Summer Reading Suggestions!

**Devil in the White City** (N-1170L): Erik Larson—author of #1 bestseller In the Garden of Beasts—intertwines the true tale of the 1893 World's Fair and the cunning serial killer who used the fair to lure his victims to their death. Combining meticulous research with nail-biting storytelling, Erik Larson has crafted a narrative with all the wonder of newly discovered history and the thrills of the best fiction.

**The Bell Jar** (R-1140L): The Bell Jar chronicles the crack-up of Esther Greenwood: brilliant, beautiful, enormously talented, and successful, but slowly going under -- maybe for the last time. Sylvia Plath masterfully draws the reader into Esther's breakdown with such intensity that Esther's insanity becomes completely real and even rational, as probable and accessible an experience as going to the movies. Such deep penetration into the dark and harrowing corners of the psyche is an extraordinary accomplishment and has made The Bell Jar a haunting American classic.

**A Thousand Splendid Suns** (R-830L): Born a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women brought jarringly together by war, by loss and by fate. As they endure the ever escalating dangers around them-in their home as well as in the streets of Kabul-they come to form a bond that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other, and that will ultimately alter the course not just of their own lives but of the next generation.

**Lord of the Rings** (F\*-860L): When Bilbo reached his eleventy-first birthday he disappeared, bequeathing to his young cousin Frodo the Ruling Ring and a perilous quest: to journey across Middle-earth, deep into the shadow of the Dark Lord, and destroy the Ring by casting it into the Cracks of Doom. The Lord of the Rings tells of the great quest undertaken by Frodo and the Fellowship of the Ring: Gandalf the Wizard; the hobbits Merry, Pippin, and Sam; Gimli the Dwarf; Legolas the Elf; Boromir of Gondor; and a tall, mysterious stranger called Strider.

**The Kite Runner** (R-840L): The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. It is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

**The Secret Life of Bees** (R-840L): When Lily’s fierce-hearted black “stand-in mother,” Rosaleen, insults three of the town’s most vicious racists, Lily decides they should both escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother’s past. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters who introduce Lily to a mesmerizing world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna who presides over their household.

**Laughing at My Nightmare** (N-1110L): With acerbic wit and a hilarious voice, Shane Burcaw's *Laughing at My Nightmare* describes the challenges he faces as a twenty-one-year-old with spinal muscular atrophy. From awkward handshakes to having a girlfriend and everything in between, Shane handles his situation with humor and a "you-only-live-once" perspective on life. While he does talk about everyday issues that are relatable to teens, he also offers an eye-opening perspective on what it is like to have a life threatening disease.

**Cinder** (F/Sci\*-790L): Cinder, a gifted mechanic, is a cyborg. She's a second-class citizen with a mysterious past, reviled by her stepmother and blamed for her stepsister's illness. But when her life becomes intertwined with the handsome Prince Kai's, she suddenly finds herself at the center of an intergalactic struggle, and a forbidden attraction. Caught between duty and freedom, loyalty and betrayal, she must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect her world's future.

**We Were Liars** (R-600L): A beautiful and distinguished family. A private island. A brilliant, damaged girl; a passionate, political boy. A group of four friends—the Liars—whose friendship turns destructive. A revolution. An accident. A secret. Lies upon lies. True love. The truth.

**All the Light We Cannot See** (H): From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, the beautiful, stunningly ambitious instant *New York Times* bestseller about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

**It’s Kind of a Funny Story** (R-700L): Ned Vizzini, who himself spent time in a psychiatric hospital, has created a remarkably moving tale about the sometimes unexpected road to happiness. For a novel about depression, it's definitely a funny story.

**Looking for Alaska** (R-930L): Before. Miles “Pudge” Halter is done with his safe life at home. His whole life has been one big non-event, and his obsession with famous last words has only made him crave “the Great Perhaps” even more (Francois Rabelais, poet). He heads off to the sometimes crazy and anything-but-boring world of Culver Creek Boarding School, and his life becomes the opposite of safe. Because down the hall is Alaska Young. The gorgeous, clever, funny, sexy, self-destructive, screwed up, and utterly fascinating Alaska Young. She is an event unto herself. She pulls Pudge into her world, launches him into the Great Perhaps, and steals his heart. Then. . . .  
After. Nothing is ever the same.

