Summer is upon us, and with it comes the perfect opportunity for budding young minds to expand their horizons without ever leaving their zip code. Reading gives us all the ability to “travel the world” and learn more about topics that we are already interested in as well as those we’ve yet to discover. Children are inherently curious, and giving them plenty of opportunities to make these discoveries often leads to a hunger for more.

This list of titles is adapted from the Association for Library Service 2019 Notable Books list and can help guide you as you select books for your child’s summer reading adventures!

**Grades 6–8**

**Amal Unbound.** By Aisha Saeed. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen. Unknowingly, Amal insults a corrupt but powerful man in her small Pakistani village. As retribution, he claims her as an indentured servant.

**Apollo 8: The Mission that Changed Everything.** By Martin W. Sandler. Illus. Candlewick. With riveting text and stunning archival photos capturing the excitement and danger, this compelling account of the Apollo 8 mission emphasizes the turning point of the space program.

**Attucks! Oscar Robertson and the Basketball Team that Awakened a City.** By Phillip Hoose. Illus. Farrar. This is a comprehensive account of the people and the events involved in the first all-Black high school basketball team that confronted segregation in Indianapolis and won.

**Be Prepared.** By Vera Brosgol. Illus. by Vera Brosgol and Alec Longstreth. First Second. Brosgol comically recounts her experiences at a summer camp for Russian American kids in this graphic memoir.


**Children of Blood and Bone.** By Tomi Adeyemi. Holt. In an adventure infused with West African mythology, Zélie’s magic reawakens and she battles to restore magic to the oppressed kingdom of Orïsha.

**Crash: The Great Depression and the Fall and Rise of America.** By Marc Favreau. Little, Brown. This account of American life during the 1930s covers the economic hardships and political changes of the period, as well as the lingering influences on America today.

**The Cruel Prince.** By Holly Black. Little, Brown. In this dark high fantasy, twin mortal girls are caught up in the political machinations of powerful, blood-thirsty Faeries.

**The Girl Who Drew Butterflies: How Maria Merian’s Art Changed Science.** By Joyce Sidman. Illus. HMH. On pages featuring Merian’s illustrations, this inviting volume demonstrates how her fascination with observing life cycles led her to create realistic and detailed drawings that changed scientific research. *Sibert Medal Book*
**Ghost Boys.** By Jewell Parker Rhodes. Little, Brown. This novel explores the issues of racial violence and police brutality from the viewpoint of Jerome, the ghost of a 12-year-old black boy gunned down by a white police officer.

**Harbor Me.** By Jacqueline Woodson. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen. Six children learn the power of sharing their stories when their teacher assigns them to spend Fridays in a weekly conversation circle.

**Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction.** By Jarrett J. Krosoczka. Illus. by the author. Scholastic/Graphix. This graphic memoir offers an intimate portrait of a young artist growing up in challenging circumstances, including his single mother's lifelong battle with drug addiction.

**Hurricane Child.** By Kheryn Callender. Scholastic. As a hurricane approaches her Caribbean island home, 12-year-old Caroline desperately searches for her mother in this story of abandonment, mysterious spirits, and a first crush.

**The Hyena Scientist.** By Sy Montgomery. Illus. by Nic Bishop. HMH. Montgomery profiles biologist Kay Holekamp at her research camp in Masai Mara, Kenya, where she studies the social structure, communication, biology, and habits of spotted hyenas.

**Illegal.** By Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin. Illus. by Giovanni Rigano. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky. Determined preteen Ebo leaves his impoverished Nigerian village to follow his older siblings, all of whom have one dream: to make it to Europe, by any means possible.

**Ivy Aberdeen’s Letter to the World.** By Ashley Herring Blake. Little, Brown. As her family deals with the devastating aftermath of a tornado, Ivy loses a sketchbook in which she has drawn pictures that reveal her secret same-sex crushes.

**Jazz Owls: A Novel of the Zoot Suit Riots.** By Margarita Engle. Illus. by Rudy Gutierrez. Atheneum. In this novel-in-verse set in 1940’s Los Angeles, several Mexican American teens are swept into the chaos of the Zoot Suit Riots.

