

Summer 2020 ESMS Recommended Book List (7th Grade)

**This book list was curated by the 7th Grade Humanities teachers. These books are optional. We hope you enjoy reading over the summer!*



Genre	Title and Author:	Summary:
Historical Fiction ¹	<p><i>King George: What Was His Problem?: The Whole Hilarious Story of the American Revolution</i> by Steven Sheinkin (American Revolution)</p>	<p><i>What do the most famous traitor in history, hundreds of naked soldiers, and a salmon lunch have in common? They're all part of the amazing story of the American Revolution.</i></p> <p><i>Entire books have been written about the causes of the American Revolution. This isn't one of them.</i></p> <p><i>What it is, instead, is utterly interesting, anecdotes (John Hancock fixates on salmon), from the inside out (at the Battle of Eutaw Springs, hundreds of soldiers plunged into battle "naked as they were born") close-up narratives filled with little-known details, lots of quotes that capture the spirit and voices of the principals ("If need be, I will raise one thousand men, subsist them at my own expense, and march myself at their head for the relief of Boston" --George Washington), and action. It's the story of the birth of our nation, complete with soldiers, spies, salmon sandwiches, and real facts you can't help but want to tell to everyone you know.</i></p>
	<p><i>Sophia's War: A Tale of the Revolution</i> by Avi (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>In 1776, young Sophia Calderwood witnesses the execution of Nathan Hale in New York City, which is newly occupied by the British army. Sophia is horrified by the event and resolves to do all she can to help the American cause. Recruited as a spy, she becomes a maid in the home of General Clinton, the supreme commander of the</i></p>

¹ Almost all of the historical fiction recommendations come from a book called *Experiencing America's Story Through Fiction* by Hilary Susan Crew.

		<p><i>British forces in America. Through her work she becomes aware that someone in the American army might be switching sides, and she uncovers a plot that will grievously damage the Americans if it succeeds. But the identity of the would-be traitor is so shocking that no one believes her, and so Sophia decides to stop the treacherous plot herself, at great personal peril: She's young, she's a girl, and she's running out of time. And if she fails, she's facing an execution of her own.</i></p>
	<p><i>The Year of the Hangman by Gary Blackwood (Revolution and the New Nation)</i></p>	<p><i>In 1776, the rebellion of the American colonies against British rule was crushed. Now, in 1777-the year of the hangman-George Washington is awaiting execution, Benjamin Franklin's banned rebel newspaper, Liberty Tree, has gone underground, and young ne'er-do-well Creighton Brown, a fifteen-year-old Brit, has just arrived in the colonies. Having been shipped off against his will, with nothing but a distance for English authorities, Creighton befriends Franklin, and lands a job with his print shop. But the English general expects the spoiled yet loyal Creighton to spy on Franklin. As battles unfold and falsehoods are exposed, Creighton must decide where his loyalties lie...a choice that could determine the fate of a nation.</i></p>
	<p><i>Give Me Liberty by L.M. Elliot (Revolution and the New Nation)</i></p>	<p><i>Life is tough for thirteen-year-old Nathaniel Dunn, an indentured servant in colonial Virginia. Then in a twist of luck, he meets Basil, a kind schoolmaster, and an arrangement is struck lending Nathaniel's labor to a Williamsburg carriage maker. Basil introduces Nathaniel to music, books, and philosophies that open his mind to new attitudes about equality.</i></p> <p><i>The year is 1775, and as colonists voice their rage over England's taxation, Patrick Henry's words "give me liberty, or give me death" become the sounding call for action. Should Nathaniel and Basil join the fight? What is the meaning of "liberty" in a country reliant on indentured servants and slaves? Nathaniel</i></p>

