

June 2020

Dear Computer School Families,

Our goal for summer reading is for students to find a book they love and lose themselves in a new world. As author Malorie Blackman reminds us, "Reading is an exercise in empathy; an exercise in walking in someone else's shoes for a while." Each year, we carefully compile our list from teachers, staff, and student suggestions. As a result, you'll find a wide variety of genres and authors revealing the breadth of interest and skill present among readers in our community.

We believe reading is an essential part of learning. In particular, summer reading supports student growth throughout the year. During the first days of school, students will engage in making connections to our 2020-2021 school-wide theme of Resilience. Below are the steps to complete the Summer Reading Assignment.

1. All Community Read – *Just Mercy Adapted for Young Adults: A True Story of the Fight for Justice* by Bryan Stevenson

We ask that ***all*** members of The Computer School community—students, parents/guardians, teachers and staff—read this young adult book that centers around the theme of resilience.

2. Core Book:

Students read one book from the list of core books (see below).

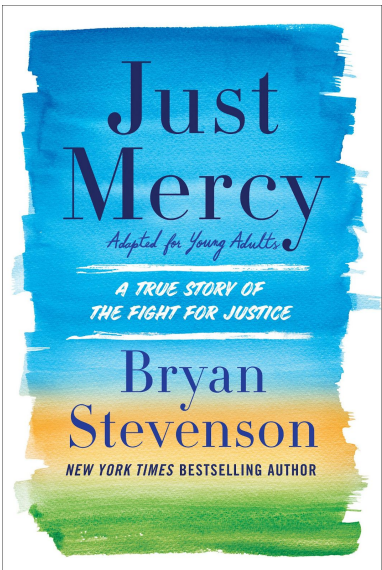
3. Choice Book:

Students read at least one other book of their choice (see recommendations below).

4. Creative response:

Students choose one of three options listed at the end of this letter to reflect on and respond to their core book. This assignment must be completed and presented on the first day of school.

ALL COMMUNITY READ:

	<p><i>Just Mercy Adapted for Young Adults: A True Story of the Fight for Justice</i> by Bryan Stevenson</p> <p>In this very personal work--adapted from the original #1 bestseller, which the <i>New York Times</i> calls "as compelling as <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>, and in some ways more so"--acclaimed lawyer and social justice advocate Bryan Stevenson offers a glimpse into the lives of the wrongfully imprisoned and his efforts to fight for their freedom.</p> <p>Stevenson's story is one of working to protect basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society--the poor, the wrongly convicted, and those whose lives have been marked by discrimination and marginalization. Through this adaptation, young people of today will find themselves called to action and compassion in the pursuit of justice.</p> <p>A portion of the proceeds of this book will go to charity to help in</p>
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	<p>Stevenson's important work to benefit the voiceless and the vulnerable as they attempt to navigate the broken U.S. justice system.</p> <p><u>Here's the link to buy our All Community Read on Amazon!</u></p> <p><u>Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!</u> (note: long reserve time)</p>
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ALL COMMUNITY WATCH
 (Just Mercy Film and/or TedTalk):
***parental guidance and family discussion strongly recommended**



[For the month of June, *Just Mercy* will be available to rent for free on digital platforms in the US.](#)

**Rated PG-13 (for heavy and upsetting content, including some racial epithets)
[Parent review and post-viewing questions](#)



Bryan Stevenson's TedTalk 2012:
[We Need to Talk About an Injustice](#)

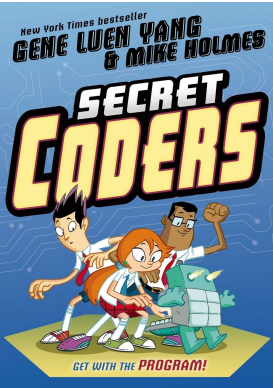
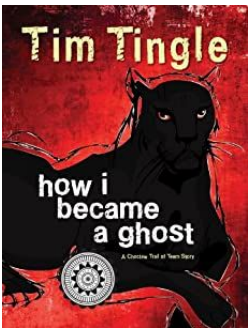
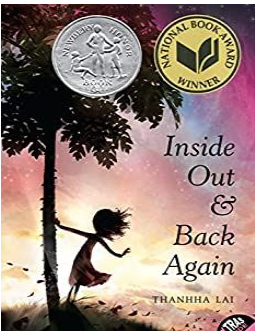
**Consider this option for younger students.

