

**SIDWELL FRIENDS MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY**  
**A Few Words About the SFS Summer Reading Lists**

A child will grow up to become a reader under two conditions: when s/he is read to every day from birth, and later, if once that child develops the skills to read, s/he reads every day thereafter. A habitual reader of fiction and poetry, narrative non-fiction and biography, opens the way to developing a deeper sense of empathy, a wider sense of justice, a broader base of knowledge, and a flexibility of mind— essentially, the conditions for happiness and success.

That is what we want for Sidwell students – to become habitual, devoted, intelligent readers. This single activity consistently correlates with more imaginative thinking and higher academic achievement. To this end, we provide the best literature written and published for youth in our classrooms and libraries. The books on these lists come recommended by the middle school students, the teachers, and the librarians. The books cross genres and time periods and are written by national and international authors, both living and dead. They are available in area public libraries and in paperback. Of course, students may read other titles not found on the list, but this is a good starting point.

All SFS students are eligible for a DC Public Library card whether the family lives in the District, Virginia, or Maryland. If your local county system does not carry the book you are looking for, check DC Public Library's online catalog. Chances are you will find the titles you're looking for.

**All students entering Fifth Grade must read The Shakespeare Stealer by Gary Blackwood. All students entering Sixth Grade must read Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko.**

**Pick three additional books and enjoy. Have a happy summer!**

Most of the books on this list are available at the DC Public Library, Montgomery County Public Library and in paperback.

**Aiken, Joan.**                      **Dangerous Games.**

An exciting episode in the celebrated Wolves Chronicles. Her mission to bring an expert on games back to an ailing King James III in London takes Dido Twite to a small tropical island, where she is caught up in the conflict between a conniving city dweller and the more subtle powers of the native forest people.

**Alexander, Lloyd.**              **The Golden Dream of Carlo Chuchio.**

Naïve and bumbling Carlo, his shady camel-puller Daksheesh, and Shira, a girl determined to return home, follow a treasure map through the deserts and cities of the infamous Golden Road, as mysterious strangers try in vain to point them toward real treasures.

**Applegate, Katherine.**        **Home of the Brave. This novel in verse follows Kek, a refugee from war-torn Sudan to Minnesota where he will live with some relatives.**

**Alvarez, Julia.**                **How Tia Lola Came to Visit Stay.**

Ten-year-old Miguel just wants to fit in to his new home. With his black hair and brown skin, it's hard enough already without the flamboyant antics of his friendly, nutty aunt, visiting from the Dominican Republic who stands out in Vermont like a tropical bird in a snowstorm.

**Babbitt, Natalie.                    Tuck Everlasting.**

Having learned the Tucks' secret, young Winnie must decide whether to share in their wonderful and horrible existence, a decision complicated by a stranger's own plans for the Tucks.

**Bartek, Mary.                    Funerals & Fly Fishing.**

The summer after sixth grade, Brad Stanislawski travels to Pennsylvania by himself to visit the grandfather he has never met before, and overcomes some of the preconceived ideas he has gotten from his mother.

**Barry, Dave.                    Peter and the Starcatchers.**

Soon after Peter, an orphan, sets sail from England on the ship Never Land, he befriends and assists Molly, a young Starcatcher, whose mission is to guard a trunk of magical stardust from a greedy pirate and the native inhabitants of a remote island.

**Bell, Hilary.                    Goblin Wood.**

A young Hedgewitch, an idealistic knight, and an army of clever goblins fight against the ruling hierarchy that is trying to rid the land of all magical creatures.

**Birdsall, Jeanne.                    The Penderwicks : A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy.**

While vacationing with their widowed father in the Berkshire Mountains, four lovable sisters, ages four through twelve, share adventures with a local boy, much to the dismay of his snobbish mother.

**Boyce, Frank Cottrell.                    Millions.**

After their mother dies, two brothers find a huge amount of money which they must spend quickly before England switches to the new European currency, but they disagree on what to do with it.

**Carbone, Elisa.                    Blood on the River: James Town 1607.**

Traveling to the New World in 1606 as the page to Captain John Smith, twelve-year-old orphan Samuel Collier settles in the new colony of James Town, where he must quickly learn to distinguish between friend and foe.

**Christopher, John.                    The White Mountains (and sequels).**

Will, Beanpole, and Henry seek out an ancient underground shelter to hide from the Tripods who are enslaving the humans.

**Compestine, Ying Chang. Revolution is Not a Dinner Party.**

Starting in 1972 when she is nine years old, Ling, the daughter of two doctors, struggles to make sense of the communists' Cultural Revolution, which empties stores of food, homes of appliances deemed "bourgeois," and people of laughter.

