Top Shelf Reads 2025

The Best Books of the Year for Middle Schoolers
Selected by the Newton Free Librarians
www.newtonfreelibrary.net

Adventure/Mystery

The School For Thieves by Peter Burns (EB, EA)
Blood In the Water by Tiffany Jackson (EB, EA, P, R)
Bringing Back Kay-Kay by Dev Kothari (EB, R)
The Vanished Ones by Chad Lucas (EB, EA, P)
How To Tell a True Story by Tricia Springstubb (EB)

Realistic and Historical Fiction

Scattergood by H.M. Bouwman (EB)
Rabbit Rabbit by Dori Hillestad Butler (EB, EA)
The Strongest Heart by Saadia Faruqi (EA, EA, P, R)
Under the Light of Fireflies by Lee Sanders (EB)
So Over Sharing by Elissa Brent Weissman (EB, EA, R)
Candle Island by Lauren Wolk (EB, EA, P)

Graphic Novels

The Other Side of Tomorrow by Tina Cho (EB)
Taxi Ghost by Sophie Escabasse (EB, EA, R)
I Witnessed the Lizzie Borden Story by Jeramey Kraatz (EB, R)
Extra Large by Tyler Page (EB, R)
Halfway To Somewhere by Jose Pimienta (EB)
I Wanna Be Your Girl by Umi Takase (EB)

Fantasy

The Dark Times of Nimble Nottingham by Ryan James Black (EB, EA, R)
Hyo the Hellmaker by Mina Ikemoto Ghosh (EB)
The Wild Huntress by Emily Lloyd-Jones (EA, EA)
A World Worth Saving by Kyle Lukoff (EB, EA, P)
The Floating World by Axie Oh (EB, EA)
Spellbound Solstice by Alexandria Rogers (EB)

EB = E- Book, EA = E-Audiobook, P =Playaway, R=Reluctant Reader

Science Fiction

Where the Lockwood Grows by Olivia A. Cole (EB, EA)
The Factory by Catherine Egan (EB, R)
Echo Nova by Clint Hall (EB, EA, R)
Sixteen Minutes by K.J. Reilly (EB, EA)
The Second Chance of Darius Logan by David F. Walker (EB, EA)

Horror/Supernatural

Beasts by Ingvild Bjerkeland (EB, EA, R)
Adia Kelbara and the Circle of Shamans by Isi Hendrix (EB, EA, P)
Hungry Bones by Louise Hung (EB, EA)
The Many Hauntings of the Manning Family by Lorien Lawrence (EA, EA)
Jax Freeman and the Phantom Shriek by Kwame Mbalia (EB)

Biographies & Non-Fiction

Fight To Win!: Heroes of American Labor by Kim Kelly (EB)
A Dangerous Idea: The Scopes Trial, the Original Fight Over Science In Schools by Debbie Levy (EB, EA)
Earthrise: The Story of the Photograph That Changed the Way We See Our … by Leonard S. Marcus (EB, R)
Cooking With Marshmello: Recipes With a Remix by Marshmello (EB)
Whale Eyes: A Memoir About Seeing and Being Seen by James Robinson (EB, EA, R)
True Gretch by Gretchen Whitmer (EB, EA)

Poetry

It's All Or Nothing, Vale by Andrea Beatriz Arango (EB, EA, R, SPAN)
Deer Run Home by Ann Clare LeZotte (EB, EA)
The Extraordinary Orbit of Alex Ramirez by Jasminne Paulino (EB, EA)
The Burning Season by Caroline Starr Rose (EB, EA)
The Poetry of Car Mechanics by Heidi E.Y. Stemple (EB, EA, P)
All the Blues In the Sky by Renee Watson (EB, EA)

Challenging Reads (8th Grade)

I Was Told There Would Be Romance by Marie Arnold (EB, EA)
Your Letter by Hyon-a Cho
All the Noise at Once by DeAndra Davis (EB, EA)
Needy Little Things by Channelle Desamours (EB, EA)
Shadowed by Carl Deuker (EB, EA)
Full Shift by Jennifer Dugan (EB)
Visitations by Corey Egbert (EB)
Death in the Jungle: Murder, Betrayal, and the Lost Dream of Jonestown by Candace Fleming (EB, EA)
The Brightwood Code by Monica Hesse (EB, EA)
A Forgery of Fate by Elizabeth Lim (EB, EA)
Hunger's Bite by Taylor Robin (EB)
D.J. Rosenblum Becomes the G.O.A.T. by Abby White (EB, EA)

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