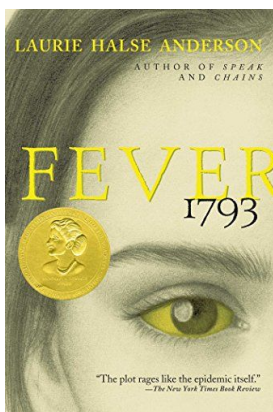
CORE BOOKS:

The books in this list represent the diversity of reading levels in a middle school.

Starred books are for advanced readers and may contain mature content.

★ Please note that you can check out most core books for free by downloading the NYPL's app: **SimplyE**. Once you download the app, you will need to sign up for a library card if you don't have one already.

	<p>1. <i>Secret Coders</i> by Gene Luen Yang and Mike Holmes</p> <p>Welcome to Stately Academy, a school which is just crawling with mysteries to be solved! The founder of the school left many clues and puzzles to challenge his enterprising students. Using their wits and their growing prowess with coding, Hopper and her friend Eni are going to solve the mystery of Stately Academy no matter what it takes!</p> <p>Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!</p> <p>Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!</p>
	<p>2. <i>How I Became a Ghost</i> by Tim Tingle</p> <p><i>How I Became a Ghost</i> is the tale of one Choctaw boy's departure from Mississippi with his family on the Trail of Tears. After suffering his own troubling experiences and watching several others die before him, ten-year-old protagonist, Isaac, meets his own tragic death. At this point, the action really picks up.</p> <p>Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!</p>
	<p>3. <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i> by Thanhha Lai</p> <p>Hà has only ever known Saigon: the thrills of its markets, the joy of its traditions, and the warmth of her friends close by. But now the Vietnam War has reached her home. Hà and her family are forced to flee as Saigon falls, and they board a ship headed toward hope—toward America.</p> <p>Here's the link to buy on Amazon!</p> <p>Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!</p>



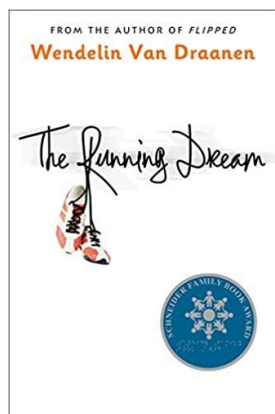
4. *Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson

During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lives above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But then the fever breaks out. Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path and turning Mattie's world upside down.

At her feverish mother's insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather. But she soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere, and Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)



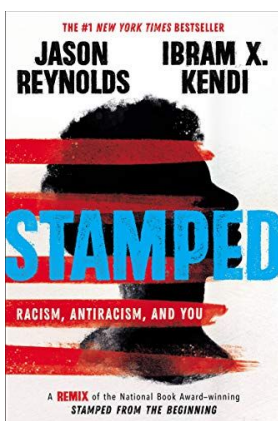
5. *The Running Dream* by Wendelin Van Draanen

Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run?

As she struggles to cope, Jessica feels that she's both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say act like she's not there. Jessica's embarrassed to realize that she's done the same to a girl with CP named Rosa. A girl who is going to tutor her through all the math she's missed. A girl who sees right into the heart of her. With the support of family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may actually be able to run again.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)



6. *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You: A Remix of the National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi

This is NOT a history book.

This is a book about the here and now.

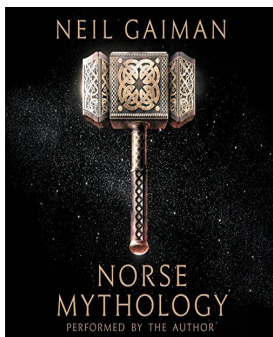
A book to help us better understand why we are where we are.

A book about race.

