



Summer Reads!



Dear Educator,

School will be out before we know it — and while summer is the perfect time for nature adventures, swimming pool days, sandcastles, and sleep away camp, it's also an ideal time for lots of reading!

Research consistently shows that when kids read over the summer, they can hone their comprehension skills, help beat summer academic slide, and even learn important social-emotional lessons.

Simon & Schuster, along with the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired, have created a free program with title suggestions, resources, and student activity handouts to encourage summer reading and exploration of genres across the middle grades.

Feel free to share this program with other teachers and families in your school. And please let us know your thoughts on the program by visiting ymiclassroom.com/summerreads. We look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



SIMON & SCHUSTER
Children's Publishing

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For questions, contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

Target Audience

Students in grades 4 to 6

Program Components

- This teacher's guide
- A reproducible book list
- Two reproducible student activities
- A standards alignment chart

Program Objectives

- To inspire summer reading
- Encourage students to explore available book options, expand their interests by trying new genres and themes, and have fun reading

How to Use This Program

Copy and distribute the handout and activities for students to use to explore and choose titles for their summer reading, giving directions as outlined below. You might select an activity that you think will work best for your class, or try them all to help students explore multiple genres and books.

Handout: Summer Reads

This two-page book list introduces students to 15 Simon & Schuster-published titles. The books are grouped by genre, and each title includes the author as well as a brief description. Distribute the handout and use the list to facilitate a discussion with students about the type of books they like and why. Students can use the list and your recommendations, along with the activity sheets, to select genres and books for their summer reading learning and fun.

Activity 1: Summer Reading, Game Style

With this activity, students can identify books that appeal to them. Required materials include dice, a game piece (a paper clip or coin work well here), and copies of the activity sheet and Summer Reads handout.

Ask students to name and describe genres of books they are familiar with based on books you've read as a class and books students have read independently. Provide the following fiction examples: realistic fiction (stories about life experiences), adventure, mystery, fantasy, graphic novels, etc.

Explain to students that sometimes we choose books from genres we like and go back to the same genres again and again because we know we enjoy them. When we do this, we can overlook other genres, authors, and themes that we might actually like if we gave them a try. Reading can open new worlds to us, and trying new genres is one way to explore.

To encourage students to explore new genres, let them know that they are going to play games. Distribute the activity sheet and review the instructions with the class. In Part 1, students will use dice and the game board to reveal the genre for one of their summer reading selections. Game on! Encourage students to play together and read aloud the book descriptions for their genre. Invite them to highlight or underline the names of any books on their Summer Reads handout that sound interesting to them.

In Part 2, students pair up with a friend to make summer reading suggestions. Each person chooses a genre for their partner to select from, and the pair reads descriptions to find books in the genre that sound compelling. Encourage students to write their selections in the tear-off section at the bottom of the handout, which they can give to their partner, with details on why they chose the selected book. Students might select more than one to give their partner options.

Activity 2: Decisions, Decisions, Decisions!

This handout features a flow chart to help students choose a genre for their summer reading pick. Direct students to answer the questions, following the chart as they go. When they arrive at a destination — the genre that appeals to them based on their answers — they can refer to the Summer Reads list to check out the offerings in that category to find a book.

Resources

- YMI program site: ymiclassroom.com/summerreads
- Simon & Schuster: simonandschuster.com/kids
- Simon & Schuster Teachers & Librarians: simonandschuster.net/grades-k-12
- Simon & Schuster Resources & Activities: simonandschuster.net/m/prek12-teachers-librarians/teaching-resources

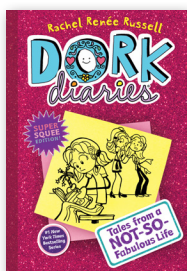


Summer Reads!



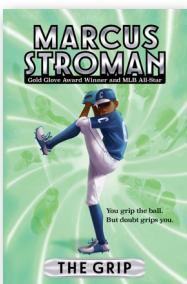
Not sure what book to pick up this summer? Need ideas for a great beach, pool, rainy day, or before-bed read? We've got you covered! Below is a list of titles in popular genres, plus a little about each of them. Get ready to get reading!

