Summer Reading List*

UNMASK! ~ Grades 9-12

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

FICTION

Chasing Shadows *by Swati Avasthi*
Acting out superhero fantasies on the streets and rooftops of Chicago, best friends Corey, Holly, and Savitri are shattered by a murderous act of violence that leaves two of them disillusioned and unable to move on. *ALA*

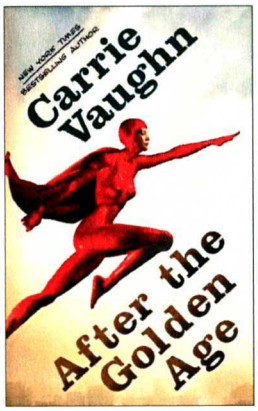
Night Sky *by Suzanne & Melanie Brockmann*
Sixteen-year-old Skylar Reid joins her best friend Cal, Dana, a girl with supernatural abilities, and Dana's friend Milo on a quest to rescue young Sasha from the Organization that kidnapped her because, according to Dana, Sky and Sasha both have special abilities, too.

Heroes *by Robert Cormier*
After joining the army at fifteen and having his face blown away by a grenade in a battle in France, Francis returns home to Frenchtown hoping to find--and kill--the former childhood hero he feels betrayed him. *ALA*

Soon I Will Be Invincible *by Austin Grossman*
Brilliant scientist Doctor Impossible, always plotting to take over the world, comes up with an evil plan to knock the planet off its orbit, setting the stage for a confrontation with Fatale, a rookie cyborg superhero and newest member of the Champions team.

Hero-Type *by Barry Lyga*
Feeling awkward and ugly is only one reason sixteen-year-old Kevin is uncomfortable with the publicity surrounding his act of accidental heroism, but when a reporter photographs him apparently being unpatriotic, he steps into the limelight to encourage people to think about what the symbols of freedom really mean. | Lexile: 670

Purple Heart *by Patricia McCormick*
While recuperating in a Baghdad hospital from a traumatic brain injury sustained during the Iraq War, eighteen-year-old soldier Matt Duffy struggles to recall what happened to him and how it relates to his ten-year-old friend, Ali. *ALA, NCSS*



The Hero and the Crown *by Robin McKinley*
Aerin, with the guidance of the wizard Luthe and the help of the Blue Sword, wins the birthright due her as the daughter of the Damarian king and a witchwoman of the mysterious, demon-haunted North. | Lexile: 1120 *ALA*

Hero *by Perry Moore*
Thom Creed, the gay son of a disowned superhero, finds that he, too, has special powers and is asked to join the very League that rejected his father, and it is there that Thom finds other misfits whom he can finally trust. *ALA*

Revolutionary *by Alex Myers*
Presents a fictionalized account of Deborah Sampson Gannett, who defied the rigid societal and social norms of her times to disguise herself as a man, join the Continental Army, and fight against the British during the American Revolution.

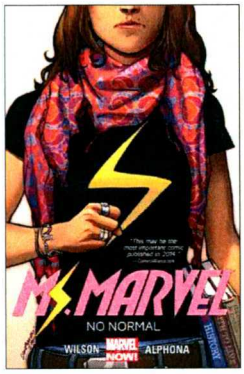
No Crystal Stair *by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson*
In this work of historical fiction, Nelson tells the story of a man with a passion for knowledge and of a bookstore whose influence has become legendary. | Lexile: 850 *ALA, NCTE*

Steelheart *by Brandon Sanderson*
At age eight, David watched as his father was killed by an Epic, a human with superhuman powers, and now, ten years later, he joins the Reckoners--the only people who are trying to kill the Epics and end their tyranny. *ALA, IRA*

After the Golden Age *by Carrie Vaughn*
Forensic accountant Celia West is the powerless and estranged daughter of two of Commerce City's great heroes, Captain Olympus and Spark. When the city prosecutes the evil Destructor for tax evasion, Celia gets pulled in to track down evidence. As a new crime spree creates tension between the city's heroes and the police force, Celia's investigation uncovers long-buried secrets about her family and the city.