The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)



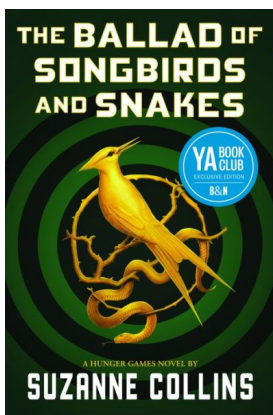
7. *Norse Mythology* by Neil Gaiman

In *Norse Mythology*, Gaiman stays true to the myths in envisioning the major Norse pantheon: Odin, the highest of the high, wise, daring, and cunning; Thor, Odin's son, incredibly strong yet not the wisest of gods; and Loki—son of a giant—blood brother to Odin and a trickster and unsurpassable manipulator.

Gaiman fashions these primeval stories into a novelistic arc that begins with the genesis of the legendary nine worlds and delves into the exploits of deities, dwarfs, and giants. Once, when Thor's hammer is stolen, Thor must disguise himself as a woman—difficult with his beard and huge appetite—to steal it back. More poignant is the tale in which the blood of Kvasir—the most sagacious of gods—is turned into a mead that infuses drinkers with poetry. The work culminates in Ragnarok, the twilight of the gods and rebirth of a new time and people.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

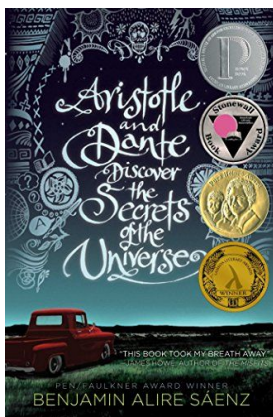
[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)



8. *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* by Suzanne Collins (Prequel to *The Hunger Games*)

The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes begins with the morning of the reaping that will kick off the tenth annual Hunger Games. In the Capitol, eighteen-year-old Coriolanus Snow is preparing for his one shot at glory as a mentor in the Games. The once-mighty house of Snow has fallen on hard times, its fate hanging on the slender chance that Coriolanus will be able to outcharm, outwit, and outmaneuver his fellow students to mentor the winning tribute.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

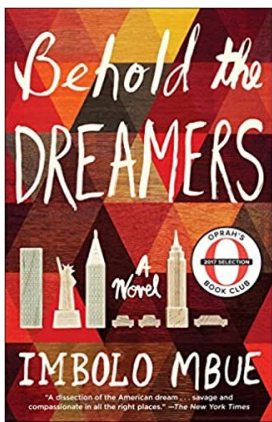


**9. *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz

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.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)

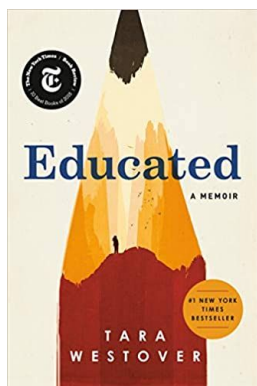


**** 10. *Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue**

Jende Jonga, a Cameroonian immigrant living in Harlem, has come to the United States to provide a better life for himself, his wife, Neni, and their six-year-old son. In the fall of 2007, Jende can hardly believe his luck when he lands a job as a chauffeur for Clark Edwards, a senior executive at Lehman Brothers. Clark demands punctuality, discretion, and loyalty—and Jende is eager to please. Clark’s wife, Cindy, even offers Neni temporary work at the Edwardses’ summer home in the Hamptons. With these opportunities, Jende and Neni can at last gain a foothold in America and imagine a brighter future. However, the world of great power and privilege conceals troubling secrets, and soon Jende and Neni notice cracks in their employers’ facades.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)



**** 11. *Educated* by Tara Westover**

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was 17 the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education and no one to intervene when one of Tara’s older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she’d traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

[Here's the link to buy this book on Amazon!](#)

[Or check it out for free on the NYPL app SimplyE!](#)

~ Book descriptions from amazon.com~

**For advanced readers

For other summer reading suggestions, you can visit the New York Public Library's [teen site](#)

Highly recommended for incoming sixth graders:

Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Middle School by Robin Epstein

Highly recommended for rising eighth graders:

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey

Other Recommendations from Your Teachers:

Ms. E. Butler: First Born by Tor Seidler and Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town by Warren St. John

Ms. K. Butler: Blended by Sharon M. Draper and Bloodchild and Other Stories by Octavia Butler

Ms. Cappiello: Dear Martin by Nic Stone, Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell, and Becoming by Michelle Obama

Ms. Chu: *visit my website, www.nicolechu.com, for all my summer reading recs*

Ms. Furr: Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson

Mr. Geraci: Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson

Ms. Hodges: A Different Mirror for Young People: A History of Multicultural America by Rebecca Stefoff

Ms. Jackson-Vásquez: Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi All the Stars Denied by Guadalupe Garcia McCall

Ms. Kissoon: Count Me In by Varsha Bajaj, New Kid by Jerry Craft, Ship of Souls by Zetta Elliott, Ninth Ward by Jewell Parker Rhodes, Does My Head Look Big in This? by Randa Abdel-Fattah, and Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga

Ms. Melachrinou: The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien, The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams, Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

Ms. Nigro: Educated by Tara Westover, The Curious Incident of the Dog in Night-Time by Mark Haddon

Mr. Novick: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon, Quiet Power: The Secret Strengths of Introverts by Susan Cain

Ms. Reilly: All American Boys by Jason Reynolds

Mr. Rodriguez: Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds, Wonder Woman: Warbringer by Leigh Bardugo, Superman: Dawnbreaker by Matt De La Pena, Dread Nation by Justina Ireland

Ms. Rotelli: Scythe by Neal Shusterman

Ms. Schoen: Unbroken Laura Hillenbrand (original or young adult adaptation)

Ms. Seuling: Pax by Sara Pennypacker

Ms. Shalom: Booked by Kwame Alexander

Ms. Sloves: We Need New Names by NoViolet Bulawayo; Born a Crime by Trevor Noah; The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer; Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years: by Amy Hill Hearth, Annie Elizabeth Delany, and Sarah Louise Delany; The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky; Hero by Perry Moore

Ms. Skinner: Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

Ms. Thompson Ready Player One by Ernest Cline

Ms. Wang: A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

Ms. Weiss: Sing Unburied Sing by Jesmyn Ward

Mr. Weissberg: Red Scarf Girl by Ji-Li Jiang

Mr. Zafiriadis: Ready Player One by Ernest Cline

Name: _____

Summer Reading Creative Response Assignment

Directions: After you have completed your summer reading books, fill out the information below and choose one of the options (A, B, or C) to show your knowledge of your core book choice. *Please bring this signed sheet and your project on the first day of school.* This will help you as we discuss our summer reading. Happy reading!

<i>All Community Read and All Community Watch:</i> <u>Just Mercy</u>	<i>Author:</i> Bryan Stevenson	<i>Date Completed:</i>	<i>Parent Signature:</i>
<i>Core Book Choice:</i>	<i>Author:</i>	<i>Date Completed:</i>	<i>Parent Signature:</i>
<i>Other Book Choice:</i>	<i>Author:</i>	<i>Date Completed:</i>	<i>Parent Signature:</i>

****We encourage you to use electronic or multimedia resources to create your summer reading assignments!***

Option A: Map

Look closely at the places that were important in your CORE book and illustrate a map that shows where they are in relation to one another. Then, create a key in which you explain why each place is important to the story.

Option B: Creative Representation of Resilience

Create a comic, poem, or song that explores how the main character or narrator of your CORE book shows resilience. For nonfiction books, create a comic, poem, or song that shows what you learned about being resilient.

Option C: Character Correspondence

Write an email or letter correspondence between two characters from your CORE book OR between a character from your CORE book and another person from literature or history. Include important details from the story and be sure to address the theme of Resilience.

★ **Bonus summer journaling:** take out your journal and decorate the cover with photos, images, and drawings related to the theme of resilience. Then choose any one of [these prompts](#) to fill your journal with your ideas, thoughts, and artwork!