**Lifeboat 12.** By Susan Hood. Simon & Schuster. Ken Sparks drifts at sea on a lifeboat with a group of passengers after the sinking of a ship carrying evacuated British children to Canada during WWII.

**The Mad Wolf’s Daughter.** By Diane Magras. Penguin/ Kathy Dawson. Drest sets out on a medieval quest in the Scottish highlands to rescue her five brothers and father, who have been captured by a neighboring Lord.

**March Forward, Girl: From Young Warrior to Little Rock Nine.** By Melba Pattillo Beals. Illus. by Frank Morrison. HMH. This compelling memoir about Melba Pattillo’s childhood focuses on her growing understanding of the impact of racism in the years leading up to her role as one of the historic Little Rock Nine.

**The Night Diary.** By Veera Hiranandani. Penguin/Kokila (originally Dial). Told in the form of diary entries addressed to Nisha’s dead mother, this novel traces a mixed-faith family’s flight from Mirpur Khas, Pakistan, to Jodhpur, India, during the partitioning of India in 1947. (*Newbery Honor Book*)

**Nowhere Boy.** By Katherine Marsh. Roaring Brook. When Max finds Syrian refugee Ahmed hiding alone in his basement in Belgium, Max decides to help Ahmed by keeping him secret and safe.

**The Poet X.** By Elizabeth Acevedo. HarperTeen. Poetry provides teenage Xiomara an outlet to express herself as she struggles with her demanding mother’s religious expectations, a secret romance, and self acceptance. (*Pura Belpré Author Award Book*)

**The Prince and the Dressmaker.** By Jen Wang. Illus. by the author. First Second. Prince Sebastian secretly likes to wear dresses and hires talented dressmaker Frances to transform him into fashionista Lady Crystallia in this graphic novel. How long can the duo keep Sebastian’s secret?

**Rebound.** By Kwame Alexander. Illus. by Dawud Anyabwile. HMH. After being sent to his grandparents’ house for the summer, Chuck Bell finds his groove through basketball, comics, and exploring his roots in this companion title to 2015 Newbery winner The Crossover.
**Run for Your Life.** By Silvana Gandolfi. Tr. by Lynne Sharon Schwartz. Yonder/Restless. In alternating voices, this Italian novel tells the story of two brothers separated by Mafia violence. *(Batchelder Honor Book)*

**Small Spaces.** By Katherine Arden. Putnam. Horror fans will appreciate this suspenseful tale of a field trip gone wrong, as 11-year-old Ollie races against the clock to save herself and her classmates.

**Spooked! How a Radio Broadcast and The War of the Worlds Sparked the 1938 Invasion of America.** By Gail Jarrow. Illus. Boyds Mills/Calkins Creek. This account of the infamous War of the Worlds radio show explores the key players and development of the broadcast as well as its aftermath. *(Sibert Honor Book)*

**Something Rotten: A Fresh Look at Roadkill.** By Heather L. Montgomery. Illus. by Kevin O’Malley. Bloomsbury. Endlessly entertaining, this is a scientific look into the world of roadkill and how it informs statistics, news, and environmental challenges.

**Streetcar to Justice: How Elizabeth Jennings Won the Right to Ride in New York.** By Amy Hill Hearth. Greenwillow. The little-known story of a young African American teacher, who was thrown off a streetcar in 1854 and won a court case against the railway company, comes to life in this account.

**They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid’s Poems.** By David Bowles. Cinco Puntos. Güero describes his neighborhood on the Mexican border, his hard-working family, and his growing love of poetry in this novel-in-verse. *(Pura Belpré Author Honor Book)*

**Tight.** By Torrey Maldonado. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen. Bryan’s friendship with new friend Mike highlights the young teen’s journey through peer pressure and family dynamics as he struggles to navigate the consequences of choosing between right and wrong.

**The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees.** By Don Brown. Illus. by the author. HMH. This graphic novel account of the Syrian refugee crisis examines both the horror and the hope of the world’s response. *(Sibert Honor Book)*

Reference: Association for Library Service to Children (http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists/ncb)