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Summer Reading List 2010

***Whittington* By Alan Armstrong 208 pgs.
Newbery Award**

This superior novel interweaves animal fantasy and family story with a retelling of the English folktale Dick Whittington and His Cat. A battered tomcat named Whittington arrives one late-fall day at a New England barn, where he gradually befriends the equally ragtag group of animals already adopted by the barn's taciturn but soft-hearted owner, Bernie.

***The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits,
and a Very Interesting Boy* By Jeanne Birdsall 272 pgs.
National Book Award for Young People's Literature**

This enjoyable tale of four sisters, a new friend, and his snooty mother is rollicking fun. The girls' father is a gentle, widowed botany professor who gives his daughters free reign but is always there to support or comfort them. The tale begins as the Penderwicks embark on a summer holiday in the Berkshire Mountains, at a cottage on the grounds of a posh mansion owned by the terribly snobbish Mrs. Tifton.

***Masterpiece* By Elise Broach 304 pgs.**

Marvin is a beetle, and he and his family live in the Manhattan kitchen that belongs to the Pompaday family. When James Pompaday receives a pen-and-ink drawing set for his 11th birthday, Marvin discovers that he is a bug with artistic talent. Although he can't speak to James, they soon bond in a true interspecies friendship, and their escapades begin. Because of Marvin's wonderful drawing, presumed to be James's work, the boy is asked to create a fake masterpiece for the Metropolitan Museum of Art to trap an art thief.

***The Sisters Grimm- The Fairy -Tale Detectives* By Michael Buckley 192 pgs.**

In book one of this *New York Times* bestselling series, sisters Sabrina and Daphne Grimm are placed with a grandmother they have never heard about. Sabrina, the eldest, is highly suspicious; why didn't their parents mention Granny Relda? Then Relda reveals the truth: the Grimms are descended from the famous storytelling brothers, and Ferryport Landing is a magical town, populated with "Everafters," characters straight from fairy tales. The girls take on the family responsibility of being fairy-tale detectives. Will they find their parents who have mysteriously disappeared?

***The Magician's Elephant* By Kate DiCamillo 208 pgs.**

The Magician's Elephant tells the tale of Peter Augustus Duchene, a ten-year-old orphan who receives an unbelievable piece of information from the local fortuneteller. Peter learns that his fate is tied to an elephant that has inexplicably fallen from the sky when a magician's trick goes terribly wrong. Why did it happen? And, how can an elephant possibly change the course of Peter's life?

***The London-Eye Mystery* By Siobhan Dowd 336 pgs.**

The facts seem simple enough. While their mothers have coffee, Ted and his older sister, Kat, and their cousin, Salim, wait in a queue to ride the London Eye, an observation wheel that allows those locked in the glass-and-steel capsules to see 25 miles in every direction. A stranger from the front of the line offers one free ticket, and since Salim is the visitor, stopping in London before moving with his mum to New York, he takes it. Ted and Kat see him enter the capsule and follow his ride, but to their shock, he doesn't exit with his fellow riders.

***The Outlandish Adventures of Liberty Aimes* By Kelly Easton 214 pgs.**

Ten-year-old Liberty has never been let out of her decrepit house on 33 Gooch Street, and her massively obese mother, Sal, doesn't dare leave either. Only Liberty's dreadful father, Mal, comes and goes. As Liberty discovers one day, he really is a genius (the evil sort) and has invented, among other things, potions for communicating with animals and for levitating. Using these devices to escape, Liberty sets off on a search for what she feels must be heaven on Earth—a boarding school called the Sullivan School—meeting friends, dodging scoundrels, and having adventures along the way.

***The Gollywopper Games* By Jody Feldman 366 pgs.
Midwest Booksellers' Choice Honor Book**

Gil Goodson's future happiness depends on winning the Golly Toy & Game Company's ultimate competition. If Gil wins, his dad has promised that the family can move away from all the gossip, false friends, and bad press that have plagued them ever since The Incident. Inside the toy company's fantastic headquarters, Gil will have to master trivia, solve puzzles, and complete physical stunts—and he'll have to do it better than all of the other kids competing. Oh, and did we mention that Gil's every step—and every mistake—will be broadcast on national television?

