

Governor's Summer Reading Challenge Grades 9-12



Beauty Queens by Libba Bray

Survival of the fittest. The fifty contestants in the Miss Teen Dream Pageant thought this was going to be a fun trip to the beach. But sadly, their airplane crashed on a desert island leaving the survivors stranded with little food or water and practically no eyeliner. What's a beauty queen to do? Continue to practice for the talent portion of the program or wrestle snakes to the ground? Welcome to the heart of non-exfoliated darkness. | Lexile: HL690L

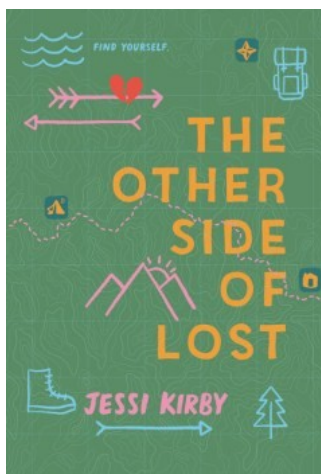
Dan Versus Nature by Don Calame

Shy and scrawny, Dan Weekes spends his time creating graphics, but then his mom drops a bomb; she and her latest beau, Hank, are engaged, and she's sending them all on a survivalist camping trip to bond. Determined to trick Hank into showing his true flawed colors, Dan and his nerdy germaphobe best friend, Charlie, prepare a series of increasingly gross and embarrassing pranks. But then the boys get separated from their wilderness guide. With a man-hungry bear on their trail, no supplies, and a lot of unpleasant itching going on, can Dan see his plan through now that his very survival depends on Hank? Lexile: HL660L

The Other Side of Lost

by Jessi Kirby

Mari Turner's life is perfect to her thousands of followers who have helped her become an internet starlet. But when she breaks down and posts a video confessing she's been living a lie, that she *isn't* the happy, inspirational online personality she's been trying so hard to portray, it goes viral and she receives a major backlash. Impulsively, she decides to hike the entire John Muir Trail. Mari and her late cousin Bri were supposed to do it together before Mari got wrapped up in her online world. With Bri's boots and trail diary, a heart full of regret, and a group of strangers she meets along the way, Mari navigates the difficult terrain. But the true challenge lies within, as she searches for the way back to the girl she fears may be too lost to find, herself.



Every Hidden Thing by Kenneth Oppel

Somewhere in the Badlands, lies the skeleton of a massive dinosaur, larger than anything the late 19th century world has ever seen. Samuel Bolt calls it the 'rex', the king dinosaur that could put him and his struggling, temperamental archaeologist father in the history books. For Rachel Cartland the find could be her ticket to a different life, where her loves of science and adventure aren't just relegated to books and sitting rooms. As their paths cross and the rivalry between their fathers intensifies, Samuel and Rachel are pushed closer together. As danger looms, causing everyone's secrets to come to light, Samuel and Rachel are forced to make a decision. Lexile: HL650L

Switchback by Danika Stone

Vale loves to hike, but kind of hates her classmates. Ash is okay with his classmates, but kind of hates the outdoors. So, needless to say, they are both fairly certain that the overnight nature hike with their PE class is going to be difficult. When they get separated from the group during a storm, they have worse things to worry about than bullies and blisters. Lost in the Canadian wilderness with limited supplies, in dangerous weather, and surrounded by wildlife, it's going to take every bit of strength, skill, and luck they can muster to survive.



The 5th Wave by Rick Yancey

After the 1st wave, only darkness remains. After the 2nd, only the lucky escape. And after the 3rd, only the *unlucky* survive. After the 4th wave, only one rule applies. Trust no one. Now, it's the dawn of the 5th wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them, the beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see, who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive. Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's only hope for rescuing her brother—or even saving herself. Cassie must choose between trust and despair, defiance and surrender, to give up or to get up. | Lexile: HL690L