		<p><i>must face the puzzling choices a dawning nation lays before him.</i></p>
	<p>Five 4ths of July by Pat Hughes (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>The American Revolution is underway, and fiery Jake Mallory wants freedom from tyranny – the tyranny of his strict father, that is. Jake doesn't care about fighting for liberty. To him, the pursuit of happiness is sailing the high seas, seeking adventure on a privateer. But his father insists that Jake remain at home on the Connecticut coast, tending the family's ferry and joining the local militia in case the town is attacked. Which, Jake knows, will never happen. He's destined to a life of boring chores, militia drills, and verbal sparring with Hannah, the insufferable indentured servant of his best friend Tim's family.</i></p> <p><i>But on July 4, 1779, Jake's world is turned upside down. The British are coming, and they mean to suppress the Patriot rebellion by any means necessary. The brutal Battle of New Haven sets off a series of horrific events that will shatter Jake's life. And only when he has lost his own freedom does he begin to understand what's at stake in this war.</i></p>
	<p>Soldier's Secret by: The Story of Deborah Sampson by Sheila Solomon Klass (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>A brief biography of the woman who disguised herself as a man and joined the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.</i></p>
	<p>Woods Runner by Gary Paulsen (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>Samuel, 13, spends his days in the forest, hunting for food for his family. He has grown up on the frontier of a British colony, America. Far from any town, or news of the war against the King that American patriots have begun near Boston.</i></p> <p><i>But the war comes to them. British soldiers and Iroquois attack. Samuel's parents are taken away, prisoners. Samuel follows, hiding, moving silently, determined to find a way to rescue them. Each day he confronts the enemy, and the tragedy and horror of this</i></p>

		<p><i>war. But he also discovers allies, men and women working secretly for the patriot cause. And he learns that he must go deep into enemy territory to find his parents: all the way to the British headquarters, New York City.</i></p>
	<p>Crogan's Loyalty by Chris Schweizer (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>"Schweizer's limber figures and quick jabs of slapstick goofing give this graphic novel a deceptively light veneer, even as life-and-death matters are unfolding. It's no easy feat to combine a high-energy historical adventure with a smart and nuanced look at the many shades of gray that tint notions of patriotism, loyalty, and family ties, but Schweizer does just that. Educators looking to add an energizing bit of spice to discussions about the American Revolution should take notice." - Booklist</i></p>
	<p>Come August, Come Freedom by Gigi Amateau (Revolution and Slavery)</p>	<p><i>In a time of post-Revolutionary fervor in Richmond, Virginia, an imposing twenty-four-year-old slave named Gabriel plotted a rebellion involving thousands of African- American freedom seekers armed with refashioned pitchforks and other implements of Gabriel's blacksmith trade. The revolt would be thwarted by a confluence of fierce weather and human betrayal, but Gabriel retained his dignity to the end. Interwoven with original documents, this poignant, illuminating novel gives a personal face to a remarkable moment in history. This edition includes extensive research notes on the story behind the plot.</i></p>
	<p>Steal Away Home and Soon be Free by Lois Ruby (Slavery)</p>	<p><i>When Dana uncovers a skeleton hidden in the wall of her home, she also uncovers a dark secret that stretches back years.</i></p> <p><i>When twelve-year-old Dana Shannon starts to strip away wallpaper in her family's old house, she's unprepared for the surprise that awaits her. A hidden room—containing a human skeleton! How did such a thing get there? And why was the tiny room sealed up?</i></p> <p><i>With the help of a diary found in the room, Dana learns her house was once a station on the Underground Railroad. The young woman</i></p>

		<p><i>whose remains Dana discovered was Lizbet Charles, a conductor and former slave. As the scene shifts between Dana's world and 1856, the story of the families that lived in the house unfolds. But as pieces of the puzzle begin to fall into place, one haunting question remains—why did Lizbet Charles die?</i></p>
	<p>The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: The Pox Party by M.T. Anderson (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>Young Octavian is being raised by a group of rational philosophers known only by numbers — but it is only after he opens a forbidden door that learns the hideous nature of their experiments, and his own chilling role them. Set in Revolutionary Boston, M. T. Anderson's mesmerizing novel takes place at a time when Patriots battled to win liberty while African slaves were entreated to risk their lives for a freedom they would never claim. The first of two parts, this deeply provocative novel reimagines past as an eerie place that has startling resonance for readers today.</i></p>
	<p>The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume II: The Kingdom on the Waves (Revolution and the New Nation)</p>	<p><i>Fearing a death sentence, Octavian and his tutor, Dr. Trefusis, escape through rising tides and pouring rain to find shelter in British-occupied Boston. Sundered from all he knows — the College of Lucidity, the rebel cause — Octavian hopes to find safe harbor. Instead, he is soon to learn of Lord Dunmore's proclamation offering freedom to slaves who join the counterrevolutionary forces.</i></p> <p><i>In Volume II of his unparalleled masterwork, M. T. Anderson recounts Octavian's experiences as the Revolutionary War explodes around him, thrusting him into intense battles and tantalizing him with elusive visions of liberty. Ultimately, this astonishing narrative escalates to a startling, deeply satisfying climax, while reexamining our national origins in a singularly provocative light.</i></p>
	<p>Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson (The New Nation)</p>	<p><i>During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lives above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But then the fever breaks out.</i></p>

