

# SUMMER READING LIST\*

## On Your Mark, Get Set... READ!

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

### PICTURE BOOKS

#### **A Dance Like Starlight: One Ballerina's Dream** by *Kristy Dempsey & Floyd Cooper*

A young girl growing up in Harlem in the 1950s, whose mother cleans and stitches costumes for a ballet company, dreams of becoming a prima ballerina one day, and is thrilled to see a performance of Janet Collins, the first black prima ballerina. | Lexile: 1100 | [ALA](#)

#### **Play Ball, Jackie!** by *Stephen Krensky*

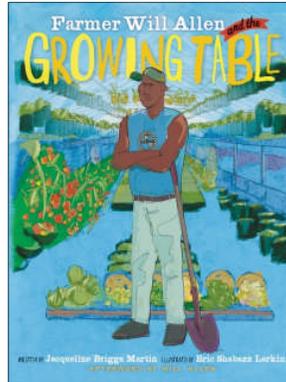
On April 15, 1947, Matt Romano and his father watch the Brooklyn Dodgers season-opener, during which Jackie Robinson, a twenty-eight-year-old rookie, breaks the "color line" that had kept black men out of Major League baseball. Includes facts about Jackie Robinson's life and career. | Lexile: 480

#### **Mudball** by *Matt Tavares*

During a rainy Minneapolis Millers baseball game in 1903, Little Andy Oyler has the chance to become a hero by hitting the shortest and muddiest home run in history. | Lexile: 680 |

#### **Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table** by *Jacqueline Briggs Martin*

The story of former basketball star and current urban farmer and activist, Will Allen, whose vision of gardening from abandoned urban sites led to a grassroots feeding craze. | Lexile: 770 | [ALA](#)



When Alvin's father takes him camping to instill a love of nature, like that of their hometown hero Henry David Thoreau, Alvin makes a new friend and learns that he can be brave despite his fear of everything | Lexile: 570 |

#### **The Home-Run King** by

*Patricia McKissack*

During the Depression in Nashville, Tennessee, two baseball-loving brothers host Josh Gibson, a star of the Negro Leagues, in their home, and are motivated to get their own team started as well. | Lexile: 570

#### **Izzy Barr, Running Star** by *Claudia Mills*

The third book in the Franklin School Friends series is a fast and funny story about sports, friendship, and sibling rivalries. | Lexile: 810

#### **Tales for Very Picky Eaters** by *Josh*

*Schneider*

A father tells outlandish stories while trying to get his young son, who is a very picky eater, to eat foods he thinks he will not like. | Lexile: 500 | [ALA](#)

#### **Lulu Walks the Dogs** by *Judith*

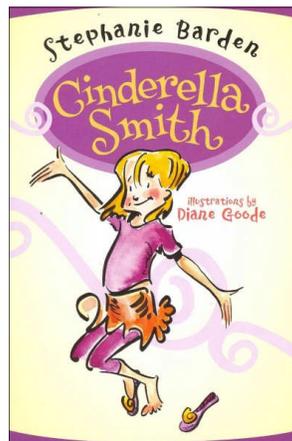
*Viorst*

Lulu needs help from a boy named Fleischman if she is to earn money walking her neighbors' dogs, and she finds out that if she wants her business venture to succeed, she has to be nice. | Lexile: 940

#### **In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson** by *Bette Bao*

*Lord*

In 1947, a Chinese child comes to Brooklyn where she becomes Americanized at school, in her apartment building, and by her love for baseball. | Lexile 730 | [ALA](#)



### CHAPTER BOOKS

#### **Cinderella Smith** by *Stephanie Barden*

Cast off by her old friends, Cinderella agrees to help a new student deal with the stepsisters she will soon have, and meantime, a former friend tries to prevent Cinderella from dancing the lead in their tap recital. | Lexile: 670