Fiction

The Gilded Ones by Namina Forna

Sixteen-year-old Deka lives in fear and anticipation of the blood ceremony that will determine whether she will become a member of her village. Already different from everyone else because of her unnatural intuition, Deka prays for red blood so she can finally feel like she belongs. But on the day of the ceremony, her blood runs gold, the color of impurity—and Deka knows she will face a consequence worse than death. Then a mysterious woman comes to her with a choice: stay in the village and submit to her fate, or leave to fight for the emperor in an army of girls just like her. But as she journeys to the capital to train for the biggest battle of her life, she will discover that the great walled city holds many surprises. Nothing and no one are quite what they seem to be—not even Deka herself. | Lexile: 780L

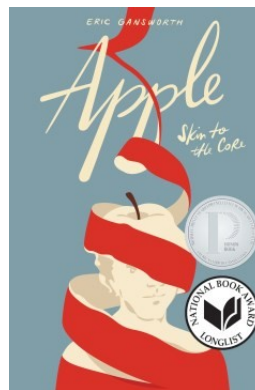
The Lightness of Hands by Jeff Garvin

Ellie Dante is desperate for something to finally go right. Her father was a famous stage magician until he attempted an epic illusion on live TV—and failed. Now they live in a beat up RV performing for children's parties. But when the gigs dry up, Ellie receives a call from a famous magic duo who offer fifteen thousand dollars for her father to perform the illusion that wrecked his career—on their live TV special. Ellie knows her dad will refuse, but she takes the deal anyway, and then lies to persuade him to head west. With the help of her online best friend and an unusual guy she teams up with along the way, Ellie makes a plan to stage her father's comeback.

Damselfly by Chandra Prasad

After crash-landing on a deserted tropical island, a group of private-school teens must rely on their wits and one another to survive. With survival in their own hands, the teens find each other after the crash, set up shelter, and hope for rescue. But as the days pass, the

teens realize they're on their own, stranded on an island with a mysterious presence that taunts and threatens them. Soon, they discover they need to survive more than the jungle... they need to survive each other. | Lexile: 660L



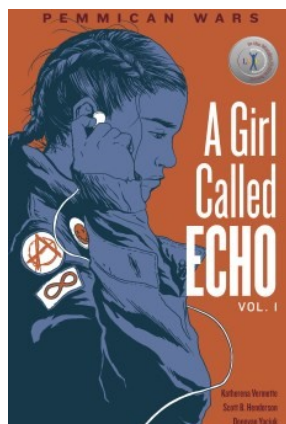
Nonfiction

Apple (Skin to the Core)

by Eric Gansworth

In *Apple (Skin to the Core)*, Eric Gansworth tells his story, the story of his family—of Onondaga among Tuscaroras—of Native folks everywhere. From the horrible legacy of the government boarding schools, to a boy watching his siblings leave and return and leave again, to a young man fighting to be an artist who balances multiple worlds. This memoir showcases poems recounting family and personal history, twined with artwork and musical references, accompanied by occasional photographs.

Graphic Novels



Pemmican Wars

by Katherena Vermette

Echo Desjardins, a 13-year-old Métis girl adjusting to a new home and school, is struggling with loneliness. Then an ordinary day in Mr. Bee's history class turns extraordinary. During Mr. Bee's lecture, Echo finds herself transported to another time and place—a bison hunt on the Saskatchewan prairie—and back again to the present. In the following weeks, Echo slips back and forth in time. She visits a Métis camp, travels the old fur-trade routes, and experiences the perilous and bygone era of the Pemmican Wars. | Lexile: HL500L

Many of the listed books were recognized as exemplary books by one or more of the following organizations: American Library Association (ALA), Children's Literature & Reading and Special Interest Group (CL/R SIG), Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), American Indian Library Association (AILA), International Literacy Association (ILA), National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), American Association of the Advancement of Science (AAAS), United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY). Other awards as noted.



Featured Connecticut Authors



Sarah Albee

Sarah lives in Connecticut with her husband, who is a high school history teacher and administrator. They have three grown kids, and a dog, Rosie. Prior to becoming a full-time writer, she worked at Children's Television Workshop (producers of Sesame Street) for nine years. She played

basketball in college, and a year of semi-professional women's basketball in Cairo, Egypt. She especially loves writing about topics where history and science connect.