		<p><i>Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path and turning Mattie's world upside down. At her feverish mother's insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather. But she soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere, and Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease.</i></p>
	<p>Jefferson's Sons: A Founding Father's Secret Children by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (The New Nation)</p>	<p><i>This story of Thomas Jefferson's children by one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, tells a darker piece of America's history from an often unseen perspective—that of three of Jefferson's slaves—including two of his own children. As each child grows up and tells his story, the contradiction between slavery and freedom becomes starker, calling into question the real meaning of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This poignant story sheds light on what life was like as one of Jefferson's invisible offspring.</i></p>
<p>Graphic Novels</p>	<p>American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang</p>	<p><i>Jin Wang starts at a new school where he's the only Chinese-American student. When a boy from Taiwan joins his class, Jin doesn't want to be associated with an FOB like him. Jin just wants to be an all-American boy, because he's in love with an all-American girl. Danny is an all-American boy: great at basketball, popular with the girls. But his obnoxious Chinese cousin Chin-Kee's annual visit is such a disaster that it ruins Danny's reputation at school, leaving him with no choice but to transfer somewhere he can start all over again. The Monkey King has lived for thousands of years and mastered the arts of kung fu and the heavenly disciplines. He's ready to join the ranks of the immortal gods in heaven. But there's no place in heaven for a monkey. Each of these characters cannot help himself alone, but how can they possibly help each other? They're going to have to find a way—if they want fix the disasters their lives have become.</i></p>

	<p>New Kid by Jerry Craft</p>	<p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>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?</i></p>
	<p>Nimona by Noelle Stevenson</p>	<p><i>Nemeses! Dragons! Science! Symbolism! All these and more await in this brilliantly subversive, sharply irreverent epic from Noelle Stevenson. Featuring an exclusive epilogue not seen in the web comic, along with bonus conceptual sketches and revised pages throughout, this gorgeous full-color graphic novel has been hailed by critics and fans alike as the arrival of a “superstar” talent (NPR.org).</i></p> <p><i>Nimona is an impulsive young shapeshifter with a knack for villainy. Lord Ballister Blackheart is a villain with a vendetta. As sidekick and supervillain, Nimona and Lord Blackheart are about to wreak some serious havoc. Their mission: prove to the kingdom that Sir Ambrosius Goldenloin and his buddies at the Institution of Law Enforcement and Heroics aren’t the heroes everyone thinks they are.</i></p> <p><i>But as small acts of mischief escalate into a vicious battle, Lord Blackheart realizes that Nimona’s powers are as murky and mysterious as her past. And her unpredictable wild side might be more dangerous than he is willing to admit.</i></p>