#### **Alvin Ho: Allergic to Camping, Hiking, and Other Natural Disasters** by

*Lenore Look*

### GRAPHIC NOVELS

#### **Extreme Babymouse** by *Jennifer L. Holm*

It seems that everyone at school has taken up snowboarding, so Babymouse decides she must hit the slopes, too. | Lexile: 240 | [ILA](#)

# SUMMER READING LIST\*

## POETRY

**Yum! Mmmm! Que Rico!:** Americas' Sproutings: Haiku by *Pat Mora*

From blueberries to vanilla, indigenous foods of the Americas are celebrated in this collection of haiku, which also includes information about each food's origins. | Lexile: 820

## NONFICTION

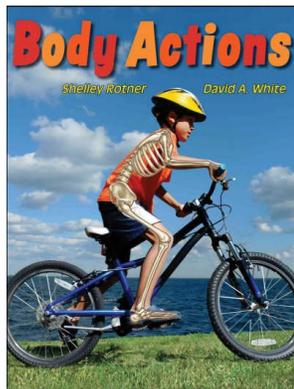
**Barbed Wire Baseball** by *Marissa Moss*

Traces the childhood dream of Japanese-American baseball pioneer Kenichi Zenimura of playing professionally and his family's struggles in a World War II internment camp where he introduces baseball to raise hope. | Lexile: 800 | [ALA](#), [NCSS](#)

**Body Actions** by

*Shelley Rotner*

Introduces the nervous, skeletal, muscular, respiratory, and circulatory systems and major organs through illustrations of children running, jumping, riding bikes, and using all five senses and explanatory overlays. | Lexile: 800 | [IRA](#), [NSTA](#)



**Goal!** by *Sean Taylor*

Where there's a ball . . . there will always be someone who wants to play soccer. Whether in Tanzania or Togo, Burma or Brazil, children love soccer. GOAL! celebrates the sport's power to bridge cultural divides and bring together the many and diverse people of the world. Filled with fun facts and striking photos, this book is a poetic snapshot of soccer around the globe. | [NCSS](#)

## BIOGRAPHY

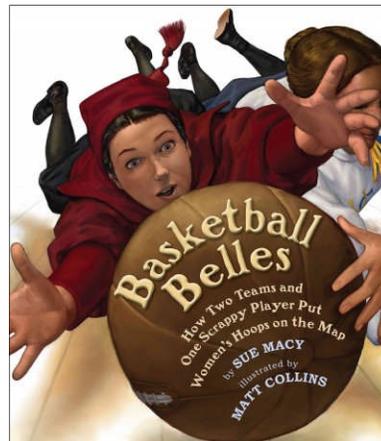
**My Story, My Dance:** Robert Battle's journey to Alvin Ailey by *Lesa Cline-Ransome*

Looks at the life of dancer and choreographer Robert Battle and his rise to the position of Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. | Lexile: 1060 | [ALA](#), [ILA](#)

**Game Changer:** John McLendon and the Secret game by *John Coy*

In 1944, Coach John McLendon orchestrated a secret

basketball game between the best players from a white college and his team from a black college. At a time of widespread segregation and rampant racism, this illegal gathering changed basketball forever. | Lexile 1170 | [ILA](#), [NCTE](#)



**Wilma**

**Unlimited:** How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman by *Kathleen Krull*

A biography of the African-American woman who overcame crippling polio as a child to become the first woman to win three gold medals in

track in a single Olympics. | Lexile: 730 | [ALA](#)

**Basketball Belles:** How Two Teams and One Scraggy Player Put Women's Hoops on the Map by *Sue Macy*

Recounts the first women's basketball game between Stanford University and University of California Berkeley on April 4, 1896, from Stanford guard Agnes Morley's perspective. | Lexile: 700 | [NCSS](#)

**Miss Mary Reporting:** The True Story of Sportswriter Mary Garber by *Sue Macy*

Details the life and accomplishments of Mary Garber, the first woman to win the APSE award and inducted into the Hall of Fame of National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association. | Lexile: 910