**Corder, Zizou.                    Lion Boy (and sequels).**

In the near future, a boy with the ability to speak the language of cats sets out from London to seek his kidnapped parents and finds himself on a Paris-bound circus ship learning to train lions.

**Creech, Sharon.                    Replay.**

While preparing for a role in the school play, twelve-year-old Leo finds an autobiography that his father wrote as a teenager and ponders the ways people change as they grow up. Includes the text for the play, "Rumpopo's Porch."

**Creedon, Catherine.                    Blue Wolf.**

Following the death of his mother, fourteen-year-old Jamie is sent to live with his mysterious aunt in the wilds of the Pacific Northwest, where he discovers some long-hidden family secrets.

**Cummings, Nancy.      The Red Kayak.**

A young boy must choose between doing what's right and causing serious trouble for his friends. Set in the Chesapeake Bay area.

**Curtis, Christopher Paul   Elijah of Buxton.**

In 1859, eleven-year-old Elijah Freeman, the first free-born child in Buxton, Canada, which is a haven for slaves fleeing the American south, uses his wits and skills to try to bring to justice the lying preacher who has stolen money that was to be used to buy a family's freedom.

**Enright, Elizabeth.      Thimble Summer.**

Stories of Garnet and her life as she grows up on a farm in Wisconsin.

**Enzenberger, Hans M.      The Number Devil : a Mathematical Adventure.**

A 12-year-old math-phobe is visited in his dreams by a strange fellow who devilishly reveals the pleasures of mathematical thinking.

**Erdrich, Louise.      The Game of Silence (sequel to *The Birchbark House*).**

Nine-year-old Omakayas, of the Ojibwa tribe, moves west with her family in 1849.

**Farmer, Nancy.      Land of Silver Apples (sequel to *Sea of Trolls*).**

After escaping from the Sea of Trolls, the apprentice bard Jack plunges into a new series of adventures, traveling underground to Elfland and uncovering the truth about his little sister Lucy.

**Feinstein, John.      Vanishing Act.**

Eighth-grade sports reporters Susan Carol and Stevie reunite at the U.S. Open tennis championships where they investigate the mysterious disappearance of a top Russian player.

**Fleischman, Sid.      Jim Ugly.**

The adventures of 12-year-old Jake and Jim Ugly, his father's part-mongrel, part-wolf dog, as they travel through the Old West trying to find out what really happened to Jake's actor father.

**Frechette, Carole.      In the Key of Do. Translated from the French.**

From the moment flashy Dolores (Do) Desnoyers walked into Vero's classroom, Vero's sixteen-year-old life changed forever. Then, on the very day Vero and Do are to start a grand adventure, Do disappears.

**Gardner, Sally.      I, Coriander.**

In 17th century London, Coriander, a girl who has inherited magic from her mother, must find a way to use this magic in order to save both herself and an inhabitant of the fairy world where her mother was born.

**Going, K.L.      The Liberation of Gabriel King.**

In Georgia during the summer of 1976, Gabriel, a white boy who is being bullied, and Frita, an African American girl who is facing prejudice, decide to overcome their many fears together as they enter fifth grade.

**Grahame, Kenneth.      Wind in the Willows.**

The escapades of four animal friends who live along a river in the English countryside--Toad, Mole, Rat, and Badger.

**Guy, Rosa.      The Ups and Downs of Carl Davis III.**

Carl, 12, in a series of letters, chronicles his anger, confusion, and disdain, as well as his gradual change of heart about being sent to live with his grandmother.

**Haddix, Margaret Peterson.**      **Among the Hidden** (and others in the series).

In a future where the Population Police enforce the law limiting a family to only two children, Luke has lived all his twelve years in isolation and fear on his family's farm, until another "third" convinces him that the government is wrong.

**Hahn, Mary Downing.**      **Deep and Dark and Dangerous: A Ghost Story.**

Ali is thrilled to babysit her cousin at the lake until she meets a creepy girl named Sissy.

**Hart, Alison.**      **Gabriel's Horses.**

In Kentucky, during the Civil War, the twelve-year-old slave Gabriel, contends with a cruel new horse trainer and skirmishes with Confederate soldiers as he pursues his dream of becoming a jockey.

**Higgins, F. E.**      **The Black Book of Secrets.**

When Ludlow Fitch runs away from his thieving parents in the City, he meets up with the mysterious Joe Zabbidou, who calls himself a secret pawnbroker, and who takes Ludlow as an apprentice to record the confessions of the townspeople of Pagus Parvus, where resentments are many and trust is scarce.

