

Hey parents, as you know children learn through us, they aren't just empty buckets to fill up with some knowledge, so if you want to raise a reader, be a reader. Make reading an essential part of your summer adventures. Let them see you read! There are so many ways to make literacy a part of your summer: You can make weekly trips to the library, allow splurging for books that they choose, consider reading a novel as a family, where you either read the book aloud or pass around a shared copy, (we like Ghost by Jason Reynolds or Hoot by Carl Hiaasen, if you're asking) play an audiobook on long trips and watch well-made films that you may not have watched on those lazy afternoons at the beach house. Below are student required and suggested titles, it's an ocean of possibilities. Jump in! I'll be seeing you, Elliot Guerra

Required Summer Reading Middle School

Students are required to read a novel and a graphic novel for class, they are encouraged to bring in a purchased or borrowed copy of each book on the second week of school and will be expected to have read the books in full and be prepared to be able to be tested on their knowledge of them. Used copies of summer reading are available on a limited basis contact, Mr. Guerra at Guerra@academyolmc.org for details.

Grade 6 *El Deafo* by Cece Bell and *Holes* by Louis Sachar

El Deafo

In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful and very awkward hearing aid. The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear (including some things she wasn't intended to hear), but it also isolates her from her classmates. She really just wants to fit in and find a true friend, someone who appreciates her as she is.

After some trouble, she is finally able to harness the power of the Phonic Ear and become "El Deafo, Listener for All." More importantly, Cece declares a place for herself in the world and finds the friend she's longed for.

Holes

This winner of the Newbery Medal and the National Book Award features Stanley Yelnats, a kid who is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats.

Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake: the warden is looking for something. Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime, punishment, and redemption.

Grade 7 *March (Book 1)* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell and *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander

March (Book One)

The March trilogy is an autobiographical black and white graphic novel trilogy about the Civil rights movement, told through the perspective of civil rights leader and U.S. Congressman John Lewis. The series is written by Lewis and Andrew Aydin, and illustrated and lettered by Nate Powell.

The Crossover

Josh and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood. He's got mad beats too, beats that tell his family's story in verse. But both brothers must come to grips with growing up, on and off the court, as they realize breaking the rules can come at a terrible price, resulting in a game-changer for their entire family. Winner of the 2015 Newbery Medal.

Grade 8 *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang and *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton

American Born Chinese

A tour-de-force by New York Times bestselling graphic novelist Gene Yang, *American Born Chinese* tells the story of three apparently unrelated characters: Jin Wang, who moves to a new neighborhood with his family only to discover that he's the only Chinese-American student at his new school; the powerful Monkey King, subject of one of the oldest and greatest Chinese fables; and Chin-Kee, a personification of the ultimate negative Chinese stereotype, who is ruining his cousin Danny's life with his yearly visits. Their lives and stories come together with an unexpected twist in this action-packed modern fable. *American Born Chinese* is an amazing ride, all the way up to the astonishing climax.

The Outsiders

Ponyboy Curtis is a good-natured teen who loves books and movies. He's also an orphan whose two older brothers and street-smart friends guard and protect him. Together these ragtag, working-class boys, known as "greasers" to the locals, try to make their way in the world, without privilege, supervision, or education.

But it isn't easy. A bunch of wealthy kids, called the "Socs," target Ponyboy and his friends. They bully, mock, and ridicule the greasers. Until one night they push the greasers too far, and violence explodes. Now young Ponyboy has a decision to make: Does he run or does he stand his ground and try to find justice?

This realistic novel was written by a first-time teen author no older than the characters she depicted. The story remains as hard-hitting and important today as when it was published in 1967.

Suggested Graphic Novels

This is suggested reading not required for class, families should make their own independent choices when choosing what to allow their children to read. Parents, as first educators, know when their children are ready for certain themes, language or visuals so we encourage you to use parental tools like www.commonensemedia.org. The graphic novels are widely available at bookstores and you can find your copy at the local library by searching for titles at www.bccls.org today!