	<p>El Deafo by Cece Bell</p>	<p><i>Going to school and making new friends can be tough. But going to school and making new friends while wearing a bulky hearing aid strapped to your chest? That requires superpowers! 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.</i></p> <p><i>The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear—sometimes things she shouldn’t—but 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.” And more importantly, declare a place for herself in the world and find the friend she’s longed for.</i></p>
	<p>Dare to Disappoint by Ozge Samanci</p>	<p><i>Growing up on the Aegean Coast, Ozge loved the sea and imagined a life of adventure while her parents and society demanded predictability. Her dad expected Ozge, like her sister, to become an engineer. She tried to hear her own voice over his and the religious and militaristic tensions of Turkey and the conflicts between secularism and fundamentalism. Could she be a scuba diver like Jacques Cousteau? A stage actress? Would it be possible to please everyone including herself?</i></p> <p><i>In her unpredictable and funny graphic memoir, Ozge recounts her story using inventive collages, weaving together images of the sea, politics, science, and friendship.</i></p>
<p>Fiction</p>	<p>It Ain't So Awful, Falafel by Firoozeh Dumas</p>	<p><i>Zomorod (Cindy) Yousefzadeh is the new kid on the block . . . for the fourth time. California’s Newport Beach is her family’s latest perch, and she’s determined to shuck her brainy loner persona and start afresh with a new Brady Bunch name—Cindy. It’s the late 1970s, and fitting in becomes more difficult as</i></p>

		<p><i>Iran makes U.S. headlines with protests, revolution, and finally the taking of American hostages. Even puka shell necklaces, pool parties, and flying fish can't distract Cindy from the anti-Iran sentiments that creep way too close to home.</i></p>
	<p>Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Poultry Farmer by Kelly Jones</p>	<p><i>Twelve-year-old Sophie Brown feels like a fish out of water when she and her parents move from Los Angeles to the farm they've inherited from a great-uncle. But farm life gets more interesting when a cranky chicken appears and Sophie discovers the hen can move objects with the power of her little chicken brain: jam jars, the latch to her henhouse, the entire henhouse...</i></p> <p><i>And then more of her great-uncle's unusual chickens come home to roost. Determined, resourceful Sophie learns to care for her flock, earning money for chicken feed, collecting eggs. But when a respected local farmer tries to steal them, Sophie must find a way to keep them (and their superpowers) safe.</i></p>
	<p>One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams- Garcia</p>	<p><i>In One Crazy Summer, eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern. She's had to be, ever since their mother, Cecile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. But when the sisters arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with their mother, Cecile is nothing like they imagined.</i></p> <p><i>While the girls hope to go to Disneyland and meet Tinker Bell, their mother sends them to a day camp run by the Black Panthers. Unexpectedly, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern learn much about their family, their country, and themselves during one truly crazy summer.</i></p>

Anne of Green Gables by
L.M. Montgomery

Anne is described as bright and quick, eager to please, talkative, and extremely imaginative. She has a pale face with freckles and usually braids her red hair. When asked her name, Anne asks Marilla to call her Cordelia, which Marilla refuses; Anne then insists that if she is to be called Anne, it must be spelled with an e, as that spelling is "so much more distinguished." Marilla at first says the girl must return to the orphanage, but after a few days she decides to let her stay. Marilla feels that she could be a good influence on the girl and had also overheard that another disagreeable woman in town might take Anne in instead. As a child of imagination, Anne takes much joy in life and adapts quickly, thriving in the close-knit farming village. Her talkativeness initially drives the prim, duty-driven Marilla to distraction, although Matthew falls for her charm immediately. Anne says that they are "kindred spirits." The book recounts Anne's adventures in making a home: the country school where she quickly excels in her studies; her friendship with Diana Barry (her best or "bosom friend" as Anne fondly calls her); her budding literary ambitions; and her rivalry with classmate Gilbert Blythe, who teases her about her red hair. For that he earns her instant hatred, although he apologizes many times. As time passes, Anne realizes she no longer hates Gilbert but cannot bring herself to admit it. However, by the end of the book they become friends. The book also follows Anne's adventures in quiet, old-fashioned Avonlea. Episodes include her play time with friends (Diana, Jane Andrews and Ruby Gillis), her run-ins with the unpleasant Pye sisters (Gertie and Josie), and domestic mishaps such as dyeing her hair green (while intending to dye it black) or accidentally getting Diana drunk (by giving her what she thinks is raspberry cordial but is currant wine).