**Hotze, Sollace.**      **A Circle Unbroken.**

Captured by a roving band of Sioux Indians, Rachel is recaptured by her family.

**Hurmence, Belinda.**      **A Girl Called Boy.**

Boy, an 11-year-old African American girl, is transported to the North Carolina of the 1850s and must find a way to evade slave catchers.

**Karr, Kathleen.**      **The Boxer.**

Having learned how to box while in prison, fifteen-year-old Johnny sets out to discover if he can make a decent living as a fighter in late nineteenth-century New York City.

**Kerr, P.B.**      **The Akenaten Adventure** (Children of the Lamp, 1).

When twelve-year-old twins Philippa and John discover that they are descended from a long line of djinn, their mother sends them away to their Uncle Nimrod, who takes them to Cairo where he starts to teach them about their extraordinary powers.

**Kessler, Liz.**      **The Tail of Emily Windsnap.**

After finally convincing her mother that she should take swimming lessons, twelve-year-old Emily discovers a terrible and wonderful secret about herself that opens up a whole new world.

**Levine, Gail Carson.**      **Dave at Night.**

When orphaned Dave is sent to the Hebrew Home for Boys where he is treated cruelly, he sneaks out at night and is welcomed into the music- and culture-filled world of the Harlem Renaissance.

**Lewis, C.S.**      **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe** (and others in the series).

Four English children visit another world, Narnia, which they first discover through a wardrobe.

**Lynch, Chris.**      **Gold Dust.**

In 1975, twelve-year-old Richard befriends Napoleon, a Caribbean newcomer to his Catholic school, hoping that Napoleon will learn to love baseball and the Red Sox, and will win acceptance in the racially polarized Boston school.

**Merrill, Jean.**      **The Toothpaste Millionaire.**

A young girl describes how her school friend made over a million dollars by creating and marketing a cheaper and better toothpaste.

**Montgomery, Lucy.**      **Anne of Green Gables.** (100<sup>th</sup> anniversary! ☺)

A red-headed orphan enters the life of Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert on Prince Edward Island.

**Namioka, Lensey.**      **Half and Half.**

At Seattle's annual Folk Fest, twelve-year-old Fiona and her older brother are torn between trying to please their Chinese grandmother and making their Scottish grandparents happy.

**Napoli, Donna Jo.**      **North.**

Tired of his mother's overprotectiveness and intrigued by the life of African American explorer Matthew Henson, twelve-year-old Alvin travels north and spends a season with a trapper near the Arctic Circle.

**Peck, Richard.**      **A Long Way from Chicago.**

A boy recounts his annual summer trips to rural Illinois with his sister during the Great Depression to visit their larger-than-life grandmother.

**Pierce, Tamora.**      **Alanna: The First Adventure.** (and many others by Tamora Pierce!)

Eleven-year-old Alanna, who aspires to be a knight even though she is a girl, disguises herself as a boy to become a royal page, a learning many hard lessons along her path to high adventure.

**Reiss, Johanna.**      **The Upstairs Room.**

A Dutch Jewish girl describes the two-and-one-half years she spent hiding in an upstairs bedroom during WWII.

**Reuter, Bjarne B.**      **The Boys from St. Petri.**

A group of Danish teenage boys' resistance to the Nazis in 1942 evolves from pranks to deadly sabotage.

**Riordan, Rick**      **Lightning Thief** (and others in the series).

After learning that he is the son of a mortal woman and Poseidon, god of the sea, twelve-year-old Percy is sent to a summer camp for demigods like himself, and joins his new friends on a quest to prevent a war between the gods.

**Ryan, Pamela M.**      **Paint the Wind.**

After her overprotective grandmother has a stroke, Maya, an orphan, leaves her extremely restricted life in California to stay with her mother's family on a remote Wyoming ranch, where she discovers a love of horses and encounters a wild mare that her mother once rode.

**Schlitz, Laura**      **A Drowned Maiden's Hair.**

At the Barbary Asylum for Female Orphans, eleven-year-old Maud is adopted by three spinster sisters moonlighting as mediums who take her home and reveal to her the role she will play in their seances.

**Schmidt, Gary D.**      **The Wednesday Wars.**

During the 1967 school year, on Wednesday afternoons when all his classmates go to either Catechism or Hebrew school, seventh-grader Holling Hoodhood stays in Mrs. Baker's classroom where they read the plays of William Shakespeare and Holling learns much of value about the world he lives in.

**Shan, Darren.**      **Cirque Du Freak.**

Two boys who are best friends visit an illegal freak show, where an encounter with a vampire and a deadly spider forces them to make life-changing choices.