SUMMER READING LIST*

GRAPHIC NOVELS



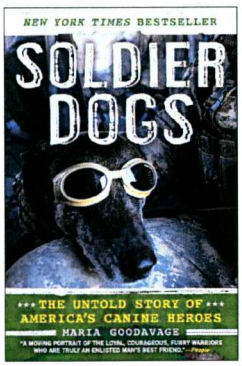
Ms. Marvel. 1, No Normal *by G. Willow Wilson & Adrian Alphona*
Kamala Khan, a Pakistani American girl from Jersey City who lives a conservative Muslim lifestyle with her family, suddenly acquires superhuman powers and, despite the pressures of school and home, tries to use her abilities to help her community. (B&T) *ALA*

The Adventures of Superhero Girl *by Faith Erin Hicks*
What if you can leap tall buildings and defeat alien monsters with your bare hands, but you buy your capes at secondhand stores and have a weakness for kittens? Cartoonist Faith Erin Hicks brings charming humor to the trials and tribulations of a young, female superhero, battling monsters both supernatural and mundane in an all-too-ordinary world. *ALA*

Gandhi: My Life is My Message *by Jason Quinn*
Introduces the life and accomplishments of the Indian political and spiritual leader who led his country to freedom from British rule through his policy of nonviolent resistance in a graphic novel format.

NONFICTION

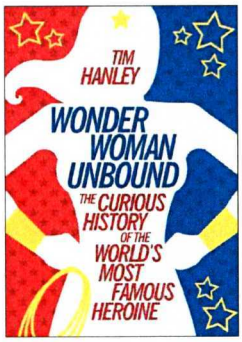
Flags of Our Fathers: Heroes of Iwo Jima *by James Bradley*
An account of the Marines who came together during the battle of Iwo Jima to raise the American flag in a moment that has been immortalized in one of the most famous photographs of World War II. Lexile: 950 *ALA (ALEX)*



Soldier Dogs: The Untold Story of America's Canine Heroes *by Maria Goodavage*
Explores the work and significance of military dogs, sharing uplifting stories about noteworthy canines, their training, and heroic accomplishments as well as the lasting bonds they have formed with their soldier companions. (BT) Lexile:

Wonder Woman Unbound: The Curious History of the World's Most Famous Heroine *by Tim Hanley*
Explores the iconic comic book character, placing her in the historical context of women's evolving social roles in America. (BT) *ALA (ALEX)*

The Physics of Superheroes *by James Kakalios*
The physics professor made famous for his "Everything I Needed to Know About Physics I Learned from Reading Comic Books" course presents an expanded edition of his popular book that incorporates additional superheroes and the latest scientific findings.



Frozen In Time: An Epic Story of Survival and a Modern Quest for Lost Heroes of World War II *by Mitchell Zuckoff*
In Nov. 1942 a U.S. cargo plane crashed into the Greenland ice cap, the B-17 sent on the search-and-rescue mission got caught in a storm and also crashed, miraculously all nine men aboard survived. A second rescue operation was launched, but the plane, the Grumman Duck, flew into a storm and vanished. The survivors of the B-17 spent 148 days fighting to stay alive while waiting for rescue by famed explorer Bernt Balchen. Then in 2012 the U.S. Coast Guard and North South Polar mount an expedition to solve the mystery of the vanished plane and recover the remains of the lost plane's crew.

BIOGRAPHY

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban *by Malala Yousafzai*
When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday October 9, 2012, she almost paid the ultimate price. | Lexile: 1000

*Many listed were selected as exemplary by one or more of the following organizations: the *American Library Association* (ALA), the *International Reading Association* (IRA), 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 9-12

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: 690

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian *by Sherman Alexie*
Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. | Lexile: 600

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: 770

The Handmaid's Tale *by Margaret Atwood*
Set in the near future, America has become a puritanical theocracy and Offred tells her story as a Handmaid under the new social order. | Lexile: 750

Squashed *by Joan Bauer*
As sixteen-year-old Ellie pursues her two goals--growing the biggest pumpkin in Iowa and losing twenty pounds herself--she strengthens her relationship with her father and meets a young man with interests similar to her own. | Lexile: 930

Love in the Time of Global Warming *by Francesca Lia Block*
After a devastating earthquake destroys the West Coast, causing seventeen-year-old Penelope to lose her home, her parents, and her ten-year-old brother, she navigates a dark world, holding hope and love in her hands and refusing to be defeated. | Lexile: 890

Weetzie Bat *by Francesca Lia Block*
Follows the wild adventures of Weetzie Bat and her Los Angeles friends, Dirk, Duck, and My-Secret-Agent-Lover-Man. | Lexile: 960

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: 580

Ender's Game *by Orson Scott Card*
Young Ender Wiggin may prove to be the military genius Earth needs to fight a desperate battle against a deadly alien race that will determine the future of the human race. | Lexile: 780

