

American History: Rising 8th Grade Summer Reading List

Choose ONE of the non-fiction books from the following list to read over the summer. These books relate to the content we will cover in 8th grade. You will be responsible for completing an activity related to your summer reading book during the first couple weeks of school.

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 a 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. -Summary from Scholastic

Island of Hope: The Story of Ellis Island and the Journey to America

By: Martin Sandler

The moving story of immigration to America as told through the passionate voices and stories of those who passed through Ellis Island. On January 1, 1892, a fifteen-year-old Irish girl named Annie Moore made history when she became the first person to be processed at a new immigrant station at Ellis Island in New York Harbor. In the next 62 years more than 12 million other immigrants would follow. Many of these newcomers would be "pushed" into America--fleeing religious persecution, political oppression, or economic hardships in their native lands. Millions of others would be "pulled" into the United States by the promise of new opportunities. -Summary from Amazon

The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible ... On Schindler's List

By: Leon Leyson

Leon Leyson was only ten years old when the Nazis invaded Poland and his family was forced to relocate to the Krakow ghetto. With incredible luck, perseverance, and grit, Leon was able to survive the sadism of the Nazis, including the demonic Amon Goeth, commandant of the Krakow-Plaszow concentration camp. Ultimately, it was the generosity and cunning of one man, a man named Oskar Schindler, that saved Leon Leyson's life and the lives of his mother, his father, and two of his four siblings. Schindler added their names to the list of workers in his factory, a list that became known around the world. -Summary from goodreads.com

Courage Has No Color, The True Story of the Triple Nickles: America's First Black Paratroopers

By: Tanya Lee Stone

The true story of Triple Nickles, America's first black paratroopers who fought an attack on the American West by the Japanese. "Captivating."—Publishers Weekly, starred review

World War II is raging, and thousands of American soldiers are fighting overseas against the injustices brought on by Hitler. Back on the home front, discrimination against African Americans plays out as much on Main Street as in the military. Tanya Lee Stone examines the little-known history of the Triple Nickles, America's first black paratroopers, who fought in an attack on the American West by the Japanese.

The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi

By: Neal Bascomb

A thrilling spy mission, a moving Holocaust story, and a first-class work of narrative nonfiction.

In 1945, at the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the head of operations for the Nazis' Final Solution, walked into the mountains of Germany and vanished from view. Sixteen years later, an elite team of spies captured him at a bus stop in Argentina and smuggled him to Israel, resulting in one of the century's most important trials, one that cemented the Holocaust in the public imagination.

—Summary from goodreads.com

Unbroken (Young Adult Adaptation): An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive

By: Laura Hillenbrand

In this captivating and lavishly illustrated young adult edition of her award-winning #1 *New York Times* bestseller, Laura Hillenbrand tells the story of a former Olympian's courage, cunning, and fortitude following his plane crash in enemy territory. This adaptation of *Unbroken* introduces a new generation to one of history's most thrilling survival epics. –Summary from Amazon

The Boys in the Boat (Young Adult Adaptation): Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics

By: Daniel James Brown

It was unlikely from the start. With a team composed of the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew team was never expected to defeat the elite teams of the East Coast and Great Britain — yet they did, going on to shock the world by defeating the German team rowing for Adolf Hitler. And at the heart of it all was a teenager without family or prospects, who rowed not only to regain his shattered self-regard but also to find a real place for himself in the world. Drawing on the boys' own journals and vivid memories of a once-in-a-lifetime shared dream, Brown has created an unforgettable portrait of an era, a celebration of a remarkable achievement, and a chronicle of one extraordinary young man's personal quest. –Summary from Random House Publishing

Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War

By: Steve Sheinkin

A tense narrative nonfiction account of what the *New York Times* deemed "the greatest story of the century": how whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg transformed from obscure government analyst into "the most dangerous man in America," risking everything to expose years of government lies during the Nixon/Cold War era. –Summary from Amazon

Years of Dust: The Story of the Dust Bowl

By: Albert Marrin

Here, in riveting, accessible prose, and illustrated with moving historical quotations and photographs, acclaimed historian Albert Marrin explains the causes behind the disaster and investigates the Dust Bowl's impact on the land and the people. Both a tale of natural destruction and a tribute to those who refused to give up, this is a beautiful exploration of an important time in our country's past. –Summary by goodread.com

I Am a SEAL Team Six Warrior (Young Adult Adaptation): Memoirs of an American Soldier

By: Howard E. Wasdin

This young reader's edition of the adult bestseller SEAL Team Six introduces Howard Wasdin, who overcame childhood adversity to become one of the best snipers on the planet. Readers follow Wasdin's training from Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) — the longest, most grueling course of military training in the world — through his deployment in Operation Desert Storm as part of SEAL Team Two, and on to the fulfillment of his dream: becoming a member of the legendary SEAL Team Six. –Summary from Scholastic

Eleanor Roosevelt: Photographic Story of a Life

By: Sawyer

This excellent biography truly shows readers how committed Eleanor Roosevelt was to helping others. She was not afraid to speak her mind and she stuck to her convictions even when they made her unpopular. Eleanor showed the people in her country and elsewhere that a First Lady could make a real difference and that there really is no excuse for not going out into the world to make it a better place. –Review by Marya Jansen-Gruber

The Remarkable Rough-Riding Life of Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of Empire America

By: Cheryl Harness

The eagerly awaited third title in the Cheryl Harness Histories series paints a vibrant portrait of Theodore Roosevelt—Rough Rider, trustbuster, explorer, President, and more—whose bullish attitude forever changed America. With a new adventure on almost every page, readers will find themselves "wowed" by this true story of a larger-than-life American hero, and the country and times in which he lived. -Summary from Amazon

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice

By: Philip Hoose

On March 2, 1955, an impassioned teenager, fed up with the daily injustices of Jim Crow segregation, refused to give her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Instead of being celebrated as Rosa Parks would be just nine months later, fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin found herself shunned by her classmates and dismissed by community leaders. Undaunted, a year later she dared to challenge segregation again as a key plaintiff in *Browder v. Gayle*, the landmark case that struck down the segregation laws of Montgomery and swept away the legal underpinnings of the Jim Crow South. *Claudette Colvin* is the National Book Award Winner for Young People's Literature, a Newbery Honor Book, A YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults Finalist, and a Robert F. Sibert Honor Book.-Summary from Amazon