**Everything I Never Told You** (R-870L): “Lydia is dead. But they don’t know this yet.” So begins this exquisite novel about a Chinese American family living in 1970s small-town Ohio. Lydia is the favorite child of Marilyn and James Lee, and her parents are determined that she will fulfill the dreams they were unable to pursue. But when Lydia’s body is found in the local lake, the delicate balancing act that has been keeping the Lee family together is destroyed, tumbling them into chaos.

**The Night Circus** (F-950L): The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. Within the black-and-white striped canvas tents is an utterly unique experience full of breathtaking amazements. It is called *Le Cirque des Rêves*, and it is only open at night. But behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway: a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. Unbeknownst to them both, this is a game in which only one can be left standing. Despite the high stakes, Celia and Marco soon tumble headfirst into love, setting off a domino effect of dangerous consequences, and leaving the lives of everyone, from the performers to the patrons, hanging in the balance.

**All the Bright Places** (R-830L): When Finch and Violet meet on the ledge of the bell tower at school, it’s unclear who saves whom. And when they pair up on a project to discover the “natural wonders” of their state, both Finch and Violet make more important discoveries: It’s only with Violet that Finch can be himself—a weird, funny, live-out-loud guy who’s not such a freak after all. And it’s only with Finch that Violet can forget to count away the days and start living them. But as Violet’s world grows, Finch’s begins to shrink.

**The Help** (H-730L): In pitch-perfect voices, Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women—mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends—view one another. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humor, and hope,*The Help* is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don’t.

**The Program** (D\*-660L): Sloane knows better than to cry in front of anyone. With suicide now an international epidemic, one outburst could land her in The Program, the only proven course of treatment. Sloane’s parents have already lost one child; Sloane knows they’ll do anything to keep her alive. She also knows that everyone who’s been through The Program returns as a blank slate. Because their depression is gone—but so are their memories.

**Red Queen** (F\*-740L): Mare Barrow's world is divided by blood—those with common, Red blood serve the Silver- blooded elite, who are gifted with superhuman abilities. Mare is a Red, scraping by as a thief in a poor, rural village, until a twist of fate throws her in front of the Silver court. Before the king, princes, and all the nobles, she discovers she has an ability of her own.

**Vanishing Girls** (R-890L): Dara and Nick used to be inseparable, but that was before the accident that left Dara's beautiful face scarred and the two sisters totally estranged. When Dara vanishes on her birthday, Nick thinks Dara is just playing around. But another girl, nine-year-old Madeline Snow, has vanished, too, and Nick becomes increasingly convinced that the two disappearances are linked. Now Nick has to find her sister, before it's too late.

**The Red Tent** (H-1010L): Her name is Dinah. In the Bible, her life is only hinted at in a brief and violent detour within the more familiar chapters of the Book of Genesis that tell of her father, Jacob, and his twelve sons. Told in Dinah's voice, Anita Diamant imagines the traditions and turmoils of ancient womanhood--the world of the red tent. It begins with the story of the mothers--Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah--the four wives of Jacob. They love Dinah and give her gifts that sustain her through childhood, a calling to midwifery, and a new home in a foreign land. Dinah's story reaches out from a remarkable period of early history and creates an intimate connection with the past.

**Uglies** (D\*-770L): Tally Youngblood lives in a futuristic society that acculturates its citizens to believe that they are ugly until age 16 when they'll undergo an operation that will change them into pleasure-seeking "pretties." Anticipating this happy transformation, Tally meets Shay, another female ugly, who shares her enjoyment of hoverboarding and risky pranks. But Shay also disdains the false values and programmed conformity of the society and urges Tally to defect with her to the Smoke, a distant settlement of simple-living conscientious objectors. Tally declines, yet when Shay is found missing by the authorities, Tally is coerced by the cruel Dr. Cable to find her and her compatriots–or remain forever "ugly." Tally's adventuresome spirit helps her locate Shay and the Smoke. It also attracts the eye of David, the aptly named youthful rebel leader to whose attentions Tally warms. However, she knows she is living a lie, for she is a spy who wears an eye-activated locator pendant that threatens to blow the rebels' cover.

**Divergent** (D\*-700L): One choice can transform you. Beatrice Prior's society is divided into five factions—Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent). Beatrice must choose between staying with her Abnegation family and transferring factions. Her choice will shock her community and herself. But the newly christened Tris also has a secret, one she's determined to keep hidden, because in this world, what makes you different makes you dangerous

**Feed** (D-770L): For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon - a chance to party during spring break and play with some stupid low-grav at the Ricochet Lounge. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its omnipresent ability to categorize human thoughts and desires.