The Perks of Being a Wallflower *by Stephen Chbosky*
A series of letters to an unknown correspondent reveals the coming-of-age trials of a high-schooler named Charlie. | Lexile: 720

Girl Overboard *by Justina Chen*
After a snowboarding accident, Syrah Cheng, a billionaire's daughter, must rehabilitate both her knee and her self-esteem while forging relationships with those who accept her for who she is. | Lexile: 960

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: 850

Just Listen *by Sara Dessen*
Isolated from friends who believe the worst because she has not been truthful with them, sixteen-year-old Annabel finds an ally in classmate Owen, whose honesty and passion for music help her to face and share what really happened at the end-of-the-year party that changed her life. | Lexile: 810

Copper Sun *by Sharon M. Draper*
Two fifteen-year-old girls--one a slave and the other an indentured servant--escape their Carolina plantation and try to make their way to Fort Moses, Florida, a Spanish colony that gives sanctuary to slaves. | Lexile: 820

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close *by Jonathan Safran Foer*
Follows nine-year-old Oskar Schell as he encounters a number of interesting characters in his search for information about his father, who died in the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and tries to find the lock that fits the mysterious key he left behind. | Lexile: 940

The Fault in Our Stars *by John Green*
Sixteen-year-old Hazel, a stage IV thyroid cancer patient, has accepted her terminal diagnosis until a chance meeting with a boy at cancer support group forces her to reexamine her perspective on love, loss, and life. | Lexile: 850

SUMMER READING

Favorites & Classics

For Grades 9-12

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime *by Mark Haddon*
Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother. | Lexile: 1180

Seraphina *by Rachel Hartman*
In a world where dragons and humans coexist in an uneasy truce and dragons can assume human form, Seraphina, whose mother died giving birth to her, grapples with her own identity amid magical secrets and royal scandals, while she struggles to accept and develop her extraordinary musical talents. | Lexile: 760

Game *by Walter Dean Myers*
If Harlem high school senior Drew Lawson is going to realize his dream of playing college, then professional, basketball, he will have to improve at being coached and being a team player, especially after a new--white--student threatens to take the scouts' attention away from him. | Lexile: 800

Monster *by Walter Dean Myers*
While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken. | Lexile: 670

Persepolis *by Marjane Satrapi*
Contains black-and-white comic strip images in which the author shares the story of her life in Tehran, Iran, where she lived from ages six to fourteen while the country came under control of the Islamic regime. | Lexile: 380

Midwinterblood *by Marcus Sedgwick*
Seven linked vignettes unfold on a Scandinavian island inhabited--throughout various time periods--by Vikings, vampires, ghosts, and a curiously powerful plant. | Lexile: 770

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

Buried Onions *by Gary Soto*
When nineteen-year-old Eddie drops out of college, he struggles to find a place for himself as a Mexican American living in a violence-infested neighborhood of Fresno, California. | Lexile: 850

Marcelo in the Real World *by Francisco X. Stork*
Marcelo Sandoval, a seventeen-year-old boy on the high-functioning end of the autistic spectrum, faces new challenges, including romance and injustice, when he goes to work for his father in the mailroom of a corporate law firm. | Lexile: 700

Jumped *by Rita Williams-Garcia*
The lives of Leticia, Dominique, and Trina are irrevocably intertwined through the course of one day in an urban high school after Leticia overhears Dominique's plans to beat up Trina and must decide whether or not to get involved. | Lexile: 600

How to Save a Life *by Sara Zarr*
Told from their own viewpoints, seventeen-year-old Jill, in grief over the loss of her father, and Mandy, nearly nineteen, are thrown together when Jill's mother agrees to adopt Mandy's unborn child but nothing turns out as they had anticipated. | Lexile: 710

SERIES

Weetzie Bat series *by Francesca Lia Block*
Finishing School series *by Gail Carriger*
The Mortal Instruments series *by Cassandra Clare*
The Hunger Games series *by Suzanne Collins*
The Maze Runner series *by James Dashner*
The Rangers Apprentice series *Flanagan*
Earthsea series *by Ursula K. Le Guin*
Life as We Knew It series *by Susan Beth Pfeffer*
His Dark Materials series *by Philip Pullman*
The Raven Cycle *by Maggie Stiefvater*
Shiver trilogy *by Maggie Stiefvater*
Daughter of Smoke and Bone series *by Laini*