REALISTIC FICTION

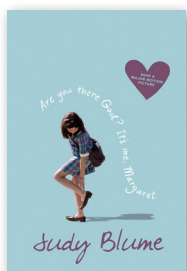


Dork Diaries by Rachel Renee Russell:

Follow Nikki Maxwell as she chronicles her life through text and art — her move to a new school, her battles with queen bee MacKenzie, and her zany adventures with her BFFs Chloe and Zoey by her side.

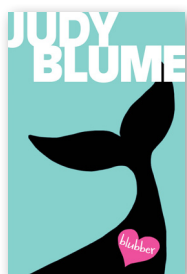


The Grip by Marcus Stroman: In this semi-autobiographical story (Stroman is an MLB pitcher), a young baseball player learns that perfect games only come with practice — and some strikeouts. But young Marcus is determined to make it to the top, despite every coach telling him he's not tall enough to become a "real" pitcher.

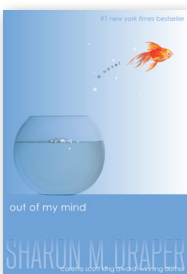


Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret by Judy Blume:

Margaret Simon, almost 12, moves from New York City to New Jersey and is anxious to fit in with her new friends. When they form a secret club to talk about private subjects like boys, bras, and getting their first periods, Margaret is happy to belong. But the girls can't believe that Margaret doesn't have a religion. What they don't know is Margaret has her own special relationship with God.



Blubber by Judy Blume: "Blubber is a good name for her," is what the note about Linda said. Jill didn't want to think about it and crumpled it up — but a boy grabbed the note and passed it around the classroom. Everyone in her fifth-grade class wanted to see how far they could go to tease Linda — and nobody, Jill least of all, expected things to end where they did.



Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper:

Eleven-year-old Melody is not like most people. She can't walk, talk, or write because she has cerebral palsy. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but no one knows it. Most people dismiss her as mentally challenged because she can't tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by her disability. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

FANTASY

Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger:

This first book in a series introduces Sophie, a 12-year-old who has never quite fit into her life. The reason? Sophie is a telepath and can read minds. She finds out she's also the key to a brand-new world — she just has to figure out how and why before the wrong person finds the answer first.



Wilderlore: The Accidental Apprentice by Amanda Foody:

Barclay Thorne, a mushroom farmer's apprentice, accidentally breaks his town's biggest rule: Never go into the forest, which supposedly has magical Beasts lurking in it. Barclay unwittingly forms a bond with a Beast and must set off on an adventure in the mysterious woods, making friends, entering a dangerous apprenticeship exam, and facing the legendary Beast of the Woods.



Dungeoneer Adventures by Ben Costa and James Parks:

For Coop Cooperson, the only human at a school for future explorers, fitting in can be tough, but he's determined to pass the test for his Junior Dungeoneer Badge. He and his friends must rely on each other to find the final gauntlet in the fungal jungle. As future dungeoneers, they know to expect the unexpected, but *nothing* could prepare them for the adventure in store.



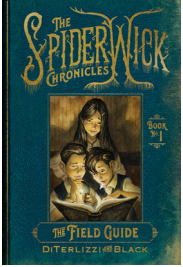
Middle School and Other Disasters: Worst Broommate Ever by Wanda Coven:

Witch-in-training Heidi Heckelbeck juggles magical mishaps and everyday mayhem when she starts middle school at Broomsfield Academy — the only school in the country that has secret classes for witches in training. Her first day takes a turn for the worst when Heidi discovers her roommate is her old rival. But when magic enters the mix, will the reluctant roommates go too far?

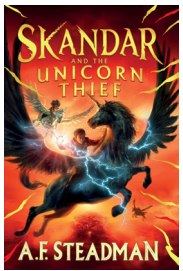




FANTASY

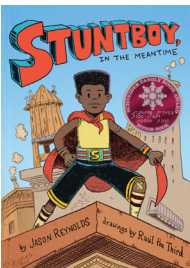


The Field Guide: Spiderwick Chronicles Book #1 by Tony DiTerlizzi and Holly Black: After finding a mysterious, handmade field guide in the attic of an old mansion, Jared, Simon, and Mallory, discover that there's a magical and maybe dangerous world existing parallel to their own — the world of faerie. The Grace children want to share their story, but the faeries will do everything possible to stop them.