**Footwork:** The Story of Fred and Adele Astaire by *Roxane Orgill*

A colorful dual portrait of siblings Fred and Adele Astaire traces their early 20th-century journey toward stardom, describing their childhood practices and eventual successes on Broadway and beyond. | Lexile: [NCSS](#)

**Growing up Pedro:** How the Martinez Brothers Made it From the Dominican Republic to the Major Leagues by *Matt Tavares*

An illustrated biography of Pedro Martinez that describes his childhood and how he became a famous baseball player. | Lexile: 820 | [ALA](#), [NCTE](#)

\*Many listed books were selected as exemplary 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 Science Teachers Association* (NSTA), the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* (AAAS) or the *United States Board on Books for Young People* (USBBY).



# SUMMER READING

## Favorites & Classics

For Grades 3-4

### **My Name Is Maria Isabel**

by *Alma Flor Ada*

Third grader María Isabel, born in Puerto Rico and now living in the U.S., wants badly to fit in at school; and the teacher's writing assignment "My Greatest Wish" gives her that opportunity. | Lexile: 880

### **How Tia Lola Came to Stay** by *Julia*

*Alvarez*

Although ten-year-old Miguel is at first embarrassed by his colorful great aunt, Tia Lola, when she comes to Vermont from the Dominican Republic to stay with his mother, his sister, and him after his parents' divorce, he learns to love her. | Lexile: 740

### **Mr. Popper's Penguins** by *Richard Atwater*

The unexpected delivery of a large crate containing an Antarctic penguin changes the life and fortunes of Mr. Popper, a house painter obsessed by dreams of the Polar regions. | Lexile: 910

### **Tuck Everlasting** by *Natalie Babbitt*

The Tuck family is confronted with an agonizing situation when they discover that a ten-year-old girl and a malicious stranger now share their secret about a spring whose water prevents one from ever growing any older. | Lexile: 770

### **Madeline** by *Ludwig Bemelmans*

Madeline, smallest and naughtiest of the twelve little charges of Miss Clavel, wakes up one night with an attack of appendicitis. | Lexile: 480

### **Freckle Juice** by *Judy Blume*

Andrew wants freckles so badly that he buys Sharon's freckle recipe for fifty cents. | Lexile: 370

### **The Stories Julian Tells** by *Ann Cameron*

Relates episodes in seven-year-old Julian's life which include getting into trouble with his younger brother Huey, planting a garden, what he did to try to grow taller, losing a tooth, and finding a new friend. | Lexile: 520

### **James and the Giant Peach** by *Roald Dahl*

Wonderful adventures abound after James escapes from his fearful aunts by rolling away inside a giant peach. | Lexile: 870

### **Luz sees the Light** by *Claudia Dávila*

Luz, worried by blackouts in her neighborhood and her growing awareness of oil shortages and excessive energy use, decides to turn an abandoned lot into a garden and park with the help of her friends. | Lexile: 390

### **Because of Winn-Dixie** by *Kate DiCamillo*

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie. | Lexile: 610

### **The Hundred Dresses** by *Eleanor Estes*

In winning a medal she is no longer there to receive, a tight-lipped little Polish girl teaches her classmates a lesson. | Lexile: 870

### **My Father's Dragon** by *Ruth Stiles Gannett*

A young boy determines to rescue a poor baby dragon who is being used by a group of lazy wild animals to ferry them across the river on Wild Island. | Lexile: 990

### **Misty of Chincoteague** by *Marguerite Henry*

Paul and his sister Maureen's determination to own a pony from the herd on Chincoteague Island, Virginia, is greatly increased when the Phantom and her colt are among the ponies rounded up for the yearly auction. | Lexile: 750

### **The Tales of Uncle Remus**

as told by *Julius Lester*

A retelling of the African American tales about the adventures and misadventures of Brer Rabbit and his friends and enemies. | Lexile: 760