**Smith, Roland. Peak.**

A fourteen-year-old boy attempts to be the youngest person to reach the top of Mount Everest.

**Spinelli, Jerry. Wringer.**

As Palmer comes of age, he must learn to deal with the bullies who taunt him and with his desire not to be a "wringer" at the town's annual Pigeon Day.

**Stevenson, Robert Louis. Treasure Island.**

While going through the possessions of a deceased guest who owed them money, the mistress of the inn and her son find a treasure map that leads to a pirate fortune as well as great danger.

**Stewart, Trento Lee. The Mysterious Benedict Society.**

After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.

**Stroud, Jonathan. The Amulet of Samarkand.**

Nathaniel, a magician's apprentice, summons up the djinni Bartimaeus and instructs him to steal the Amulet of Samarkand from the powerful magician Simon Lovelace.

**Westall, Robert. The Machine Gunners.**

After an air raid, a group of English children find a German machine gun and hide it from the adults who are looking for it.

**White, Ruth. Way Down Deep.**

Set in 1950s Appalachia, orphaned Ruby asks important questions: Who makes up family, and what do you owe them?

**Woodson, Jacqueline. Feathers.**

When a new, white student nicknamed "The Jesus Boy" joins her sixth grade class in the winter of 1971, Frannie's growing friendship with him makes her start to see some things in a new light.

**Wulffson, Don. The Golden Rat.**

In this historical mystery set in 1199 China, Baoliu is convicted of his stepmother's murder and another man suffers the death penalty in his place. Because of this Baoliu becomes the "golden rat" and is shunned by his family and community.

**Yang, Dori Jones. The Secret Voice of Gina Zhang.**

When her extreme shyness makes her unable to speak at her new American school, twelve-year-old Jinna, newly arrived from China, retreats into her own fairy tale world.

**Zimmer, Tracie Vaughn. Reaching For Sun.**

Josie struggles with cerebral palsy, social isolation, and giant bulldozers that are carving up the surrounding countryside to build enormous houses around her family's farmhouse.

#### **SHORT STORIES and FOLKTALES:**

Edelman, Marian Wright, ed. *I Can Make a Difference: A Treasury to Inspire Our Children.*

Fang, Linda. *The Ch'i Lin Purse: A Collection of Ancient Chinese Stories.*

Fleischman, Paul. *Seedfolks.*

McKissack, Patricia. *Porch Lies: Tales of Slicksters, Tricksters, and Other Wily Characters.*

Mercado, Nancy, ed.  
Naidoo, Beverly.  
Soto, Gary  
Quattlebaum, Mary.

*Baseball Crazy.*  
*Out of Bounds: Seven Stories of Conflict and Hope.*  
*Baseball in April, and Other Stories.*  
*Sparks Fly High: The Legend of Dancing Point.*

**POETRY:**

Brenner, Barbara, ed.  
Carroll, Lewis.  
Janeczko, Paul  
Sidman, Joyce.  
Smith, Charles R., Jr.  
Worth, Valerie.

*Voices : Poetry and Art from Around the World.*  
*Jabberwocky* (Illustrated by Christopher Myers).  
*A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms.*  
*This is Just to Say: Poems of Apology and Forgiveness.*  
*Short Takes : Fast Break Basketball Poetry.*  
*Animal Poems.*

**NON-FICTION:**

Armstrong, Jennifer

Bishop, Nic.  
Fleischman, John.  
Brandenburg, Jim  
Heuer, Karsten.  
Lekuton, Joseph.  
Macaulay, David  
Montgomery, Sy.

*Ritter, Lawrence.*

*Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World: the Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance.*  
*Spiders.*  
*Black and White Airmen: Their True History.*  
*To the Top of the World: Adventures with Arctic Wolves.*  
*Being Caribou: Five Months on Foot With a Caribou Herd.*  
*Facing the Lion: Growing Up Masai on the African Savanna.*  
*Mosque.*  
*Quest for the Tree Kangaroo: An Expedition to the Cloud Forest of New Guinea.*  
*The Story of Baseball.*

**BIOGRAPHY and MEMOIR:**

Delano, Poli.  
Freedman, Russell  
Giblin, James.

Jurmain, Suzanne.

Rumford, James.

*When I Was a Boy Neruda Called Me Policarpo.*  
*Marian Anderson: The Voice that Challenged a Nation.*  
*Good Brother, Bad Brother : The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*  
*The Forbidden Schoolhouse: The True and Dramatic Story of Prudence Crandall and Her Students.*  
*Traveling Man : The Journey of Ibn Battuta, 1325 – 1354.*