

Summer Reading Recommendations

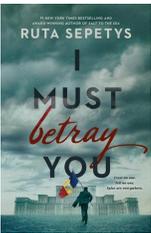
R.J. Grey Junior High Library - Grades 7-8



***The Last Cuentista* by Donna Barba Higuera (Science Fiction/Adventure)**

Relocating to a new planet after Earth is destroyed, 12-year-old Petra Peña's suspended animation fails during the 370-year journey, so when all the other children are mysteriously reprogrammed and the adults purged, Petra becomes the lone bringer of Earth's now forbidden stories and her grandmother's Mexican folklore to a changing humanity.

For fans of *The Lion of Mars* (Holm), *The Wild Robot* (Brown), or *The Giver* (Lowry).



***I Must Betray You* by Ruta Sepetys (Historical Fiction)**

Romania, 1989. Communist regimes are crumbling across Europe. Seventeen-year-old Cristian Florescu dreams of becoming a writer, but Romanians aren't free to dream; they are bound by rules and force. Amidst the tyrannical dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu in a country governed by isolation and fear, Cristian is blackmailed by the secret police to become an informer. He's left with only two choices: betray everyone and everything he loves—or use his position to creatively undermine the most notoriously evil dictator in Eastern Europe. He eagerly joins the revolution to fight for change when the time arrives. But what is the cost of freedom?

For fans of Alan Gatz, *Internment* (Ahmed), or *Girl in a Blue Coat* (Hesse).



***Amari and the Night Brothers* by B.B. Alston (Mystery/Fantasy)**

Amari Peters has never stopped believing her missing brother, Quinton, is alive. So when she finds a ticking briefcase in his closet, containing a nomination for a summer tryout at the Bureau of Supernatural Affairs, she's certain the secretive organization holds the key to locating Quinton—if only she can wrap her head around the idea of magicians, fairies, aliens, and other supernatural creatures all being real. Now she must compete for a spot against kids who've known about magic their whole lives. With an evil magician threatening the supernatural world, and her own classmates thinking she's an enemy, Amari has never felt more alone. But if she doesn't stick it out and pass the tryouts, she may never find out what happened to Quinton.

For fans of *Artemis Fowl* (Colfer), *Parker Inheritance* (Johnson) or *Akata Witch* (Okorafor)

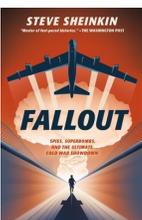


***King and the Dragonflies* by Kacen Callender (Realistic Fiction, LGBTQ)**

Twelve-year-old Kingston James is sure his brother Khalid has turned into a dragonfly. When Khalid unexpectedly passed away, he shed what was his first skin for another to live down by the bayou in their small Louisiana town. Khalid still visits in dreams, and King must keep these secrets to himself as he watches grief transform his family.

It would be easier if King could talk with his best friend, Sandy Sanders. But just days before he died, Khalid told King to end their friendship, after overhearing a secret about Sandy — that he thinks he might be gay. "You don't want anyone to think you're gay too, do you?" But when Sandy goes missing, sparking a town-wide search, and King finds his former best friend hiding in a tent in his backyard, he agrees to help Sandy escape from his abusive father, and the two begin an adventure as they build their own private paradise down by the bayou and among the dragonflies. As King's friendship with Sandy is reignited, he's forced to confront questions about himself and the reality of his brother's death.

For fans of *Too Bright to See* (Lukoff), *The Thing About Jellyfish* (Benjamin), *Melissa* (Gino)



***Fallout* by Steve Sheinkin (Nonfiction)**

As World War II comes to a close, the United States and the Soviet Union emerge as the two greatest world powers on extreme opposites of the political spectrum. After the United States showed its hand with the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, the Soviets refuse to be left behind. With communism sweeping the globe, the two nations begin a neck-and-neck competition to build even more destructive bombs and conquer the Space Race. In their battle for dominance, spy planes fly above, armed submarines swim deep below, and undercover agents meet in the dead of night.

For fans of *Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales*, *I Survived* series, or Alan Gatz.

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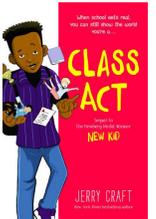


Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald (*Realistic Fiction*)

Caleb Springer is the up-and-coming star freshman quarterback on the high school football team, which isn't a surprise considering his dad, Sammy Springer, was an NFL superstar and is now the town celebrity. College scouts are already snooping around Caleb, and his future seems set.

But just as Caleb's glory days begin, his dad starts to change. He's forgetting things and getting angry at random times. Caleb is forced to confront a bleak possibility: The sport that gives him so much status and self-worth might be the cause of his dad's strange behavior. Will Caleb keep playing the sport of his dreams, even if he knows how dangerous it can be?

For fans of Mike Lupica, *Before the Ever After* (Woodson), or *Here to Stay* (Farizan)



Class Act by Jerry Craft (*Graphic, Realistic Fiction*)

Eighth grader Drew Ellis is no stranger to the saying "You have to work twice as hard to be just as good." But what if he works ten times as hard and still isn't afforded the same opportunities that his privileged classmates at the Riverdale Academy Day School take for granted? To make matters worse, Drew begins to feel as if his good friend Liam might be one of those privileged kids. He wants to pretend like everything is fine, but it's hard not to withdraw, and even their mutual friend Jordan doesn't know how to keep the group together.

As the pressures mount, will Drew find a way to bridge the divide so he and his friends can truly accept each other? And most important, will he finally be able to accept himself?

For fans of *New Kid* (Craft), *Ungifted* (Korman), or *Crush* (Chmakova).



Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise by Dan Gemeinhart (*Realistic Fiction*)

For five years Coyote and her dad, Rodeo, have lived on the road in an old school bus, criss-crossing the nation. It's also how long ago Coyote lost her mom and two sisters in a car crash. Coyote hasn't been home in all that time, but when she learns that the park in her old neighborhood is being demolished—a park where she, her mom, and her sisters buried a treasured memory box—she devises an elaborate plan to get her dad to drive 3,600 miles back to Washington state in four days...without him realizing it. Along the way, they'll pick up a strange crew of misfit travelers. Over the course of thousands of miles, Coyote will learn that going home can sometimes be the hardest journey of all...but that with friends by her side, she just might be able to turn her "once upon a time" into a "happily ever after."

For fans Kate DiCamillo, *Lucky List* (Lippincott), or *Same Sun Here* (House & Vaswani)



Graceling by Kristin Cashore and Gareth Hinds (*Graphic, Fantasy*)

Katsa is a Graceling, one of the rare people born with an extreme skill. As niece of the king, she lived a life of privilege until the day her ability to kill a man with her bare hands revealed itself during a royal banquet. Now she acts as her uncle's enforcer, traveling the kingdom and threatening those who dare oppose him.

But everything changes when she meets Po, a foreign prince Graced with combat skills who is searching for the truth about his grandfather's disappearance. When Katsa agrees to help him, she never expects to learn a new truth about her own Grace—or about a terrible secret that could destroy them all.

For Fans of *Heartless Prince* (Dragoon), *Throne of Glass* series (Maas), or *Serpent's Secret* (DasGupta).