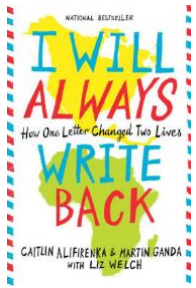


# 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE SUMMER READING

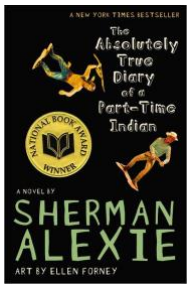
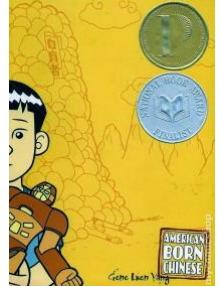


by Martin Ganade, Caitlin Alifrenka, and Liz Welsh

I WILL ALWAYS WRITE BACK is the true story of two pen pals: Caitlin, a typical American teenager, and Martin, a poor but incredibly bright and hard-working boy in the African country of Zimbabwe who's struggling to get enough money to stay in school. Caitlin has no concept of Martin's poverty and sends him photographs and small gifts. She asks for similar items in return, not knowing that Martin's family barely has enough money to eat or pay his school fees, much less buy stamps or even have a photograph taken. Slowly, Martin reveals the depth of his poverty to his new American friend, who responds by sending him \$20 she earned babysitting -- enough to keep him in school and prevent his family from being evicted. As Martin's financial situation grows dire, Caitlin and her family increase their support, eventually changing both Martin's and Caitlin's lives forever.

by Gene Yang

Three parallel stories interlock in this graphic novel. In the first, the American-born Chinese boy of the title, Jin, moves with his family from San Francisco's Chinatown to a mostly white suburb. There he's exposed to racism (from children and adults), bullying, and taunts and is isolated until a Taiwanese boy, Wei-Chen Sun, moves in and they become friends. But Jin develops a crush on a white girl and longs to fit in. The second story is a retelling of the story of the Monkey King, a fabled Chinese character who develops extraordinary powers in his quest to be accepted as a god. The third concerns Danny, a popular Anglo boy who's visited by his cousin, Chin-Kee, a walking, talking example of the most pernicious Asian stereotypes.

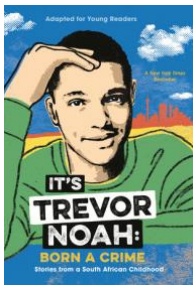
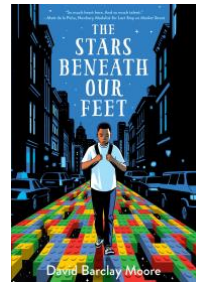


by Sherman Alexie

Junior has more than his fair share of burdens. He was born hydrocephalic, and he lives on an Indian reservation where there is little hope or money, but plenty of alcoholics, including his parents. His sister hardly ever comes out of the basement. He gets beaten up a lot for looking weird. But he has a few things going for him too. He's smart, good at drawing and basketball, and, unlike his friends and relatives, he has ambition and hope. But when he decides to reach for more by going to a white school 22 miles away, his burdens grow even greater.

by David Barclay Moore

It's Christmas Eve in Harlem, but twelve-year-old Lolly Rachpaul and his mom aren't celebrating. They're still reeling from his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting just a few months earlier. Then Lolly's mother's girlfriend brings him a gift that will change everything: two enormous bags filled with Legos. Lolly's always loved Legos, and he prides himself on following the kit instructions exactly. Now, faced with a pile of building blocks and no instructions, Lolly must find his own way forward.



by Trevor Noah

The adaptation for young readers of comedian Trevor Noah's 2016 memoir *Born a Crime*. Noah describes growing up as an outsider because he's of mixed race, born at a time when marriage or relations between blacks and whites was illegal in South Africa. Noah was a mischievous kid, and his antics are entertaining, even as his life and observations reveal so much that was wrong in his world of poverty, racism, injustice, and abuse. Noah regales readers with stories of youthful misadventures, from playing with matches to bad first dates to petty crimes, sometimes with amusing results and occasionally with disastrous ones. Through his own experience, Noah gives readers a look at family life, education, gender roles, and religion in 1980s and '90s South Africa.

by John Lewis

Discover the inside story of the Civil Rights Movement through the eyes of one of its most iconic figures, Congressman John Lewis. *March* is the award-winning, #1 bestselling graphic novel trilogy recounting his life in the movement.