Poison: Deadly Deeds, Perilous Professions, and Murderous Medicines | Lexile: 1080L
Accidental Archaeologist | Lexile: 990L



Stacy Barnett Mozer

Stacy Barnett Mozer started teaching in 1997. During her teacher training at NYU she was introduced to the writer's workshop style of teaching writing and started her first writer's notebook. She never expected that would lead her to write "actual books," but every time she gave an

assignment to her students, she would do it first. She used her own writing pieces as models in the classroom, enjoying writing in a way she had never remembered experiencing as a child.

The Sweet Spot
The Perfect Trip (The Sweet Spot Book 2)



Suzanne Nelson

When she was in kindergarten, Suzanne Nelson jotted down in a school keepsake album that she wanted to be a "riter." She persisted, composing cryptic poems about rainbows, fairies, mud, and even Star Wars in spiral notebooks all through

elementary school. She was born in New Jersey, grew up in Southern California, attended college in Texas, and spent eight years as a children's book editor in New York City. After decades of searching for her geographic "promise land," she now lives in Ridgefield, Connecticut, with her husband and three children.

A Batch Made in Heaven | Lexile: 730L
Pumpkin Spice up your Life | Lexile: 720L



Karen Romano Young

Karen Romano Young is a writer, artist, deep-sea diver, and polar explorer, and crazy about books, science, kids, and raccoons. On any given day, you can find her at the beach, at the art museum, or drawing, doodling, writing, or doing other

kinds of experiments in her back yard or her barn.

Space Junk: The Dangers of Polluting Earth's Orbit

Lexile: 1220L

A Girl, A Raccoon, and the Midnight Moon

Lexile: 780L

Try This!: 50 Fun Experiments for the Mad Scientist in You | Lexile: 910L



Nutmeg

What are the Nutmeg Book Awards?

The CT Nutmeg Book Award encourages children in grades 2-12 to read quality literature and to choose their favorite from a list of nominated titles. Jointly sponsored by the Connecticut Library Association and the Connecticut Association of School Librarians, the Nutmeg Committee is comprised of children's librarians and school library media specialists who are members of sponsoring organizations, as well as students. For more information, visit www.nutmegaward.org.

The Inheritance Games

by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

We Are Not Free

by Traci Chee

Flamer

by Mike Curato

All Eyes on Her

by L. E. Flynn

The House in the Cerulean Sea

by TJ Klune

What I Carry

by Jennifer Longo

More Than Just a Pretty Face

by Syed M. Masood

Furia

by Yamile Saied Méndez

The Astonishing Color of After

by Emily X. R. Pan

Punching the Air

by Ibi Zoboi

101 Ways to Bug Your Parents

by Lee Wardlaw

Classics and Popular Titles

Speak

by Laurie Halse Anderson

A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school. | Lexile: 690L

Feed

by M. T. Anderson

In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble. | Lexile: 770L

The Handmaid's Tale

by Margaret Atwood

Set in the near future, Offred tells her story as one of the unfortunate Handmaids living under a new social order based on a monolithic theocracy. | Lexile: 750L

Love in the Time of Global Warming

by Francesca Lia Block

Penelope has lost her home, parents, and brother in an earthquake. She navigates a dark world, refusing to be defeated, holding hope and love in her hands. | Lexile: 850L

Kindred

by Octavia Butler

A young African-American woman is mysteriously transferred back in time, leading to an irresistible curiosity about her family's past. Lexile: 580L

The House on Mango Street

by Sandra Cisneros

A young girl living in a Hispanic neighborhood in Chicago, ponders the advantages and disadvantages of her environment, and evaluates her relationships with family and friends. | Lexile: 870L

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

by Betty Smith

Young Francie Nolan, having inherited both her father's romantic nature and her mother's practical nature, struggles to survive and thrive growing up in the slums of Brooklyn in the early twentieth century. | Lexile: 810L