**Life as We Knew It** (D\*-770L): High school sophomore Miranda’s disbelief turns to fear in a split second when an asteroid knocks the moon closer to Earth, like "one marble hits another." The result is catastrophic. How can her family prepare for the future when worldwide tsunamis are wiping out the coasts, earthquakes are rocking the continents, and volcanic ash is blocking out the sun? As August turns dark and wintery in northeastern Pennsylvania, Miranda, her two brothers, and their mother retreat to the unexpected safe haven of their sunroom, where they subsist on stockpiled food and limited water in the warmth of a wood-burning stove.

**Code Name Verity** (H-1020L): Oct. 11th, 1943-A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it's barely begun. When "Verity" is arrested by the Gestapo, she's sure she doesn't stand a chance. As a secret agent captured in enemy territory, she's living a spy's worst nightmare. Her Nazi interrogators give her a simple choice: reveal her mission or face a grisly execution. As she intricately weaves her confession, Verity uncovers her past, how she became friends with the pilot Maddie, and why she left Maddie in the wrecked fuselage of their plane. On each new scrap of paper, Verity battles for her life, confronting her views on courage, failure and her desperate hope to make it home. But will trading her secrets be enough to save her from the enemy?

**The Declaration** (D\*-930L): It's the year 2140 and Anna shouldn't be alive. Nor should any of the children she lives with at Grange Hall. The facility is full of kids like her, kids whose parents chose to recklessly abuse Mother Nature and have children despite a law forbidding them from doing so as long as they took longevity drugs. To pay back her parents' debt to Mother Nature, Anna will have to work for the rest of her life. But then Peter appears at the hall, and he tells a very different story about the world outside of the Grange. Peter begs Anna to escape Grange Hall, and to claim a life for herself outside its bleak walls. But even if they get out, they still have to make their way to London, to Anna's parents, and to an underground movement that's determined to bring back children and rid the world of longevity drugs.

**The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian** (R-600L): Bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

**The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks** (N-1140L): Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and more. Henrietta's cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and her family can't afford health insurance. This phenomenal New York Times bestseller tells a riveting story of the collision between ethics, race, and medicine; of scientific discovery and faith healing; and of a daughter consumed with questions about the mother she never knew.

**Daughter of Smoke and Bone** (F\*-850L): Around the world, black handprints are appearing on doorways, scorched there by winged strangers who have crept through a slit in the sky. In a dark and dusty shop, a devil's supply of human teeth grown dangerously low. And in the tangled lanes of Prague, a young art student is about to be caught up in a brutal otherwordly war. Meet Karou. She fills her sketchbooks with monsters that may or may not be real; she's prone to disappearing on mysterious "errands"; she speaks many languages--not all of them human; and her bright blue hair actually grows out of her head that color. Who is she? That is the question that haunts her, and she's about to find out. When one of the strangers--beautiful, haunted Akiva--fixes his fire-colored eyes on her in an alley in Marrakesh, the result is blood and starlight, secrets unveiled, and a star-crossed love whose roots drink deep of a violent past. But will Karou live to regret learning the truth about herself?

**Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children** (F\*-890L): A mysterious island. An abandoned orphanage. A strange collection of very curious photographs. It all waits to be discovered in *Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children*, an unforgettable novel that mixes fiction and photography in a thrilling reading experience. As our story opens, a horrific family tragedy sets sixteen-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children. As Jacob explores its abandoned bedrooms and hallways, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. They may have been dangerous. They may have been quarantined on a deserted island for good reason. And somehow—impossible though it seems—they may still be alive.

**Crank** (R/P\*-600L): Kristina Snow is the perfect daughter: gifted high school junior, quiet, never any trouble. Then, Kristina meets the monster: crank. And what begins as a wild, ecstatic ride turns into a struggle through hell for her mind, her soul—her life.

**The Hobbit** (F-1000L): Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit who enjoys a comfortable, unambitious life, rarely traveling any farther than his pantry or cellar. But his contentment is disturbed when the wizard Gandalf and a company of dwarves arrive on his doorstep one day to whisk him away on an adventure. They have launched a plot to raid the treasure hoard guarded by Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. Bilbo reluctantly joins their quest, unaware that on his journey to the Lonely Mountain he will encounter both a magic ring and a frightening creature known as Gollum.

