

# CBHS Freshmen and Sophomore Summer Reading 2017

## Expectations:

Summer reading work will be assessed and applied towards your Trimester 1 Reads Regularly standard in Humanities English. Be prepared to talk about and write about three of the books you read.

**Final Deadline:** All work related to summer reading is due **Tuesday, *September 11th, 2017.***

**Read at least THREE BOOKS. All CBHS Freshmen are required to read at least three books this summer.**

1. **You may read any books of your choice. We have provided you a list of recommended readings for your enjoyment!**
2. **Complete Summer Books Read Chart. Keep track of what you are reading and be prepared to hand in the Summer Books Read Chart on Monday, September 11, 2017. Note that this requires a parent/guardian signature.**
3. **Exceeds / Honors Options**  
**In order to exceed in the “Reads Regularly” Standard, you must...**
  - Meet the standard *AND*
  - Read one more free choice book for a 3.25 (for a total of 4 books)
  - Read two more free choice books for a 3.5 (for a total of 5 books)
  - Read three more free choice books for a 3.75H (for a total of 6 books)
  - Read four more free choice books for a 4H (for a total of 7 books or MORE)

**7. Enjoy!!! Immerse yourself in the wild world of books!**

# CBHS Summer Reading Log

## **\*\*3 Books Required to Meet**

Your Summer Reading Goal:

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**\*\* Be prepared to talk about and write about three of the books you read. \*\***

#	Title	Author	Date Completed	Parent Initials
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# CBHS Freshman and Sophomore Summer Reading List

*Reminder, you are required to read **at least three books** of your choosing and be prepared to talk about and write about three of the books you read. The books listed here are books that other students have enjoyed and that your teachers recommend. Included are complex books, books of high interest for teenagers about teenagers, and quick reads. Seriously, this is a list of fantastic books! Happy reading!*

## **For those of you who enjoy complexity:**

**To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee** Compassionate, dramatic, and deeply moving, *To Kill A Mockingbird* takes readers to the roots of human behavior - to innocence and experience, kindness and cruelty, love and hatred, humor and pathos. Now with over 18 million copies in print and translated into forty languages, this regional story by a young Alabama woman claims universal appeal. Harper Lee always considered her book to be a simple love story. Today it is regarded as a masterpiece of American literature.

**The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway** *The Old Man and the Sea* is one of Hemingway's most enduring works. Told in language of great simplicity and power, it is the story of an old Cuban fisherman, down on his luck, and his supreme ordeal -- a relentless, agonizing battle with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream. Here Hemingway recasts, in strikingly contemporary style, the classic theme of courage in the face of defeat, of personal triumph won from loss. Written in 1952, this hugely successful novella confirmed his power and presence in the literary world and played a large part in his winning the 1954 Nobel Prize for Literature.

**Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage by Alfred Lansing** The astonishing saga of polar explorer Ernest Shackleton's survival for over a year on the ice-bound Antarctic seas, as *Time* magazine put it, "defined heroism." Alfred Lansing's scrupulously researched and brilliantly narrated book -- with over 200,000 copies sold -- has long been acknowledged as the definitive account of the *Endurance's* fateful trip. To write their authoritative story, Lansing consulted with ten of the surviving members and gained access to diaries and personal accounts by eight others.

**Passing by Nella Larsen** Clare and Irene were two childhood friends. They lost touch when Clare's father died and she moved in with two white aunts. By hiding that Clare was part-black, they allowed her to 'pass' as a white woman and marry a white racist. Irene lives in Harlem, commits herself to racial uplift, and marries a black doctor. The novel centers on the meeting of the two childhood friends later in life, and the unfolding of events as each woman is fascinated and seduced by the other's daring lifestyle. The end of the novel is famous for its ambiguity. Many see this novel as an example of the plot of the tragic mulatto, a common figure in early African-American literature. Recently, *Passing* has received renewed attention because of its close examination of racial and sexual ambiguities and liminal spaces. It has achieved canonical status in many American universities.

**The Age of Innocence by Edith Wharton** Deeply moving study of the tyrannical and rigid requirements of New York high society in the late 19th century and the effect of those strictures on the lives of three people. Vividly characterized drama of affection thwarted by a man's sense of honor, family, and societal pressures. A long-time favorite with readers and critics alike.

**Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress by Dai Sijie** This is an enchanting tale that captures the magic of reading and the wonder of romantic awakening. An immediate international bestseller, it tells the story of two hapless city boys exiled to a remote mountain village for re-education during China's infamous Cultural Revolution. There the two friends meet the daughter of the local tailor and discover a hidden stash of Western classics in Chinese translation. As they flirt with the seamstress and secretly devour these banned works, the two friends find transit from their grim surroundings to worlds they never imagined.