***Operation Redwood* By S. Terrell French 368 pgs.**

When Julian Carter-Li, 12, becomes ill, he is sent by his school to the office of his wealthy, bullying uncle with whom he lives. There he sees email from a Robin Elder degrading the man and he quickly becomes fascinated with this spirited person. Through their exchanges, Julian learns that homeschooled Robin lives next to a grove of redwood trees that his uncle's company plans to harvest, and Julian ditches math camp to see the trees for himself. Drawn to both the forest and Robin's family, Julian embarks on a campaign to save the trees, and the children take up residence in the Elder family's tree house.

***The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School* By Candace Fleming 192 pgs.**

A book of contemporary fables about a rambunctious group of fourth graders and their amazing teacher—the globe-trotting, Mayan-ceremonial-robe-wearing Mr. Jupiter—that is sure to delight students and teachers alike. Kids will laugh out loud as they learn tried-and-true lessons in this funny, fast-paced book.

***Scat* By Carl Hiaasen 384 pgs.**

Once again, Hiaasen has written an edge-of-the-seat eco-thriller. When their unpopular biology teacher goes missing in a suspicious fire during a field trip to the Black Vine Swamp, Nick and Marta don't buy the headmaster's excuse for her absence and decide to do some investigating of their own. Eco-avengers; an endangered, hunted panther; illegal pipelines in the Everglades; and an underachieving student with the nickname "Smoke" all play a part in this gripping novel. From the first sentence, readers will be hooked.

***The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* By Jacqueline Kelly 352 pgs.
Newbery Honor**

A charming and inventive story of a child struggling to find her identity at the turn of the 20th century. As the only girl in an uppercrust Texas family of seven children, Calpurnia, 11, is expected to enter young womanhood with all its trappings of tight corsets, cookery, and handiwork. Unlike other girls her age, Callie is most content when observing and collecting scientific specimens with her grandfather.

***The Book of Story Beginnings* By Kristin Kladstrup 368 pgs.**

Oscar Martin was fourteen when he mysteriously disappeared from his Iowa farmhouse in 1914. His sister claimed Oscar had rowed out to sea — but how was that possible? Nearly a century later, when Lucy Martin moves with her parents to that same Iowa farmhouse, she discovers the strange and dangerous BOOK OF STORY BEGINNINGS, and soon Oscar himself reappears in a bizarre turn of events that sends the two distant relatives on a perilous journey. From a first-time author comes an intricate, spellbinding fantasy that lures you in and won't let go.

***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* By Grace Lin 288 pgs.
Newbery Honor**

Living in the shadow of the Fruitless Mountain, Minli and her parents spend their days working in the rice fields, barely growing enough to feed themselves. Every night, Minli's father tells her stories about the Jade Dragon that keeps the mountain bare, the greedy and mean Magistrate Tiger, and the Old Man of the Moon who holds everyone's destiny. Determined to change her family's fortune, Minli sets out to find the Old Man of the Moon, urged on by a talking goldfish who gives her clues to complete her journey. Along the way she makes new friends including a flightless dragon and an orphan and proves her resourcefulness when she tricks a group of greedy monkeys and gets help from a king.

***Rules* By Cynthia Lord 224 pgs.
Newbery Honor**

"No toys in the fish tank" is one of many rules that 12-year-old Catherine shares with her autistic younger brother, David, to help him understand his world. Lots of the rules are practical. Others are more subtle and shed light on issues in Catherine's own life. Torn between love for her brother and impatience with the responsibilities and embarrassment he brings, she strives to be on her parents' radar and to establish an identity of her own. At her brother's clinic, Catherine befriends a wheelchair-bound boy, Jason, who talks by pointing at word cards in a communication notebook. Catherine experiences some of the same unease with Jason that others do in the presence of her brother. In the end, Jason helps Catherine see that her rules may really be excuses, opening the way for her to look at things differently. A heartwarming first novel.

***11 Birthdays* By Wendy Mass 272 pgs.**

Amanda and Leo, born on the same day, have celebrated their birthdays together for 10 years. Still feeling hurt from an unkind remark Leo made at last year's party, Amanda spends her eleventh birthday without her now-estranged friend to share the fun. In the days that follow, both Amanda and Leo discover that they are caught in a time loop, waking up each morning to find themselves repeating their eleventh birthdays.