**The Catcher in the Rye** (R-790L): The influential and widely acclaimed story details the two days in the life of 16-year-old Holden Caulfield after he has been expelled from prep school. Confused and disillusioned, he searches for truth and rails against the "phoniness" of the adult world. He ends up exhausted and emotionally ill, in a psychiatrist's office. After he recovers from his breakdown, Holden relates his experiences to the reader.

**The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy** (Sci\*-1100L): Seconds before the Earth is demolished to make way for a galactic freeway, Arthur Dent is plucked off the planet by his friend Ford Prefect, a researcher for the revised edition of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy who, for the last fifteen years, has been posing as an out-of-work actor. Together this dynamic pair begin a journey through space aided by quotes from The Hitchhiker's Guide ("A towel is about the most massively useful thing an interstellar hitchhiker can have") and a galaxy-full of fellow travelers: Zaphod Beeblebrox--the two-headed, three-armed ex-hippie and totally out-to-lunch president of the galaxy; Trillian, Zaphod's girlfriend (formally Tricia McMillan), whom Arthur tried to pick up at a cocktail party once upon a time zone; Marvin, a paranoid, brilliant, and chronically depressed robot; Veet Voojagig, a former graduate student who is obsessed with the disappearance of all the ballpoint pens he bought over the years.

**The Perks of Being a Wallflower** (R-720L): The critically acclaimed debut novel from Stephen Chbosky, *Perks* follows observant “wallflower” Charlie as he charts a course through the strange world between adolescence and adulthood. First dates, family drama, and new friends. Sex, drugs, and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Devastating loss, young love, and life on the fringes. Caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it, Charlie must learn to navigate those wild and poignant roller-coaster days known as growing up.

**Graceling** (F\*-730L): Kristin Cashore’s best-selling, award-winning fantasy *Graceling* tells the story of the vulnerable yet strong Katsa, a smart, beautiful teenager who lives in a world where selected people are given a Grace, a special talent that can be anything from dancing to swimming. Katsa’s is killing. As the king’s niece, she is forced to use her extreme skills as his thug. Along the way, Katsa must learn to decipher the true nature of her Grace . . . and how to put it to good use.

**Eragon** (F\*-710-1050L): Fifteen-year-old Eragon believes that he is merely a poor farm boy—until his destiny as a Dragon Rider is revealed. Gifted with only an ancient sword, a loyal dragon, and sage advice from an old storyteller, Eragon is soon swept into a dangerous tapestry of magic, glory, and power. Now his choices could save—or destroy—the Empire.

**Something Wicked This Way Comes** (F-820L): The show is about to begin. The carnival rolls in sometime after midnight, ushering in Halloween a week early. The shrill siren song of a calliope beckons to all with a seductive promise of dreams and youth regained. In this season of dying, Cooger & Dark's Pandemonium Shadow Show has come to Green Town, Illinois, to destroy every life touched by its strange and sinister mystery. And two boys will discover the secret of its smoke, mazes, and mirrors; two friends who will soon know all too well the heavy cost of wishes. . .and the stuff of nightmare.

**Glass Castle** (N-1010L): Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Rex and Rose Mary Walls had four children. In the beginning, they lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly. Rose Mary, who painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family, called herself an "excitement addict." Cooking a meal that would be consumed in fifteen minutes had no appeal when she could make a painting that might last forever.

**I Capture the Castle** (R-920L): *I Capture the Castle* tells the story of seventeen-year-old Cassandra and her family, who live in not-so-genteel poverty in a ramshackle old English castle. Here she strives, over six turbulent months, to hone her writing skills. She fills three notebooks with sharply funny yet poignant entries. Her journals candidly chronicle the great changes that take place within the castle's walls, and her own first descent into love.

**Wicked** (F\*-890L): Gregory Maguire's breathtaking *New York Times*bestseller *Wicked*views the land of Oz, its inhabitants, its Wizard, and the Emerald City, through a darker and greener (not rosier) lens. Brilliantly inventive, *Wicked* offers us a radical new evaluation of one of the most feared and hated characters in all of literature: the much maligned Wicked Witch of the West who, as Maguire tells us, wasn’t nearly as *Wicked*as we imagined.