**Welcome to Braggsville: A Novel by T. Geronimo Johnson** A dark and socially provocative Southern-fried comedy about four UC Berkeley students who stage a dramatic protest during a Civil War reenactment. Caught between the

prosaic values of his rural hometown and the intellectualized multicultural cosmopolitanism of Berkeley (UC Berkeley), the nineteen-year-old white kid is uncertain about his place until one disastrous party brings him three idiosyncratic best friends: Louis, a “kung-fu comedian” from California; Candice, an earnest do-gooder claiming Native roots from Iowa; and Charlie, an introspective inner-city black teen from Chicago. They dub themselves the “4 Little Indians.” Armed with youthful self-importance, makeshift slave costumes, righteous zeal, and their own misguided ideas about the South, the 4 Little Indians descend on Braggsville. Their journey through backwoods churches, backroom politics, Waffle Houses, and drunken family barbecues is uproarious to start, but will have devastating consequences. T. Geronimo Johnson has written an astonishing, razor-sharp satire...he skewers issues of class, race, intellectual and political chauvinism, Obamaism, social media, and much more. A literary coming-of-age novel for a new generation, written with tremendous social insight and a unique, generous heart, *Welcome to Braggsville* reminds us of the promise and perils of youthful exuberance, while painting an indelible portrait of contemporary America.

**Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight by Alexandra Fuller** A searing memoir of a white family clinging to lives in Africa as Rhodesia became Zimbabwe lays out, without moralizing or sentimentality, the way in which turmoil and injustice in society distort the lives of families and individuals. No one has ever written a book about growing up white in rural Africa the way Alexandra Fuller has. Her sense of humor is extremely sly. Without a trace of pretension, she quietly relates a child's experience in a brawling, bad-luck family on the losing side of an anti-colonial war.

**The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri** *The Namesake* takes the Ganguli family from their tradition-bound life in Calcutta through their fraught transformation into Americans. On the heels of their arranged wedding, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli settle together in Cambridge, Massachusetts. An engineer by training, Ashoke adapts far less warily than his wife, who resists all things American and pines for her family. When their son is born, the task of naming him betrays the vexed results of bringing old ways to the new world. Named for a Russian writer by his Indian parents in memory of a catastrophe years before, Gogol Ganguli knows only that he suffers the burden of his heritage as well as his odd, antic name. Lahiri brings great empathy to Gogol as he stumbles along the first-generation path, strewn with conflicting loyalties, comic detours, and wrenching love affairs. With penetrating insight, she reveals not only the defining power of the names and expectations bestowed upon us by our parents, but also the means by which we slowly, sometimes painfully, come to define ourselves. *The New York Times* has praised Lahiri as "a writer of uncommon elegance and poise." *The Namesake* is a fine-tuned, intimate, and deeply felt novel of identity.

**The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt** Theo Decker, a 13-year-old New Yorker, miraculously survives an accident that kills his mother. Abandoned by his father, Theo is taken in by the family of a wealthy friend. Bewildered by his strange new home on Park Avenue, disturbed by schoolmates who don't know how to talk to him, and tormented above all by his longing for his mother, he clings to the one thing that reminds him of her: a small, mysteriously captivating painting that ultimately draws Theo into the underworld of art. As an adult, Theo moves silkily between the drawing rooms of the rich and the dusty labyrinth of an antiques store where he works. He is alienated and in love--and at the center of a narrowing, ever more dangerous circle. *The Goldfinch* is a mesmerizing, stay-up-all-night and tell-all-your-friends triumph, an old-fashioned story of loss and obsession, survival and self-invention, and the ruthless machinations of fate.

**Becoming Nicole by Amy Ellis Nutt** *Becoming Nicole* chronicles a journey that could have destroyed a family but instead brought it closer together. It's the story of a mother whose instincts told her that her child needed love and acceptance, not ostracism and disapproval; of a Republican, Air Force veteran father who overcame his deepest fears to become a vocal advocate for trans rights; of a loving brother who bravely stuck up for his twin sister; and of a town forced to confront its prejudices, a school compelled to rewrite its rules, and a courageous community of transgender activists determined to make their voices heard. Ultimately, *Becoming Nicole* is the story of an extraordinary girl who fought for the right to be herself.