Skandar and the Unicorn Thief by A.F. Steadman: Skandar Smith has always yearned to leave the Mainland and escape to the secretive Island, where wild unicorns roam free. He's spent years studying to become a unicorn rider. But on the day of the exam, his hopes are shattered...until Skandar receives a message that the Island is in peril and he must save it.

GRAPHIC NOVEL



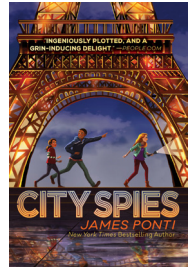
Stuntboy in the Meantime by Jason Reynolds: Portico Reeves is the greatest young superhero you've never heard of! His superpower is making sure all other superheroes — like his parents and two best friends — stay super. And safe. He does this secretly, so no one knows he's actually... Stuntboy!



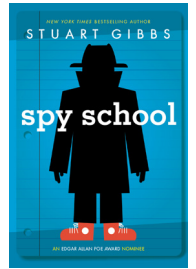
Barb and the Last Berzerker by Dan Abdo and Jason Patterson: Barb is a Berzerker, one of a group of warriors sworn to protect the land of Bailiwick from the monsters that plague it. But the warriors have met their match in the nefarious Witch Head, who uses a magical sword to take them captive. Only Barb is able to escape — now it's up to her to free her fellow warriors so they can stop Witch. Luckily, she's got her best friend, Porkchop the yeti, to help her.

ADVENTURE/MYSTERY

City Spies by James Ponti: In this first book, Sara Martinez is a hacker facing years in juvenile detention, until she's recruited to be a member of the City Spies, five kids from various parts of the world with unique skills that allow them to go places in the world of espionage where adults can't. Before she knows what she's doing, Sara is heading to Paris to hack an international youth summit... no one said saving the world was easy.



Spy School by Stuart Gibbs: When Ben Ripley is recruited to the CIA's Academy of Espionage, it's a dream come true. But Ben begins to wonder what he's doing there. Luckily, through a series of funny misadventures, Ben realizes he could actually become a halfway decent spy...if he can survive all the attempts being made on his life!

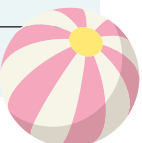


MY SUMMER READING NOTES

My summer reading goal:

Genre that I'd like to try:

Books I'd like to check out:

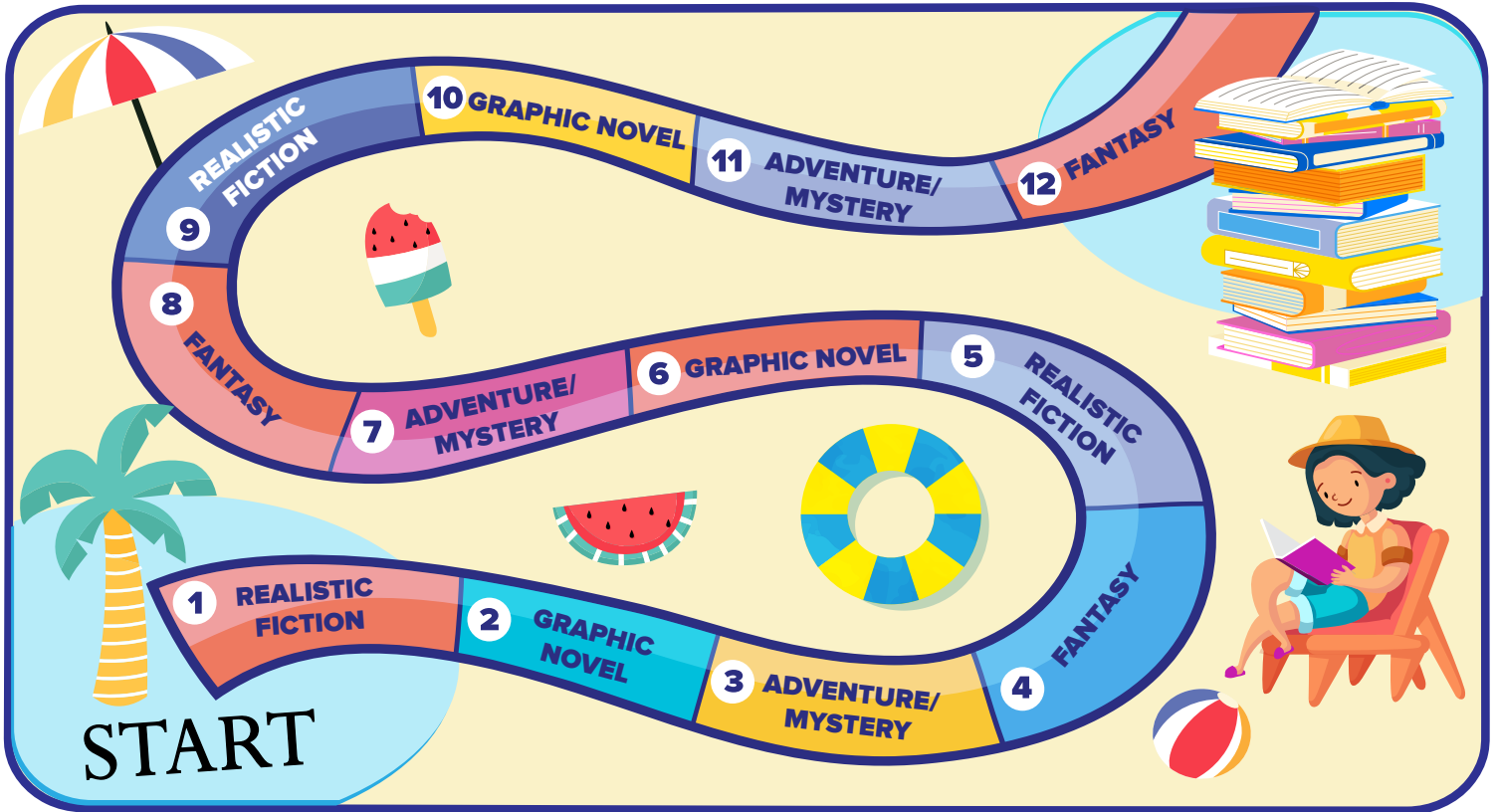




Summer Reading, Game Style

Want to add some fun to choosing your summer reading book?
Gamify it! Here are two ways to find a new book.

Part 1: Roll With It! Grab a playing piece (a paper clip or coin will do) and one or two dice. Then, roll the dice, and move your game piece along the path. When you land on a genre, check the Summer Reads list and pick a book from that genre. Bonus points: Read the book description aloud to a friend.



Part 2: Friend's Choice! Pair up with a friend. On the count of 3-2-1, each person picks a genre for the other one. Peruse the book list for your genre and choose a book that *your friend* might like. Then complete the information below. Cut along the dotted line and give your partner a personalized book recommendation.

To: _____ From: _____

Circle the genre: **REALISTIC FICTION** **MYSTERY/ADVENTURE** **FANTASY** **GRAPHIC NOVEL**

Recommended book (title and author) _____

Why I chose this book: _____

After you read the book, rate it!