### **Pippi Longstocking** by *Astrid Lindgren*

Escapades of a lucky little girl who lives with a horse and a monkey — but without any parents — at the edge of a Swedish village. | Lexile: 870

### **Sarah, Plain and Tall**

by *Patricia MacLachlan*

When their father invites a mail-order bride to come live with them in their prairie home, Caleb and Anna are captivated by their new mother and hope that she will stay. | Lexile: 560



# SUMMER READING

## Favorites & Classics

For Grades 3-4

### **Archer's Quest** by Linda Sue Park

Twelve-year-old Kevin Kim helps Chu-mong, a legendary king of ancient Korea, return to his own time. | Lexile: 690

### **Pink and Say** by Patricia Polacco

Say Curtis describes his meeting with Pinkus Aylee, a black soldier, during the Civil War, and their capture by Southern troops. Based on a true story about the author's great-great-grandfather. | Lexile: 590

### **Bayou Magic** by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Visiting her grandmother in the Louisiana bayou, ten-year-old Maddy begins to realize that she may be the only sibling to carry on the gift of her family's magical legacy. | Lexile: 410

### **Tar Beach** by Faith Ringgold

A young girl dreams of flying above her Harlem home, claiming all she sees for herself and her family. Based on the author's quilt painting of the same name. | Lexile: 790

### **Grandfather's Journey** by Allen Say

A Japanese American man recounts his grandfather's journey to America which he also undertakes later, and the feelings of being torn by a love for two different countries. | Lexile: 560

### **Knights of the Kitchen Table**

by Jon Scieszka

Joe receives a magic book for his birthday present from his uncle. Joe, Fred, and Sam are transported to a time when evil knights, fire-breathing dragons, and vile-smelling giants roamed the land. | Lexile: 630

### **Where the Sidewalk Ends**

by Shel Silverstein

A boy who turns into a TV set and a girl who eats a whale are only two of the characters in this collection of humorous poetry illustrated with the author's own drawings.

### **Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters**

by John Steptoe

Mufaro's two beautiful daughters, one bad-tempered, one kind and sweet, go before the king, who is choosing a wife. | Lexile: 720

### **All-of-a-Kind Family** by Sydney Taylor

The adventures of five sisters growing up in a Jewish family in New York in the early twentieth century. | Lexile: 750

### **Charlotte's Web** by E. B. White

Wilbur, the pig, is desolate when he discovers that he is destined to be the farmer's Christmas dinner until his spider friend, Charlotte, decides to help him. | Lexile: 680

### **Dragonwings** by Lawrence Yep

In the early twentieth century a young Chinese boy joins his father in San Francisco and helps him realize his dream of making a flying machine. | Lexile: 870

### **Lon Po Po** by Ed Young

Three sisters staying home alone are endangered by a hungry wolf who is disguised as their grandmother. | Lexile: 670

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## SERIES

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**Tia Lola** series by Julia Alvarez

**The Julian** series by Ann Cameron

**Ramona** series by Beverly Cleary

**Amber Brown** series by Paula Danziger

**Mercy Watson** series by Kate DiCamillo

**Clubhouse Mystery** series by Sharon Draper

**The Carver Chronicles** by Karen English

**Nikki and Deja** series by Karen English

**Dyamonde Daniel** series by Nikki Grimes

**Babymouse** series by Jennifer L. Holm

**Bunnacula** series by James Howe

**Gooney Bird** series by Lois Lowry

**Lulu** series by Hilary McKay

**The Knight's tales** series by Gerald Morris

**Magic Treehouse** series by Mary Pope Osborne

**Junie B. Jones** series by Barbara Park

**Clementine** series by Sara Pennypacker

**Calvin Coconut** series by Graham Salisbury

**The Time Warp Trio** series by Jon Scieszka

**Dragonbreath** series by Ursula Vernon

**EllRay Jakes** series by Sally Warner

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