**Radiant Days by Elizabeth Hand** She is a painter. He is a poet. Their art bridges time. It is 1978. Merle is in her first year at the Corcoran School of Art, catapulted from her impoverished Appalachian upbringing into a sophisticated, dissipated art scene. It is also 1870. The teenage poet Arthur Rimbaud is on the verge of breaking through to the images and voice that will make his name. The meshed power of words and art thins the boundaries between the present and the past - and allows these two troubled, brilliant artists to enter each other's worlds.

**The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama** The Japanese invasion of China during the late 1930s is the somber backdrop for this unusual story about a 20-year-old Chinese painter named Stephen who is sent to his family's summer

home in a Japanese coastal village to recover from a bout with tuberculosis. Here he is cared for by Matsu, a reticent housekeeper and a master gardener. Over the course of a remarkable year, Stephen learns Matsu's secret and gains not only physical strength, but also profound spiritual insight. Matsu is a samurai of the soul, a man devoted to doing good and finding beauty in a cruel and arbitrary world, and Stephen is a noble student, learning to appreciate Matsu's generous and nurturing way of life and to love Matsu's soulmate, gentle Sachi, a woman afflicted with leprosy.

**The House of Spirits: A Novel by Isabel Allende** In one of the most important and beloved Latin American works of the twentieth century, Isabel Allende weaves a luminous tapestry of three generations of the Trueba family, revealing both triumphs and tragedies. Here is patriarch Esteban, whose wild desires and political machinations are tempered only by his love for his ethereal wife, Clara, a woman touched by an otherworldly hand. Their daughter, Blanca, whose forbidden love for a man Esteban has deemed unworthy infuriates her father, yet will produce his greatest joy: his granddaughter Alba, a beautiful, ambitious girl who will lead the family and their country into a revolutionary future. *The House of the Spirits* is an enthralling saga that spans decades and lives, twining the personal and the political into an epic novel of love, magic, and fate.

**Hearts We Lost by Umm Zakiyya** Sharif, the main character of this novel, after completing his undergraduate studies in America, is asked by family and friends to leave the comfort of the land he has known since childhood to study at a prestigious Islamic university in Riyadh. Haunted by the sudden death of his father who would have wanted this opportunity for his son, Sharif reluctantly agrees to the proposition and to assuming the position as imam over the small suburban Maryland masjid where his father once held the same post. After his six-year study abroad, Sharif returns to America changed in ways he cannot fully comprehend. Now doubting his engagement to his childhood friend, Sharif is confounded by questions of marriage and how he should practice the Islamic faith. As he searches for answers to spiritual perplexities and the deeper affairs of the heart, he finds guidance in a vision he sees while asleep, a vision that is made all the more perplexing when it manifests itself in real life. Navigating the enigmatic world of dreams and the mystery of the human soul, *Hearts We Lost* is by far the author's most powerful novel to date, and the most unforgettable.

***For those of you looking for popular reads about teenagers:***

**The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton** No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends—true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. And when it comes to the Socs—a vicious gang of rich kids who enjoy beating up on "greasers" like him and his friends—he knows that he can count on them for trouble. But one night someone takes things too far, and Ponyboy's world is turned upside down.

**That Was Then, This is Now by S.E. Hinton** Ever since Mark's parents died, he has been living with Bryon. The boys are more like brothers than mere friends. They've been inseparable—until recently. Something seems to be changing between them, and Bryon can't figure it out. Is it Cathy, Bryon's new girlfriend? Is Mark jealous? Bryon is also tired of the street fighting, but Mark seems unable to quit. And where is Mark getting all of that money? In *That Was Then, This Is Now*, one of her most admired novels, S. E. Hinton paints a richly textured portrait of two boys at a crossroads in their friendship. With careful, intimate strokes, Hinton reveals a boy struggling over whether to protect his best friend or whether to follow his own beliefs about right and wrong. The ending will surprise readers, challenging them to puzzle over Bryon's dilemma in their own hearts.

**Somebody Up There Hates You by Hollis Seamon** Smart-mouthed and funny, sometimes raunchy, Richard Casey is in most ways a typical seventeen-year-old boy. Except Richie has cancer, and he's spending his final days in a hospice unit. In this place where people go to die, Richie has plans to make the most of the life he has left. Sylvie, the only other hospice inmate under sixty, has a few plans of her own for Richie. What begins as camaraderie quickly blossoms into real love, and this star-crossed pair is determined to live on their own terms, in whatever time remains.