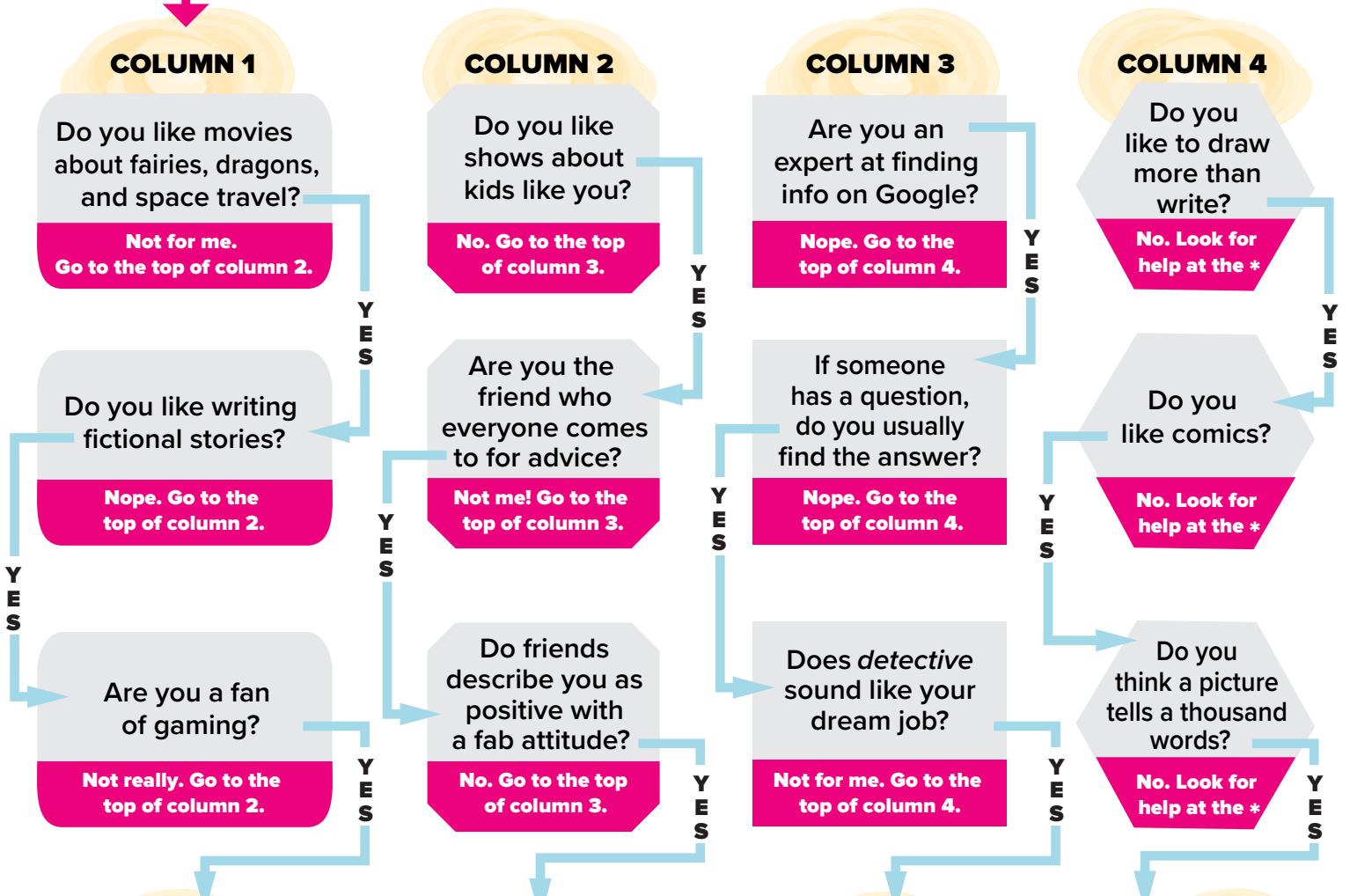


Decisions, Decisions, Decisions!

A big part of finding a book you'll like is figuring out what genre, or category, appeals to you. This fun questionnaire can help you out. Answer the questions on this chart, then follow the arrows and directions to arrive at the genre that's a fit for you.



START HERE



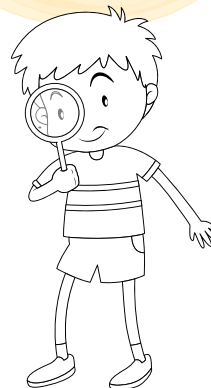
Fantasy



Realistic Fiction



MYSTERY/ADVENTURE



GRAPHIC NOVEL



*Ask a friend for a summer reading suggestion!



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