Bone: Out from Boneville by Jeff Smith (Grade 6)

Read the first book in this thrilling adventure! After being run out of Boneville, the three Bone cousins -- Fone Bone, Phoney Bone, and Smiley Bone -- are separated and lost in a vast, uncharted desert. One by one, they find their way into a deep, forested valley filled with wonderful and terrifying creatures. Eventually, the cousins are reunited at a farmstead run by tough Gran'ma Ben and her spirited granddaughter, Thorn. But little do the Bones know, there are dark forces conspiring against them and their adventures are only just beginning.

New Kid by Jerry Craft (Grade 6)

Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade.

As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?

Rollergirl by Victoria Jaimeson (Grade 7)

For most of her twelve years, Astrid has done everything with her best friend Nicole. But after Astrid falls in love with roller derby and signs up for derby camp, Nicole decides to go to dance camp instead. And so begins the most difficult summer of Astrid's life as she struggles to keep up with the older girls at camp, hang on to the friend she feels slipping away, and cautiously embark on a new friendship. As the end of summer nears and her first roller derby bout (and junior high!) draws closer, Astrid realizes that maybe she is strong enough to handle the bout, a lost friendship, and middle school... in short, strong enough to be a roller girl.

In this graphic novel debut that earned a Newbery Honor and five starred reviews, real-life derby girl Victoria Jamieson has created an inspiring coming-of-age story about friendship, perseverance, and girl power!

Bakuman (Book 1) by Tsugumi Ohba and Takeshi Obata (Grade 7)

Average student Moritaka Mashiro enjoys drawing for fun. When his classmate and aspiring writer Akito Takagi discovers his talent, he begs Moritaka to team up with him as a manga-creating duo. But what exactly does it take to make it in the manga-publishing world?

Moritaka is hesitant to seriously consider Akito's proposal because he knows how difficult reaching the professional level can be. Still, encouragement from persistent Akito and motivation from his crush push Moritaka to test his limits!

Hey Kiddo by Jarrett Krosoczka (Grade 8)

The powerful, unforgettable graphic memoir from Jarrett Krosoczka, about growing up with a drug-addicted mother, a missing father, and two unforgettably opinionated grandparents.

In kindergarten, Jarrett Krosoczka's teacher asks him to draw his family, with a mommy and a daddy. But Jarrett's family is much more complicated than that. His mom is an addict, in and out of rehab, and in and out of Jarrett's life. His father is a mystery -- Jarrett doesn't know where to find him, or even what his name is. Jarrett lives with his grandparents -- two very loud, very loving, very opinionated people who had thought they were through with raising children until Jarrett came along. Jarrett goes through his childhood trying to make his non-normal life as normal as possible, finding a way to express himself through drawing even as so little is being said to him about what's going on. Only as a teenager can Jarrett begin to piece together the truth of his family, reckoning with his mother and tracking down his father. Hey, Kiddo is a profoundly important memoir about growing up in a family grappling with addiction, and finding the art that helps you survive.

Naruto (Book 1) by Masashi Kishimoto (Grade 8)

Naruto is a young shinobi with an incorrigible knack for mischief. He's got a wild sense of humor, but Naruto is completely serious about his mission to be the world's greatest ninja!

Twelve years ago the Village Hidden in the Leaves was attacked by a fearsome threat. A nine-tailed fox spirit claimed the life of the village leader, the Hokage, and many others. Today, the village is at peace and a troublemaking kid named Naruto is struggling to graduate from Ninja Academy. His goal may be to become the next Hokage, but his true destiny will be much more complicated. The adventure begins now!

Suggested Audiobooks

Not all audiobooks are the same, and most are frankly a waste of time with too many audio distractions but these are great books with wonderful productions that keep the story intact and meaningful, a great choice for long summer drives!

Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson, Narrated by a Full Cast

The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trenton Lee Stewart, Narrated by Del Roy

Peter and the Starcatchers by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, Narrated by Dave Berry

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum, Narrated by Anne Hathaway

Suggested Films

We may never tire of watching Frozen, or the latest Marvel adventure but this summer, if it is raining at the beach house, or you have a long journey on a plane, make sure to expose your OLMC family to these family-friendly movie classics! Studies show that watching films can sharpen a child's literary skills, teach students story-telling, enrich their visual social cues and teach them to sit still for long stretches of concentration, not to mention be super entertaining!

Movies are always fun but not every film is made the same, unlike many of today's contemporary films made for children, these films, chosen by Mr. Guerra, offer a variety of storytelling techniques, not just visual stimulation, so while we hope these films are enjoyable, they may be challenging to some viewers who aren't used to older forms of storytelling.

We love all these films, but like suggested reading not required for class, families should make their own independent choices when choosing what to allow their children to watch. Parents, as first educators, know when their children are ready for certain themes, language or visuals so we encourage you to follow all MPAA ratings guidelines and use parental tools like www.commonsemmedia.org. The films are widely available on popular streaming services and you can find your copy at the local library by searching for titles at www.bccls.org today! Grab the popcorn, and enjoy!

The General (Not Rated)

(1926) One of the most revered comedies of the silent era, this film finds hapless Southern railroad engineer Johnny Gray (Buster Keaton) facing off against Union soldiers during the American Civil War. Keaton's spectacular version of the Civil War's Great Locomotive Chase reveals his mastery of crowds and action, along with perfectly integrated comedy. "Its climax is the most stunning visual event ever arranged for a film comedy." - Walter Kerr

Kiki's Delivery Service (G)

(1989) "Leaving home at 13 to find her way in the world, plucky witch Kiki heads for a nearby port town with her cat Jiji and sets up a broomstick delivery company that's an instant hit with the locals. So far, so sweet-but-predictable – if we were in Disney's world, that'd be the extent of Kiki's personal growth, and that'd be fine. But this is Miyazaki's world, where things go a little deeper. So, following a bout of illness, Kiki struggles with depression, loses her powers and must search for a new purpose in life. As a story about how hard it is to make your own way in the world, Kiki's Delivery Service is truthful and scalpel-sharp. That it manages all this while remaining consistently funny, optimistic and exciting – even for little ones – is a mark of Miyazaki's genius." – Tom Huddleston, *Time Out*

Creature from the Black Lagoon (G)

(1954) All of you horror fans get ready! Pre-Jaws underwater terror as intrepid scientists Richard Carlson, Julie Adams and Richard Dennings search the Amazon for clues to the Missing Link and his prehistoric past, but instead the eponymous 50s icon - variously described as a bipedal amphibian, a batrachian, or, simply, "The Gill Man" - equipped with both a nasty streak when his territory is invaded for "science" and a fascination with Ms. Adams.

Singin' in the Rain (G)

(1952) The switch to talkies proves a smooth one for Gene Kelly's silent swashbuckler Don Lockwood (Dignity! Always Dignity!) he declares, after flashbacks reveal his low beginnings as Western stuntman and third-rate hooper), but the nasal screech of his screen innamorata, Jean Hagen's Lina Lamont, calls for dubbing by Hollywood hopeful Debbie Reynolds, while sidekick Donald O'Connor knocks himself out (literally) to "Make 'Em Laugh" and Kelly and Cyd Charisse dance the Broadway ballet to end all Broadway ballets. Voted one of the 10 Best Films of All Time in a 2002 international critics' poll, Singin' in the Rain boasts more great song, dance, and joie de vivre (especially in the iconic title number) than just about any other musical.

John Lewis: Good Trouble (PG)

(2020) It's far more conventional than the life it honors, but John Lewis: Good Trouble remains a worthy tribute to an inspiring activist and public servant. A great way to get students interested in documentary film making and civic involvement.

Willow (PG)

(1988) Fans of fantasy books like "Wings of Fire" or kids who loved "How to Train Your Dragon" (a great movie!) will love entering the world of "Willow." Journey to the far corners of your imagination, to a land of myth and magic, where dream and reality live side by side ... to a place that never existed, a time that never was. It is a world where a young man named Willow lives out an adventure that explodes beyond the boundaries of his own hopes and fears.

