

PJA MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING 2019

Making My Voice Heard ~ Books about Taking Action

Descriptions are a compilation of information taken from various book review sites and personal recommendations. An asterisk indicates title is recommended for advanced readers due to mature content and/or challenging reading level.

FICTION

**The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier

You wouldn't think that Jerry Renault's refusal to sell chocolates during his school's fundraiser would create such a stir, but it does; it's as if the whole school comes apart at the seams. To some, Jerry is a hero, but to others, he becomes a scapegoat--a target for their pent-up hatred. And Jerry? He's just trying to stand up for what he believes.

Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan

This compelling story of immigration and assimilation is set against the labor-organizing era of the Great Depression when a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and her mother to flee to California and to settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers.

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing. When Jerome meets another ghost, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances, Jerome's journeys toward understanding the history that may have led to the events that ended his life.

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen

Carl Hiaasen plunges readers right into the middle of an ecological mystery filled with quirky characters and comic twists. The mystery itself is made up of endangered miniature owls, the Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House scheduled to be built over their burrows, and the owls' unlikely allies--three middle school kids determined to beat the system.

Iqbal by Francesco D'Adamo

Thirteen-year-old Iqbal Masih was murdered in his Pakistani village in April 1995, a few months after he had received an international prize and traveled to Sweden and the United States, speaking about his six years as a bonded child in Lahore carpet factories. The murderers--perhaps part of the "Carpet Mafia"--have never been caught. Translated from the Italian, D'Adamo retells the boy's story through the eyes of a fictional coworker.

**Internment* by Samira Ahmed

Taken from their home without warning Layla Amin and her parents are relocated to a Muslim Internment Camp just a few miles down the dusty road from the infamous site of Manzanar. Inside the camp Layla rebels against the iron fisted authority of the camp and develops friendships with other like-minded young people. These friends, Layla's Jewish boyfriend (who is outside of the camp), and an apparently sympathetic camp guard are inspired by the story of the White Rose Society to rise up and resist.

**The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair

In this deeply moving story, Sinclair exposed the brutal conditions in the Chicago stockyards at the turn of the nineteenth century and brought into sharp moral focus the appalling odds against which immigrants and other working people struggled for their share of the American dream. Recognized for bringing about change in the meat-packing industry, *The Jungle* stands as a classic of twentieth-century American literature and social protest.

* *Moxie* by Jennifer Matheiu

Vivian Carter's mom was a Riot Grrrl in the 1990s, but now she and Viv live a pretty quiet life in a small Texas town. When Viv witnesses a series of sexist incidents at her high school, she takes a page from her mom's past and makes a feminist zine that she distributes anonymously to her classmates. Viv is just blowing off steam, but before she knows it she's started a revolution.

White Rose by Kip Wilson

Disillusioned by the propaganda of Nazi Germany, Sophie Scholl, her brother, and his fellow soldiers formed the White Rose, a group that wrote and distributed anonymous letters criticizing the Nazi regime and calling for action from their fellow German citizens. This debut novel recounts the lives of Sophie and her friends and highlights their brave stand against fascism in Nazi Germany.

Wishtree by Katherine Applegate

A ten year old Muslim girl and her family move into a suburban house only to find the neighbors less than welcoming. Using a wise oak tree as the narrator, joined by a marvelous cast of animals and humans, *Wishtree* is a magical fable about the pleasures and difficulties of living in harmony, and what can and should be done in the face of racism and hatred.

NON-FICTION

* *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcolm X and Alex Haley

Malcolm X's memoir describes with blistering honesty his transformation from a bitter, self-destructive petty criminal into an articulate (and very controversial) political activist. At the core of this challenging and lengthy book is Malcolm X's emphasis on self-respect and self-help for African Americans.

Beyond Courage by Doreen Rappaport

In a stunning work of nonfiction for young people, award-winning author Doreen Rappaport presents 21 true stories of defiance and heroism in Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II. Rappaport took six years to research and write this book, including conducting extensive interviews with some of the survivors whose stories she shares in this volume.

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice by Phillip Hoose

Nine months before Rosa Parks' history-making protest on a city bus, Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old Montgomery, Alabama, high-school student, was arrested and jailed for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger. Hoose draws from numerous personal interviews with Colvin in this exceptional title that is part historical account, part memoir.

Dear Miss Breed: True Stories of the Japanese American Incarceration During World War II and a Librarian Who Made a Difference by Joanne Oppenheim

In the early 1940's, Clara Breed was the children's librarian at the San Diego Public Library. But she was also friend to dozens of Japanese American children and teens when war broke out in December of 1941. The story of what happened to these American citizens is movingly told through letters that her young friends wrote to Miss Breed during their internment. This remarkable librarian and humanitarian served as a lifeline to these imprisoned young people and was brave enough to speak out against a shameful chapter in American history.

Just Mercy (Adapted for Young Adults): A True Story of the Fight for Justice by Bryan Stevenson

Acclaimed lawyer and social justice advocate Bryan Stevenson offers a glimpse into the lives of the wrongfully imprisoned and his efforts to fight for their freedom. Stevenson's story is one of working to protect basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society--the poor, the wrongly convicted, and those whose lives have been marked by discrimination and marginalization.