***Alvin Ho: Allergic to Camping, Hiking, and Other Natural Disasters*
By LeUyen Pham 192 pgs.**

This second story about Alvin Ho, the boy who is afraid of almost everything, is another delightful look into the life of the timid youngster. In this installment, his fears center around a big upcoming event: camping with his dad.. Alvin's adventures (like getting trapped in a dishwasher box while pretending to be Houdini, and learning secret camping tricks from his uncle) are charmingly genuine and fun to read.

***The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* By Rodman Philbrick 224 pgs.
Newbery Honor**

A rip-roaring adventure in this Civil War–era novel featuring a mistreated orphan who doesn't let truth stand in the way of spinning a good yarn. When his guardian, Uncle Squinton—the meanest man in the entire state of Maine—sells off Homer P. Figg's older brother, Harold, to take a rich man's son's place in the Union army, Homer can't just stand around doing nothing. Determined to alert the authorities (and his brother) that Harold is too young to be a soldier, the plucky narrator traces the path of the regiment. He faces many dangers, including an abduction or two, and being robbed and thrown in with the pigs, and joining the Caravan of Miracles before landing smack in the middle of the Battle of Gettysburg,

***The Red Pyramid* By Rick Riordan 528 pgs.**

Since their mother's death, Carter and Sadie have become near strangers. While Sadie has lived with her grandparents in London, her brother has traveled the world with their father, the brilliant Egyptologist, Dr. Julius Kane. One night, Dr. Kane brings the siblings together for a "research experiment" at the British Museum, where he hopes to set things right for his family. Instead, he unleashes the Egyptian god Set, who banishes him to oblivion and forces the children to flee for their lives.

***Mudville* By Kurtis Scaletta 272 pgs.**

Vandals have crossed off the "o" and the "n" from the welcome sign outside the town of Moundville, and appropriately so, as it's been raining there continually for 22 years. Shortly after 12-year-old Roy discovers that he'll be sharing his bedroom with Sturgis, a scarred foster child about his age, the rain stops. What better opportunity to organize some baseball? In short order Roy finds himself captaining a ragtag team with himself as catcher, Sturgis—who has a wicked fastball—on the mound, and position players of both sexes with wildly varying levels of skill. Scaletta's debut is a gift from the baseball gods.

***The Wednesday Wars* By Gary D. Schmidt 272 pgs.
Newbery Honor**

Mrs. Baker hates Holling Hoodhood. There's no two ways about it, as far as he can tell. From the minute he entered her classroom she had it in for him and he's trying not to become paranoid. Now because half the kids in his class are Jewish and half Catholic, every Wednesday Holling (a Protestant through and through) is stuck alone with Mrs. Baker while the other kids go to Hebrew School or Catechism for the afternoon. And what has this evil genius dreamt up for our poor young hero? Shakespeare. He has to read it and get tested on it regularly with the intention (Holling is sure) of boring him to death. Surprisingly,. Holling finds that he is beginning to like Shakespeare. Huh?

***When You Reach Me* By Rebecca Stead 197 pgs.
Newbery Honor**

Shortly after sixth-grader Miranda and her best friend Sal part ways, for some inexplicable reason her once familiar world turns upside down. Maybe it's because she's caught up in reading [*Wrinkle in Time*](#) and trying to understand time travel, or perhaps it's because she's been receiving mysterious notes which accurately predict the future.

***Clover Twig and the Magical Cottage* By Kaye Umansky 304 pgs.**

Taking a job cleaning for a rather spectacularly messy witch is the start of the biggest adventure in 11-year-old Clover Twig's life. Tidy and reliable, the child quickly puts Mrs. Eckles's cottage in order—despite the unintentional interference of the witch's accident-prone neighbor, Wilf. Clover knows there is something magical and special about the cottage, but she doesn't learn what it is until after Mrs. Eckles leaves to sell her remedies. During her absence, Clover and Wilf have their hands full trying to keep the magical cottage out of the clutches of the witch's greedy and jealous sister.

***The Invention of Hugo Cabret* By Brian Selznick**

Orphan, clock keeper, and thief, Hugo lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station, where his survival depends on secrets and anonymity. But when his world suddenly interlocks with an eccentric, bookish girl and a bitter old man who runs a toy booth in the station, Hugo's undercover life, and his most precious secret, are put in jeopardy. A cryptic drawing, a treasured notebook, a stolen key, a mechanical man, and a hidden message from Hugo's dead father form the backbone of this intricate, tender, and spellbinding mystery.