**Hoop Dreams: A True Story of Hardship and Triumph by Ben Joravsky** Adapted from the award-winning film, the true story of two boys from inner-city Chicago with a gift for basketball follows their struggle to turn high school stardom into college scholarships and pro careers and to escape the ghetto. For nearly five years Arthur Agee's and

William Gates' remarkable lives were chronicled by a team of filmmakers. Roughly 250 hours of film were devoted to their journeys from the playgrounds to high school competition to college recruitment and -- whittled down to three hours -- it became the award winning film *Hoop Dreams*. Now journalist Ben Joravsky vividly brings to light all the richness and subtlety of their stories, and the impact their aspirations had on themselves, their families and their relationships. It is an intimate look, complete with an up-to-date epilogue on the latest developments in their lives.

**Chains by Laurie Anderson** As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom. This impeccably researched novel shows the lengths we can go to cast off our chains, both physical and spiritual.

**Eragon by Christopher Paolini** Perfect for fans of Lord of the Rings, the *New York Times* bestselling Inheritance Cycle about the dragon rider Eragon has sold over 35 million copies and is an international fantasy sensation. Fifteen-year-old Eragon believes that he is merely a poor farm boy—until his destiny as a Dragon Rider is revealed. Gifted with only an ancient sword, a loyal dragon, and sage advice from an old storyteller, Eragon is soon swept into a dangerous tapestry of magic, glory, and power. Now his choices could save—or destroy—the Empire.

**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon** Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, Christopher is autistic. Everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning for him. Routine, order and predictability shelter him from the messy, wider world. Then, at fifteen, Christopher's carefully constructed world falls apart when he finds his neighbor's dog, Wellington, impaled on a garden fork, and he is initially blamed for the killing. Christopher decides that he will track down the real killer and turns to his favorite fictional character, the impeccably logical Sherlock Holmes, for inspiration. But the investigation leads him down some unexpected paths and ultimately brings him face to face with the dissolution of his parents' marriage. As he tries to deal with the crisis within his own family, we are drawn into the workings of Christopher's mind.

**Peak by Roland Smith** After fourteen-year-old Peak Marcello is arrested for scaling a New York City skyscraper, he's left with a choice: wither away in juvenile detention or fly to Kathmandu with his long-lost father. Peak quickly learns that his father's renewed interest in him has strings attached. As owner of Peak Expeditions, he wants his son to be the youngest person to reach the Everest summit. The story of Peak's dangerous ascent—told in his own words—is suspenseful, immediate, and impossible to put down.

**Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell** Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits—smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. When Eleanor meets Park, you'll remember your own first love—and just how hard it pulled you under.

**The Good Braider by Terry Farish** In spare free verse laced with unforgettable images, Viola's strikingly original voice sings out the story of her family's journey from war-torn Sudan, to Cairo, and finally to Portland, Maine. Here, in the sometimes too close embrace of the local Southern Sudanese Community, she dreams of South Sudan while she tries to navigate the strange world of America - a world where a girl can wear a short skirt, get a tattoo or even date a boy; a world that puts her into sharp conflict with her traditional mother who, like Viola, is struggling to braid together the strands of a displaced life. Terry Farish's haunting novel is not only a riveting story of escape and survival, but the universal tale of a young immigrant's struggle to build a life on the cusp of two cultures.

**The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie** This is the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which

is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he thought he was destined to live.

**Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Saenz** This Printz Honor Book is a “tender, honest exploration of identity” (*Publishers Weekly*) that distills lyrical truths about family and friendship. Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When the two meet at the swimming pool, they seem to have nothing in common. But as the loners start spending time together, they discover that they share a special friendship—the kind that changes lives and lasts a lifetime. And it is through this friendship that Ari and Dante will learn the most important truths about themselves and the kind of people they want to be.

**Red Rising by Pierce Brown** Darrow and his kind have been betrayed. Soon he discovers that humanity reached the surface generations ago. Vast cities and lush wilds spread across the planet. Darrow—and Reds like him—are nothing more than slaves to a decadent ruling class. Inspired by a longing for justice, and driven by the memory of lost love, Darrow sacrifices everything to infiltrate the legendary Institute, a proving ground for the dominant Gold caste, where the next generation of humanity’s overlords struggle for power. He will be forced to compete for his life and the very future of civilization against the best and most brutal of Society’s ruling class. There, he will stop at nothing to bring down his enemies . . . even if it means he has to become one of them to do so.