* *Lakota Woman* by Mary Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes

Mary Brave Bird grew up fatherless in a one-room cabin, without running water or electricity, on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Rebelling against certain aspects of reservation life, she joined the new movement of tribal pride sweeping Native American communities in the sixties and seventies. A unique account of a way of life unknown to most Americans, the author pulls readers in with her honest portrayal of her experiences.

March: Book One and *March: Book Two* and *March: Book Three* by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin (must read both books)

Congressman John Lewis is an American icon, one of the key figures of the civil rights movement. His commitment to justice and nonviolence has taken him from an Alabama sharecropper's farm to the halls of Congress. *March* is a vivid first-hand account, told in a graphic novel format, of Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights. Books One & Two span John Lewis' youth and early political career.

#NeverAgain: A New Generation Draws the Line by David Hogg

On February 14, 2018, seventeen-year-old David Hogg and his fourteen-year-old sister, Lauren, went to school at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, like any normal Wednesday. By the next morning, following the Parkland shooting, they had joined the leadership of a movement to end school shootings in America. With alternating statements between the two siblings describing their journeys to activism, this book is a manifesto for the movement that has already changed America--with voices of a new generation that are speaking truth to power, and are determined to succeed where their elders have failed.

We Rise by Xiuhtezcatl Martinez

Beginning with the empowering story of sixteen-year-old climate activist Xiuhtezcatl Martinez and his group the Earth Guardians, this book explores many aspects of effective activism and provides step-by-step information on how to start and join solution-oriented movements. With conversations between Xiuhtezcatl and well-known activists, revolutionaries, and celebrities, practical advice for living a more sustainable lifestyle, and ideas and tools for building resilient communities, this book is an action guide for how to face the biggest problems of today.

We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Adichie offers readers a unique definition of feminism for the twenty-first century, one rooted in inclusion and awareness. Drawing extensively on her own experiences and her deep understanding of the often-masked realities of sexual politics, here is one remarkable author's exploration of what it means to be a woman now—and an of-the-moment rallying cry for why we should all be feminists. Published in 2014, this highly acclaimed, provocative New York Times bestseller is adapted from the much-admired 2012 TEDx talk of the same name.

FILMS

13th (Not Rated)

Filmmaker Ava DuVernay explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, focusing on the fact that the nation's prisons are disproportionately filled with African-Americans.

42 (PG-13)

The life story of Jackie Robinson and his history-making signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers under the guidance of team executive Branch Rickey.

Blackfish (PG-13)

Capitalizing on the power of film to bring attention to controversial issues, this documentary follows the captivity of killer whales and its dangers for both humans and whales.

The Blind Side (PG-13)

The story of Michael Oher, a homeless and traumatized boy who became an All American football player and first round NFL draft pick with the help of a caring woman and her family.

Freedom Writers (PG-13)

A young teacher inspires her class of at-risk students to learn tolerance, apply themselves, and pursue education beyond high school.

**Gandhi* (PG)

Biography of Mohandas Gandhi, the lawyer who became the famed leader of the Indian revolts against the British rule through his philosophy of non-violent protest.

Good Night, Good Luck (PG)

Based on the true efforts of CBS Reporter Edward R. Murrow and his producer Fred W. Friendly who took a stand against controversial senator Joseph McCarthy in the 1950's.

The Hate U Give (PG-13)

Starr Carter, a black teenager well-versed in code-switching between her black community and the prep school her parents send her to, is driven to action after witnessing the death of her friend during a traffic stop.

He Named Me Malala

A look at the events leading up to the Taliban's attack on Pakistani schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai for speaking out on girls' education followed by the aftermath, including her speech to the United Nations.

On the Basis of Sex (PG-13)

A young Ruth Bader Ginsburg brings a groundbreaking case to the U.S. Court of Appeals that overturns a century of gender discrimination.

Paper Clips (G)

This documentary focuses on the children of Whitwell, Tennessee, who as part of their study of the Holocaust tried to collect 6 million paper clips representing the 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis. Their efforts ultimately educate, inspire, and unite the community.

Rachel Carson: American Experience (not rated)

A clear, thoughtful and awakening representation of the shy but brilliant woman who wrote the most controversial book of her time about environmental impact of chemicals and pesticides.

RBG (PG)

At the age of 85, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has developed a lengthy legal legacy while becoming an unexpected pop culture icon. Explore her unique and unknown personal journey of her rise to the nation's highest court.

Selma (PG-13)

A chronicle of Martin Luther King's campaign to secure equal voting rights via an epic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in 1965.

Sophie Scholl: The Final Days (not rated)

A dramatization of the final days of Sophie Scholl, one of the most famous members of the German World War II anti-Nazi resistance movement, The White Rose.

**The Times of Harvey Milk* (not rated)

A documentary of the successful career and assassination of San Francisco's first elected gay councilor.