<p>Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix</p>	<p><i>In a future where the Population Police enforce the law limiting a family to only two children, Luke, an illegal third child, has lived all his twelve years in isolation and fear on his family's farm in this start to the Shadow Children series from Margaret Peterson Haddix.</i></p> <p><i>Luke has never been to school. He's never had a birthday party, or gone to a friend's house for an overnight. In fact, Luke has never had a friend.</i></p> <p><i>Luke is one of the shadow children, a third child forbidden by the Population Police. He's lived his entire life in hiding, and now, with a new housing development replacing the woods next to his family's farm, he is no longer even allowed to go outside.</i></p> <p><i>Then, one day Luke sees a girl's face in the window of a house where he knows two other children already live. Finally, he's met a shadow child like himself. Jen is willing to risk everything to come out of the shadows -- does Luke dare to become involved in her dangerous plan? Can he afford not to?</i></p>
<p>Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor</p>	<p><i>Set in Mississippi at the height of the Depression, this is the story of one family's struggle to maintain their integrity, pride, and independence in the face of racism and social injustice. And it is also Cassie's story—Cassie Logan, an independent girl who discovers over the course of an important year why having land of their own is so crucial to the Logan family, even as she learns to draw strength from her own sense of dignity and self-respect.</i></p>
<p>Holes by Louis Sachar</p>	<p><i>Stanley Yelnats 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 Yelnatses. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center,</i></p>

		<p><i>Camp Green Lake, where the boys build character by spending all day, every day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes.</i></p> <p><i>It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something. But what could be buried under a dried-up lake? Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment—and redemption.</i></p>
	<p>Little Women by Louisa May Alcott</p>	<p><i>Grown-up Meg, tomboyish Jo, timid Beth, and precocious Amy. The four March sisters couldn't be more different. But with their father away at war, and their mother working to support the family, they have to rely on one another. Whether they're putting on a play, forming a secret society, or celebrating Christmas, there's one thing they can't help wondering: Will Father return home safely?</i></p>
	<p>Matilda by Roald Dahl</p>	<p><i>Phizzwhizzing new cover look and branding for the World's NUMBER ONE Storyteller! Matilda Wormwood's father thinks she's a little scab. Matilda's mother spends all afternoon playing bingo. And Matilda's headmistress Miss Trunchbull? Well, she's the worst of all. She is a big bully, who thinks all her pupils are rotten and locks them in the dreaded Chokey. As for Matilda, she's an extraordinary little girl with a magical mind - and now she's had enough. So all these grown-ups had better watch out, because Matilda is going to teach them a lesson they'll never forget. "A true genius . . . Roald Dahl is my hero" - David Walliams Now you can listen to MATILDA and other Roald Dahl audiobooks read by some</i></p>

		<p><i>very famous voices, including Kate Winslet, David Walliams and Steven Fry - plus there are added squelchy soundeffects from Pinewood Studios! And look out for new Roald Dahl apps in the App store and Google Play- including the disgusting TWIT OR MISS! and HOUSE OF TWITS inspired by the revolting Twits.</i></p>
	<p>Ella Enchanted by Gail Carson Levine</p>	<p><i>At her birth, Ella of Frell receives a foolish fairy's gift—the “gift” of obedience. Ella must obey any order, whether it's to hop on one foot for a day and a half, or to chop off her own head! But strong-willed Ella does not accept her fate...</i></p> <p><i>Against a bold backdrop of princes, ogres, giants, wicked stepsisters, and fairy godmothers, Ella goes on a quest to break the curse forever.</i></p>
	<p>Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson</p>	<p><i>Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.</i></p>
	<p>Animal Farm by George Orwell</p>	<p><i>A farm is taken over by its overworked, mistreated animals. With flaming idealism and stirring slogans, they set out to create a paradise of progress, justice, and equality. Thus the stage is set for one of the most telling satiric fables ever penned—a razor-edged fairy tale for grown-ups that records the evolution from revolution against</i></p>

tyranny to a totalitarianism just as terrible.

When Animal Farm was first published, Stalinist Russia was seen as its target. Today it is devastatingly clear that wherever and whenever freedom is attacked, under whatever banner, the cutting clarity and savage comedy of George Orwell's masterpiece have a meaning and message still ferociously fresh.