream Keeper and Other Poems by Langston Hughes

Brian Pinkney illustrated this edition of Hughes' poetry, and it speaks as powerfully now as it did when first published over a quarter century ago.

Heart to Heart by Jan Greenberg, ed.

Some of your favorite authors, such as Jane Yolen and Angela Johnson, write new poetry based on works by some of your favorite artists, such as Calder and Grandma Moses, adding up to a book of art and poetry that is even greater than the sum of its parts.

A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms by Paul B. Janeczko and Chris Raschka

From the simplest couplet to the mind-boggling pantoum, the authors demonstrate the many fascinating ways poetic forms take shape.

Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson

Winner of the 2004 Coretta Scott King Award, this novel in verse recounts how Lonnie, inspired by his teacher, begins to write about his life in a series of poems about his friends, his foster mom, his little sister Lili, and the death of his parents.

Swinger of Birches by Robert Frost

Enjoy the lovely watercolor paintings as you read poems celebrating Robert Frost's beloved New England.

World's Apart by Gary Soto

Two middle school boys head off on imaginary adventures around the world in this collection of free verse poetry. Pick this up and enjoy the journey.

SHORT STORIES/MYTHS

Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle

Holmes and his loyal friend Dr. Watson comb the foggy streets of London in search of solutions. Can you solve the crimes before Mr. Holmes?

Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad by Rosemary Sutcliff

This version brings Homer's Iliad to life for middle school readers. Achilles, Helen, and Odysseus all appear larger than life during the ten-year siege of Troy.

Cut from the Same Cloth: American Women of Myth, Legend and Tall Tale by

Robert San Souci

Folktales, ballads, and popular stories provide the inspiration for these twenty stories about legendary American women.

D'Aulaires Book of Greek Myths by Ingri D'Aulaire and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire

No education is complete without knowledge of Greek mythology. Here is one of the best versions for middle schoolers, complete with beautiful illustrations of gods, goddesses, heroes, and heroines as they behave sometimes nobly and sometimes very badly.

Fire and Wings: Dragon Tales from East and West by Marianne Carus

Fifteen stories about the ever-popular legendary creatures, written by well-known authors and filled with traditional folklore themes such as loyalty, tests, and riddles.

Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fairy Tales and True Tales by Virginia Hamilton

Seventeen heroic female characters fill this wonderful collection that won the Coretta Scott King Award.

Odysseus by Geraldine McCaughrean

Filled with suspense, wild action, immortals, monsters, and heroes, this is a masterful retelling of Odysseus' struggles to return home to his Penelope after the Trojan War.

People Could Fly: American Black Folk Tales by Virginia Hamilton

African American folktales inventively use animals and fantasy to relay stories of hope and freedom. Winner of the Coretta Scott King Award, this collection celebrates the indomitable human spirit.

Sports Shorts: An Anthology of Short Stories by Joseph Bruchac

A collection of eight stories, each one written by a different acclaimed author, recalling their days of glory (or not) as school athletes.