

Woburn Public Schools Summer Reading Texts 2018

Joyce Middle School & Kennedy Middle School

Our summer reading options this year ask students to focus on an essential question aligned with social-emotional skills such as embracing diversity, integrity, grit, empathy and self-control. We are offering a range of texts--easy to challenging--as marked by the asterisks below. Choose one, some, or all texts listed for your grade level, considering the listed essential question as you read.

*Easy

**Medium

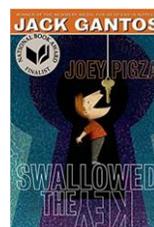
***Challenging

Grade 6

Essential Question: Why is awareness of and management of your emotions important?

**Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* by Jack Gantos

Joey Pigza's got heart, he's got a mom who loves him, and he's got "dud meds," which is what he calls the Ritalin pills that are supposed to even out his wild mood swings. Sometimes Joey makes bad choices. Joey ends up bouncing around a lot—and eventually he bounces himself all the way downtown, into the district special ed program, which could be the end of the line. As Joey knows, if he keeps making bad choices, he could just fall between the cracks for good. But he is determined not to let that happen.



***Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine

From inside Caitlin's head, readers see the very personal aftermath of a middle school shooting that took the life of the older brother she adored. Caitlin is a bright fifth-grader and a gifted artist. She also has Asperger Syndrome, and her brother, Devon, was the one who helped her interpret the world. A compassionate school counselor works with her, trying to teach her the social skills that are so difficult for her. Through her own efforts and her therapy sessions, she begins to come to terms with her loss and makes her first steps toward friendship. (Winner of the National Book Award)



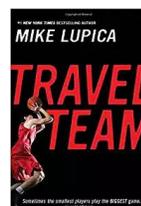
****The Thing about Jellyfish* by Ali Benjamin

After her best friend dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the true cause of the tragedy must have been a rare jellyfish sting—things don't just happen for no reason. Retreating into a silent world of imagination, she crafts a plan to prove her theory—even if it means traveling the globe, alone. Suzy's journey explores life, death, the astonishing wonder of the universe...and the potential for love and hope right next door.



****Travel Team* by Mike Lupica

Twelve-year-old Danny Walker may be the smallest kid on the basketball court - but don't tell him that, because no one plays with more heart or court sense. But none of that matters when he is cut from his local travel team, the very same team his father led to national prominence as a boy. Danny's father, still smarting from his own troubles, knows Danny isn't the only kid who was cut for the wrong reason, and together, this washed-up former player and a bunch of never-say-die kids prove that the heart simply cannot be measured.



Grade 7

Essential Question: Why is it important to be open-minded about and accepting of those different from me?

**If a Tree Falls at Lunch Period* by Gennifer Choldenko

Kirsten is having trouble with her parents and with her best friend, who has fallen under the spell of the school's queen bee, Brianna. Walker's goal is to survive at the new, white, private school his mom has sent him to because she thinks he's going to screw up like his cousin, even though he's a good kid. So is his friend Matteo, though no one knows why he'll do absolutely anything that queen bee, Brianna, asks of him. But all of this feels unimportant when Kirsten and Walker discover a secret that shakes them both to the core.



***Hello, Universe* by Erin Entrada Kelly

In one day, four lives weave together in an unexpected way. Virgil is shy and kind-hearted and feels out of place in his crazy-about-sports family. Valencia, who is deaf, is smart, brave, and secretly lonely. Kaori is a self-proclaimed psychic, whose little sister, Gen, is always following her around. And Chet wishes the weird kids would just stop being so different so he can concentrate on basketball. They aren't friends until Chet, a bully, pulls a prank that leads Kaori, Gen, and Valencia on an epic quest to find the missing Virgil. Through luck, smarts, bravery, and a little help from the universe, a rescue is performed, a bully is put in his place, and friendship blooms.



*** Posted* by John David Anderson

When cell phones are banned at school, Frost and his friends come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other around the school. It catches on and soon all the kids are leaving notes for one another; however, the kind notes start giving way to cruel ones. Frost and his friends, along with a new student, Rose, try to maintain their friendships with one another in the midst of this sticky note war. This is the story of five friends struggling to fit in, find themselves, and summon the courage to stand up for each other.



**** The Misfits* by James Howe

Skeezie, Addie, Joe, and Bobby are a group of "misfits" trying to survive seventh grade. Addie decides that their group of friends should run against more popular peers in the upcoming student council election. But her dreams and speeches make the wrong kind of waves, offending fellow classmates, teachers, and the principal. It is not until softer-spoken Bobby says what's in his heart about nicknames and taunts that people begin to listen and take notice, granting their respect for the boy they used to call "Lardo" and "Fluff." In this novel, overweight Bobby Goodspeed evolves from nerd to hero when he starts speaking his mind.

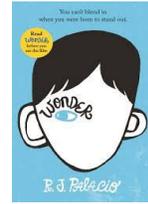


Grade 8

Essential Question: Why is it important to consider other perspectives?

***Wonder by R.J. Palacio**

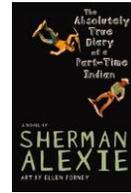
Auggie Pullman is born with severe facial deformities and faced countless surgeries throughout his lifetime. Homeschooled his entire life due to his medical needs, Auggie decides to start fifth grade in public school. Wonder follows Auggie and his classmates as he tries to just be seen as an ordinary kid in school.



***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie**

Bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells 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. Follow Junior's story as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live.

*This novel is appropriate for more mature readers



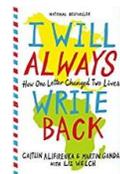
****Refugee by Alan Gratz**

This action-packed novel tells the story of three different kids who must flee their home countries in search of safety. Josef and his family are Jewish and trying to escape the threat of Nazi concentration camps in the 1930's. Isobel and her family want to leave the unrest of Cuba in 1994 and head for America. Mahmoud and his family seek refuge in Europe from the war in Syria in 2015. All three stories recount the extreme hardship, danger, and sacrifice these families face during their journeys.



****I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives by Martin Ganda and Caitlin Alifirenka**

A school assignment starts a girl from the U.S. and a boy from Zimbabwe on a journey of unlikely friendship. This heartwarming memoir recalls how Caitlin and Martin's lives both changed over the six years the two were pen pals.



*****The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime by Mark Haddon**

Christopher has a love for prime numbers and mysteries. But when a mysterious event takes place close to home, he needs to use his skills of reasoning and develop his understanding of human emotions to solve it.

*This novel is appropriate for more mature readers