**The False Prince by Jennifer A Nielsen** In this first book in a remarkable trilogy, an orphan is forced into a twisted game with deadly stakes. Choose to lie...or choose to die. In a discontent kingdom, civil war is brewing. To unify the divided people, Conner, a nobleman of the court, devises a cunning plan to find an impersonator of the king's long-lost son and install him as a puppet prince. Four orphans are recruited to compete for the role, including a defiant boy named Sage. Sage knows that Conner's motives are more than questionable, yet his life balances on a sword's point -- he must be chosen to play the prince or he will certainly be killed. But Sage's rivals have their own agendas as well.

**Everything Leads to You by Nina LaCour** Just out of high school, Emi Price is a talented young set designer already beginning to thrive in the L.A. film scene. But her artistic eye has failed her in one key area: helping her to design a love life that’s more than make-believe. Then she finds a mysterious letter at an estate sale, and it sends her chasing down the loose ends of a movie icon’s hidden life. And along the way, she finds Ava, and at long last, Emi’s own hidden life begins to bloom.

**The Girl at Midnight by Melissa Grey** Beneath the streets of New York City live the Avicen, an ancient race of people with feathers for hair and magic running through their veins. Age-old enchantments keep them hidden from humans. All but one. Echo is a runaway pickpocket who survives by selling stolen treasures on the black market, and the Avicen are the only family she's ever known. Echo is clever and daring, and at times she can be brash, but above all else she's fiercely loyal. So when a centuries-old war crests on the borders of her home, she decides it's time to act. Legend has it that there is a way to end the conflict once and for all: find the Firebird, a mythical entity believed to possess power the likes of which the world has never seen. It will be no easy task, though if life as a thief has taught Echo anything, it's how to hunt down what she wants . . . and how to take it. But some jobs aren't as straightforward as they seem. And this one might just set the world on fire.

**Mosquitoland by David Arnold** After the sudden collapse of her family, Mim Malone is dragged from her home in northern Ohio to the “wastelands” of Mississippi, where she lives in a medicated milieu with her dad and new stepmom. Before the dust has a chance to settle, she learns her mother is sick back in Cleveland. So she ditches her new life and hops aboard a northbound Greyhound bus to her real home and her real mother, meeting a quirky cast of fellow travelers along the way. But when her thousand-mile journey takes a few turns she could never see coming, Mim must confront her own demons, redefining her notions of love, loyalty, and what it means to be sane. Told in an unforgettable, kaleidoscopic voice, *Mosquitoland* is a modern American odyssey, as hilarious as it is heartbreaking.

***For those of you looking for a quick read:***

**Sick by Tom Leveen** Brian and his friends are not part of the cool crowd. They’re the misfits and wily troublemakers—the ones who jump their high school’s fence to skip class regularly. So when a deadly virus breaks out, they’re the

only ones with a chance of surviving. The virus turns Brian's classmates and teachers into bloodthirsty attackers who don't die easily. The whole school goes on lockdown, but Brian and his best friend, Chad, are safe (and stuck) in the theater department—far from Brian's sister and his ex-girlfriend with a panic attack problem. Brian and Chad, along with some of the theater kids Brian had never given the time of day before, decide to find the girls and bring them to the safety of the theater. But it won't be easy, and it will test everything they thought they knew about themselves and their classmates.

**The Summer I Turned Pretty by Jenny Han** Belly measures her life in summers. Everything good, everything magical happens between the months of June and August. Winters are simply a time to count the weeks until the next summer, a place away from the beach house, away from Susannah, and most importantly, away from Jeremiah and Conrad. They are the boys that Belly has known since her very first summer -- they have been her brother figures, her crushes, and everything in between. But one summer, one wonderful and terrible summer, the more everything changes, the more it all ends up just the way it should have been all along.

**Gym Candy by Carl Deuker** Runningback Mick Johnson has dreams: dreams of cutting back, finding the hole, breaking into the open, and running free with nothing but green grass ahead. He has dreams of winning and of being the best. But football is a cruel sport. It requires power, grace, speed, quickness, and knowledge of the game. It takes luck, too. One crazy bounce can turn a likely victory into sudden defeat. What elite athlete wouldn't look for an edge? A way to make him bigger, stronger, faster? This novel explores the dark corners of the heart of a young football player as he struggles for success under the always glaring—and often unforgiving—stadium lights.

**A Friendship Promise by Ruby Moore** Maryam, the main character of this short novel, is the daughter of strict Pakistani-American parents who decide to bend their rules to help a divorced American convert to Islam, whose free-spirited daughter Samira is in need of Muslim friends. Maryam, along with her African-American friend Latifah, tries to find common ground with Samira, but when Samira convinces Maryam to disobey their parents, Maryam is worried they may have gone too far. Though written for young adults, the story is sure to captivate readers of all ages; and, like the inspirational novels for which the author is worldly renowned, the story promises to stay with readers long after the book is closed.

