

SJA Library Summer Reading Suggestions for Students Entering MIDDLE SCHOOL 2026 – 2027

We encourage families to make reading a regular part of their summer schedule; in this current era of increased exposure to electronics and digital content, daily reading offers a break from screens, provides a time for parents and children to bond and relax together, and boosts students' attention span, comprehension, and language/vocabulary development – key tools for academic achievement and success.

Reading resources abound. The American Library Association provides a complete online list of Award Books at www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia. Baltimore County Public Library (www.bcpl.info), Harford County Public Library (www.hcplonline.org), and the York County Public Library (www.yorklibraries.org) offer additional resources and programs for students. Their websites include suggested reading lists by age, information on youth reading programs and events, including this year's Maryland State Library Summer Reading Program, "*Unearth a Story*," and a large selection of e-books and audio books available for direct download. In addition, we encourage you to link to the Baltimore County or Harford County Public Libraries' Research Databases to access NoveList K-8 Plus. This database is an excellent source for book recommendations based on age, fiction/non-fiction, interest, and genre.

We are asking that *every* Middle School student have a current public library card for the upcoming school year. Library cards may be obtained in person or online from your local library branch. A public library card gives students access to the available resources detailed above, as well as to academic databases that may be used during the year for class assignments and/or projects.

SUGGESTED READING

Listed below are selections from the 2026 – 2027 Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Book Award nominees in the Grades 6-8 Novel Category and Graphic Novel Category. *All titles are listed as suggestions only.*

2026 – 2027 Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Award Nominee Selections: Novels

- *The Bletchley Riddle*
 - *Blood in the Water*
 - *Boy 2.0*
 - *The Burning Season*
 - *The Factory*
 - *The Freedom Seeker*
 - *Happy Town*
 - *A Hero's Guide to Summer Vacation*
 - *Not Nothing*
 - *Popcorn*
- Ruta Sepetys/Steven Sheinkin
Tiffany D. Jackson
Tracey Baptiste
Caroline Starr Rose
Catherine Egan
Ruchira Gupta
Greg Van Eekhout
Pablo Cartaya
Gayle Forman
Rob Harrell

2026 – 2027 Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Award Nominee Selections: Graphic Novels

- *Almost Sunset* Wahab Algarmi
- *Deepwater Creek* Michael Regina
- *Family Force V, Book 1* Matt Braly
- *How to Talk to Your Succulent* Zoe Persico
- *I Witnessed: The Lizzy Borden Story* Jeramey Kraatz
- *The Other Side of Tomorrow* Tina Cho
- *The Puzzling Fate of Millicent Graves* Dora M. Mitchell
- *Sea Legs* Jules Bakes
- *The Vanishing of Lake Peigneur: A Graphic Novel Based on a True Story* Allan Wolf

2026 Newbery Medal

All the Blues in the Sky Renee Watson

Short Story Collections

Suggested authors and titles include, but are not limited to:

Edgar Allen Poe
Carl Sandburg
Jane Yolen

What Do Fish Have to do With Anything? by Avi

Every Living Thing by Cynthia Rylant

Dare to be Scared: Thirteen Stories to Chill and Thrill by Robert D. San Souci

Guys Read Series (Humor, True Stories, Sports, Science Fiction, Thrillers, Heroes & Villians) edited by Jon Scieszka

Fear: 13 Stories of Suspense and Horror edited by R.L. Stine

Rising Above: How 11 Athletes Overcame Challenges in Their Youth to Become Stars by Gregory Zuckerman