

Thurston Middle School Summer Reading 2020

6th grade: *Refuge* by Alan Gratz

7th grade: Choose one book in verse.

What's a book in verse?

A book in verse is a story written in poems rather than the typical book formatting. Most books are written in prose (like this paragraph). Verse is a literary term for poetry in general. Therefore, a book in verse tells its story through poems. It will still have characters, a plot, a conflict, and all the other things you expect from a book: it will just be told in poetry.

Sometimes the poems will rhyme. Often they won't. You'll find yourself turning the pages of these books quickly because there's less text on each page. You'll probably even forget that you're reading poetry every once in a while. However, the poetic form does allow authors to craft particularly meaningful moments. Don't be afraid to slow down if you read something really powerful or heartfelt.

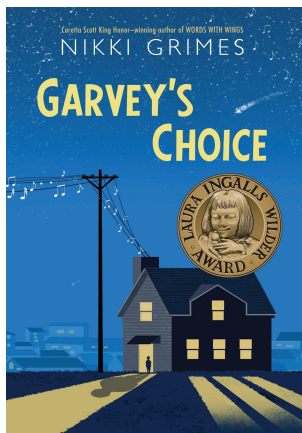


Booked by Kwame Alexander

Nick would love to think about nothing but soccer, hanging out with his best friend Coby, and maybe the girl he likes. He even dreams that his word-obsessed dad would stop assigning him extra homework! But when he injures himself, loses Coby to another team, and faces some big changes in his family, Nick will need to figure out how books might help him survive his tough year.

“it’s like a bombshell / drops / right in the center / of your heart / and it splatters / all across your life.”

Perfect for athletes and fans of clever word play!

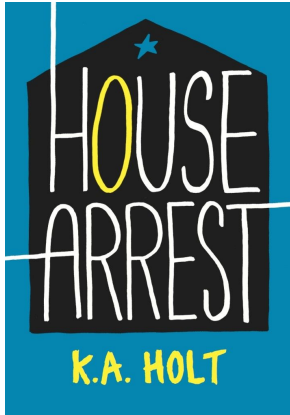


Garvey's Choice by Nikki Grimes

Garvey's dad would like him to play sports. Unfortunately, as much as he wants to make his father proud, sports have never made Garvey happy. Frustrated, he tries to figure out who he truly is, and whether that version of himself will ever be good enough for his dad.

“Mom’s got a talent / for origami, but she / can’t fold me into / the jock Dad wants me to be.”

Recommended for lovers of music and heartfelt family stories!

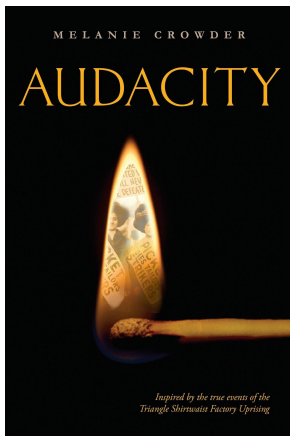


House Arrest
by K.A. Holt

Timothy is under arrest in his own home, punished for stealing \$1,445 and 32 cents. Timothy didn't buy video games or sneakers: he used the stolen credit card to pay for one month of his sickly baby brother Levi's medication. Forced to keep a court-ordered journal, twelve-year-old Timothy must figure out how to protect his mom and Levi, and if it's worth breaking the rules for the ones you love.

"What good is it to be a teenager / if no one will listen to anything you say?"

If you've ever felt like it's you against the world, read this.

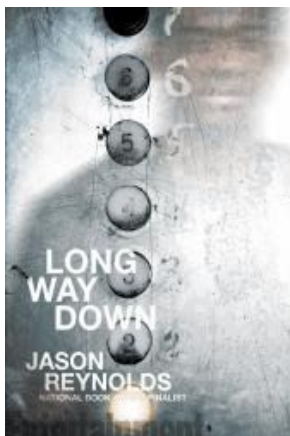


Audacity
by Melanie Crowder

It's 1903 and Clara knows she's capable of more than just "women's work." When violent anti-Semitism forces her Jewish family to flee to America, Clara sees opportunity in this new world. Unfortunately, her entire family depends on her salary, and the only jobs she finds are dangerously unfair to the women and girls who work there. Will Clara risk it all and survive the fight for her rights?

"In this battle I never intended to join / I have officially / taken a side"

A (nearly) nonfiction book for justice seekers everywhere!



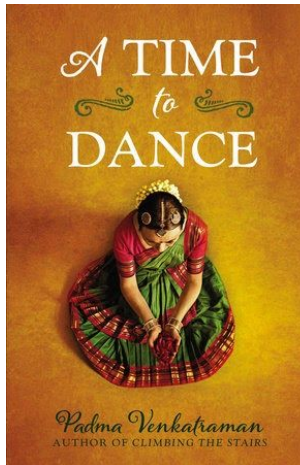
Long Way Down
by Jason Reynolds

When Will's older brother Shawn is shot in the streets of his city, Will knows he must take revenge for his brother's death. Those are the rules. He grabs a gun, steps on the elevator, and suddenly faces a new challenge: ghosts from his past, killed by this cycle of violence, question if Will can really follow through with his plan.

"ANOTHER THING ABOUT THE RULES / They weren't meant to be broken. / They were meant for the broken / to follow"

This intense read might break your heart *and* make you think!

A Time to Dance



by **Padma Venkatraman**

Veda's love is Bharatanatyam dance, and she's good at it too. That is, until a van accident leaves her without a leg. Suddenly, her rivals pity her, her friends don't know how to talk to her, and her greatest joy in life seems impossible. Veda won't give up though. She will dance again.

"I want to tell the nurses no scale can measure / the pain
of my dreams / dancing / beyond reach.

This book's great for anyone who loves an underdog or knows what it's like to pour your whole life into your passion!



Brown Girl Dreaming
by **Jacqueline Woodson**

The author tells the story of her own childhood in this beautiful memoir in verse. Woodson was born in the heart of the civil rights movement, and she grows up in the shadow of icons like Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Her struggles with family and poverty are gripping, but Woodson's shimmering poetry is what makes this book so special. Don't be afraid to ask questions as you read! Some historical topics, like lead paint poisoning and civil rights leaders, could interest you to learn more beyond the page.

"But on paper, things can live forever. / On paper,
a butterfly / never dies."

History buffs and creative spirits: this one's for you!

8th grade: *Nowhere Boy* by Katherine Marsh