Napoleon Dynamite (PG)

This one is not for the faint-of-heart and well, pretty strange, but that isn't an insult. Admittedly, much of the humor is very silly – feeding on sight gags and slapstick – and not all of it hits the mark. But there's a serious side too. The embarrassments of school and teenage life are up there to squirm at in shame, horror and laughter.

Daughters of the Dust (PG)

(1991) Julie Dash's groundbreaking Daughters of the Dust is set in the legendary Sea Islands off the South Carolina/Georgia coast in 1902. The film follows a Gullah family (descendants of West African slaves) on the eve of its migration to the North. Led by a group of women who carry with them ancient African traditions, the extended family readies itself to leave behind friends, loved ones and their insulated way of life. Can these women hold fast to their sacred religious beliefs and customs, or will they be swept into the race toward an era of science and industry? This richly costumed drama, structured in tableaux to reflect the art and icons of African tradition, testifies movingly to the secret

celebrations and packed-away sorrows of African-American women. These vital images were introduced to a new generation on a massive scale, when the film was heavily referenced in Beyoncé's visual album, *Lemonade*.

Little Women (PG)

(2019) With a stellar cast and a smart, sensitive retelling of its classic source material, Greta Gerwig's *Little Women* proves some stories truly are timeless. In the years after the Civil War, Jo March lives in New York and makes her living as a writer, while her sister Amy studies painting in Paris. Amy has a chance encounter with Theodore, a childhood crush who proposed to Jo but was ultimately rejected. Their oldest sibling, Meg, is married to a schoolteacher, while shy sister Beth develops a devastating illness that brings the family back together.

The Princess Bride (PG)

(1987) “*As... you... wish...*” Farmboy Westley turned the Dread Pirate Roberts must face the Cliffs of Insanity, Rodents of Unusual Size and torture in the Pit of Despair in order to rescue his true love Buttercup, finding help along the way from the vengeance-seeking Inigo Montoya and the giant Fezzik. This beloved adaptation of William Goldman's novel features an all-star ensemble cast.

Crooklyn (PG-13)

(1994) “Semi-comic look at middle-class family life in Brooklyn, New York, in the mid-'70s written by Spike Lee and his siblings Joie and Cinqué. As well as hanging out on the stoop and battling with four idle brothers, ten-year-old Troy (Zelda Harris) - from whose point of view the story is told - witnesses the tensions between her mother (Alfre Woodard) and father (Delroy Lindo). Lee's customary visual style and sense of street vitality are much in evidence in this fond, semi-autobiographical evocation of a largely vanished lifestyle.” – *Time Out*.

Clue (PG)

(1985) Jonathan Lynn's *Whodunnit?* comedy based on the popular board game. Seven guests enter Hill House and all become involved in a string of murders, including the Butler and the Maid. Secrets, lies, and evidence unravel as the pursuit to find the killer carries on through the night. A heads up, while rated PG this comedy masterpiece may be for a slightly more mature sleuth!

The Iron Giant (PG)

(1999) A modern animated classic. Crash-landing for a giant space robot sends 9-year-old Hogarth Hughes running, but when the behemoth machine follows him to his 1950's rural Maine home, an unlikely friendship begins to grow. That is until the government comes looking. Directorial debut for Oscar-winner Brad Bird (*The Incredibles*, *Ratatouille*)

The School of Rock (PG-13)

(2003) Overly enthusiastic guitarist Dewey Finn (Jack Black) gets thrown out of his bar band and finds himself in desperate need of work. Posing as a substitute music teacher at

an elite private elementary school, he exposes his students to the hard rock gods he idolizes and emulates -- much to the consternation of the uptight principal (Joan Cusack). As he gets his privileged and precocious charges in touch with their inner rock 'n' roll animals, he imagines redemption at a local Battle of the Bands.