**The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin** "A super sharp mystery... confoundingly clever, and very funny." —*Booklist*, starred review A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. And though no one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, on things for sure: Sam Westing may be dead...but that won't stop him from playing one last game!

**In the Sea There are Crocodiles: based on the true story of Enaiatollah Akbari by Fabio Geda** An unflinching, inspirational, and incredibly moving novel based on the true story of Enaiatollah Akbari, a young boy whose agonizing struggle begins after his native Afghanistan becomes a dangerous place to live. His mother shepherds him across the border into Pakistan but has to leave him there to fend for himself.

**Invisible by Peter Hautman** *You could say that my railroad, the Madham Line, is almost the most important thing in my life. Next to Andy Morrow, my best friend.* Lots of people think Doug Hanson is a freak -- he gets beat up after school, and the girl of his dreams calls him a worm. Doug's only refuge is creating an elaborate bridge for the model railroad in his basement and hanging out with his best friend, Andy Morrow, a popular football star who could date any girl in school. Doug and Andy talk about everything -- except what happened at the Tuttle place a few years back. *It does not matter to Andy that we live in completely different realities. I'm Andy's best friend. It does not matter to Andy that we hardly ever actually do anything together.* As Doug retreats deeper and deeper into his own reality, long-buried secrets threaten to destroy both Doug and Andy -- and everything else in Doug's fragile world.

**Secrets in the Fire by Henning Mankell** The powerful story of one girl's indomitable spirit after surviving a land mine in war-ravaged southern Africa. In her long journey toward recovery, Sofia must still deal with growing up. Along the way, she discovers friends, and foes, in places she'd never expected. Through it all, Sofia draws on a strength she never knew she had, a fire of her own that's been a secret all along.

**Ball Don't Lie by Matt De La Pena** Sticky is a beat-around-the-head foster kid with nowhere to call home but the street, and an outer shell so tough that no one will take him in. He started out life so far behind the pack that the finish line seems nearly unreachable. He's a white boy living and playing in a world where he doesn't seem to belong. But



Sticky can ball. And basketball might just be his ticket out . . . if he can only realize that he doesn't have to be the person everyone else expects him to be.

**Chanda's Secret** **Allan Stratton** Smart and determined, Chanda is a character whom readers come to care for and believe in, in spite of her almost impossible situation. The details of sub-Saharan African life are convincing and smoothly woven into this moving story of poverty and courage, but the real insight for readers will be the appalling treatment of the AIDS victims.

**Does My Head Book Big in This?** **by Abdel-fattah Randa** Sixteen-year-old Amal makes the decision to start wearing the hijab full-time and everyone has a reaction. Her parents, her teachers, her friends, people on the street. But she stands by her decision to embrace her faith and all that it is, even if it does make her a little different from everyone else. Can she handle the taunts of "towel head," the prejudice of her classmates, and still attract the cutest boy in school? Brilliantly funny and poignant, Randa Abdel-Fattah's debut novel will strike a chord in all teenage readers, no matter what their beliefs.

**Mexican Whiteboy** **by Matt De La Pena** Danny's brown. Half-Mexican brown. And growing up in San Diego that close to the border means everyone else knows exactly who he is before he even opens his mouth. Before they find out he can't speak Spanish, and before they realize his mom has blond hair and blue eyes, they've got him pegged. But it works the other way too. And Danny's convinced it's his whiteness that sent his father back to Mexico. That's why he's spending the summer with his dad's family. Only, to find himself, he may just have to face the demons he refuses to see--the demons that are right in front of his face. And open up to a friendship he never saw coming. Set in the alleys and on the ball fields of San Diego County, *Mexican Whiteboy* is a story of friendship, acceptance, and the struggle to find your identity in a world of definitions.

**Touching Spirit Bear** **by Ben Mikaelson** Troublemaker Cole Matthews is in major trouble. But instead of jail time, Cole is given an alternative: a one-year banishment to a remote Alaskan island. This program—called Circle Justice—is based on Native American traditions that provide healing for the criminal mind. To avoid serious jail time, Cole resolves to go. While there, Cole is mauled by a mysterious white bear and left for dead. Thoughts of his abusive parents, helpless Peter, and his violent anger cause him to examine the root of his troubled ways.

*Note: Reviews of books were copied directly from Amazon.com*