**I Am the Messenger** (R-640L): Ed Kennedy is an underage cabdriver without much of a future. He's pathetic at playing cards, hopelessly in love with his best friend, Audrey, and utterly devoted to his coffee-drinking dog, the Doorman. His life is one of peaceful routine and incompetence until he inadvertently stops a bank robbery. That's when the first ace arrives in the mail. That's when Ed becomes the messenger. Chosen to care, he makes his way through town helping and hurting (when necessary) until only one question remains: Who's behind Ed's mission?

**Gone** (D\*-620L): In the blink of an eye, everyone disappears. Gone. Except for the young. There are teens, but not one single adult. Just as suddenly, there are no phones, no internet, no television. No way to get help. And no way to figure out what's happened. Hunger threatens. Bullies rule. A sinister creature lurks. Animals are mutating. And the teens themselves are changing, developing new talents—unimaginable, dangerous, deadly powers—that grow stronger by the day. It's a terrifying new world. Sides are being chosen, a fight is shaping up. Townies against rich kids. Bullies against the weak. Powerful against powerless. And time is running out: on your birthday, you disappear just like everyone else. . . .

**The Name of the Star** (R\*-710L): The day that Louisiana teenager Rory Deveaux arrives in London to start a new life at boarding school is also the day a series of brutal murders breaks out over the city, killings mimicking the horrific Jack the Ripper spree of more than a century ago. Soon "Rippermania" takes hold of modern-day London, and the police are left with few leads and no witnesses. Except one. Rory spotted the man police believe to be the prime suspect. But she is the only one who saw him--the only one who can see him. And now Rory has become his next target. In this edge-of-your-seat thriller, full of suspense, humor, and romance, Rory will learn the truth about the secret ghost police of London and discover her own shocking abilities.

**Snow Flower and the Secret Fan** (H-980L): In nineteenth-century China, in a remote Hunan county, a girl named Lily, at the tender age of seven, is paired with a laotong, an “old same,” in an emotional match that will last a lifetime. The laotong, Snow Flower, introduces herself by sending Lily a silk fan on which she’s written a poem in nu shu, a unique language that Chinese women created in order to communicate in secret, away from the influence of men. As the years pass, Lily and Snow Flower send messages on the fan and compose stories on handkerchiefs, reaching out of isolation to share their hopes, dreams, and accomplishments. Together they endure the agony of footbinding and reflect upon their arranged marriages, their loneliness, and the joys and tragedies of motherhood. The two find solace in their friendship, developing a bond that keeps their spirits alive. But when a misunderstanding arises, their relationship suddenly threatens to tear apart.

**Unbroken** (N-1010L): In boyhood, Louis Zamperini was an incorrigible delinquent. As a teenager, he channeled his defiance into running, discovering a prodigious talent that had carried him to the Berlin Olympics. But when World War II began, the athlete became an airman, embarking on a journey that led to a doomed flight on a May afternoon in 1943. When his Army Air Forces bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean, against all odds, Zamperini survived, adrift on a foundering life raft. Ahead of Zamperini lay thousands of miles of open ocean, leaping sharks, thirst and starvation, enemy aircraft, and, beyond, a trial even greater. Driven to the limits of endurance, Zamperini would answer desperation with ingenuity; suffering with hope, resolve, and humor; brutality with rebellion. His fate, whether triumph or tragedy, would be suspended on the fraying wire of his will.

**Wild** (N-1060L): At twenty-two, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. In the wake of her mother’s death, her family scattered and her own marriage was soon destroyed. Four years later, with nothing more to lose, she made the most impulsive decision of her life. With no experience or training, driven only by blind will, she would hike more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mojave Desert through California and Oregon to Washington State—and she would do it alone. Told with suspense and style, sparkling with warmth and humor, *Wild* powerfully captures the terrors and pleasures of one young woman forging ahead against all odds on a journey that maddened, strengthened, and ultimately healed her.

**The Burn Journals** (N-690L): .In 1991, fourteen-year-old Brent Runyon came home from school, doused his bathrobe in gasoline, put it on, and lit a match. He suffered third-degree burns over 85% of his body and spent the next year recovering in hospitals and rehab facilities. During that year of physical recovery, Runyon began to question what he’d done, undertaking the complicated journey from near-death back to high school, and from suicide back to the emotional mainstream of life.

**KEY:**

**N-nonfiction R-realistic fiction H-historical fiction D-dystopia F-fantasy Sci-science fiction**

**P-poetry \*-series The number indicates the lexile level of the book.**