Assemblywoman
Addie J. Russell

Dear Friend,

When school lets out for the summer, we can encourage our kids to continue learning by picking up a book or downloading an e-book on your tablet. Reading is fun! Books can immerse children in far-off worlds, new characters and thrilling narratives. To that end, I'm sponsoring a Summer Reading Challenge, in coordination with New York State libraries, to inspire kids to read on a regular basis throughout the summer break.

This year, we celebrate the leisure time of summer with, "On your mark, get set… READ!" selected as the theme. These books explore the joy of having time for summer adventures and to dream big and work toward goals. It's a time to play sports, to make new friends, to dance and play music and to visit worlds which can only be visited through books. I've listed some book suggestions to get started, and you can head to your local library or go online for more.

Here's how the challenge works: Mark the enclosed calendar for each day in July and August that your child reads with you, someone else or alone. Once you have marked off 40 days or more, please return the completed form to my office, and I will award your child with a New York State Excellence in Reading certificate.

Thank you, and happy reading!

Assemblywoman
Addie J. Russell

Legislative Office Building, Room 456
Albany, NY 12248
518-455-5545
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New York State Assembly
Excellence in Reading Certificate

Information form

Child's name

School

Parent/Guardian name

Address 1

Address 2

Phone Email

Number of days completed

Favorite book read this summer

Number of years participated in the Summer Reading Challenge

To receive your certificate, please complete the above form and send it with the attached calendar to:

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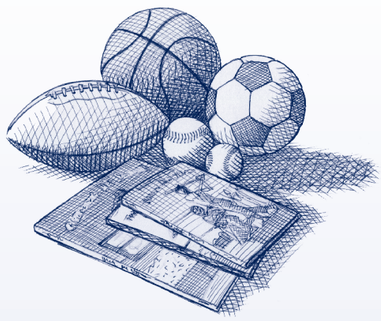


New York State Assembly's

Summer Reading Challenge

Sponsored by
Assemblywoman
Addie J. Russell

in cooperation with

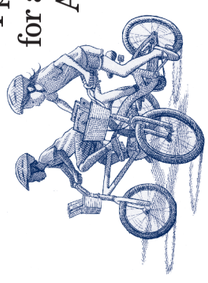
Summer Reading
AT NEW YORK LIBRARIES

www.summerreadingnys.org

Assemblywoman Addie J. Russell's

Summer Reading Challenge

"I pledge to read for at least 15 minutes each day for at least 40 days during the months of July and August. I will mark the calendar below with a check mark (✔) each day that I read by myself or with my reading buddy."



When you have marked at least 40 days on this calendar, you will earn an Excellence in Reading certificate. Just send the marked-off calendar and the completed form to my office and your certificate will arrive in the mail.

July 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Special thanks goes to the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development and librarians across the state for their help.

Updated 4/16

The Summer Reading Challenge

"Summer was supposed to be about freedom and youth and no school and possibilities and adventure and exploration. Summer was a book of hope."

– Benjamin Alire Sáenz, poet and novelist

Suggested Reading List

For more titles, visit: www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/explore.htm

Poetry

Enormous Smallness: A Story of E. E. Cummings *by Matthew Burgess.* This book is an introduction to the life and work of one of America's great poets. Non-fiction. Grades 3 and up.

Booked *by Kwame Alexander.* This free-verse novel is about a 12-year-old soccer player who struggles with family, love and a bully. Helping him is his best friend and a rapping librarian. Fiction. Grades 5-7.

Brown Girl Dreaming *by Jacqueline Woodson.* This is the author's memoir told in verse about growing up in South Carolina and New York during the Civil Rights Movement. Non-fiction. Grades 5 and up.

Picture Books

Little Humans *by Brandon Stanton.* From the blogger of "Humans of New York," comes a picture book of free-verse poetry with photographs which celebrate commonality and diversity among children. Non-fiction. Grades pre-K to 1.

Barreling Over Niagara Falls *by Nancy Allen.* This is the biography of the first person to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. We learn why and how she did it and also about those who followed her in later years. Non-fiction. Grades K-3.

Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message *by Chief Jake Swamp and Erwin Printup, Jr.* A children's version of the Thanksgiving Address, this message of gratitude originated with the native people of upstate New York and Canada and is still spoken at ceremonial gatherings. Non-fiction. Grades pre-K and up.

River of Dreams: The Story of the Hudson River *by Hudson Talbott.* The story of 400 years along the Hudson River is told as a dream sequence ending with the environmental recovery currently taking place. Non-fiction. Grades 1-3.

The Hula Hoopin' Queen *by Thelma Lynne Godin.* This fun book is the story of a girl's determination to win a hula hoop contest, the obstacles she encounters and the coming together of the whole neighborhood, young and old, to hula hoop. Fiction. Grades K-5.

All You Can Be: Dream It, Draw It, Become It *by Curtis Granderson.* This book is illustrated with drawings, chosen by Major League Baseball star Granderson, fourth graders made depicting their goals. This is the true story of a boy who worked hard to reach his goals. He shares his lessons of personal responsibility, character and integrity. Non-fiction. Grades pre-K to 5.

My Story, My Dance: Robert Battle's Journey to Alvin Ailey *by Lesa Cline-Ransome.* This is the true story of a boy who fell in love with dance, and despite many obstacles, worked hard and became the artistic director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Non-fiction. Grades K-5.

Good-bye, Havana! Hola, New York! *by Edie Colón.* Talk of Castro forces 5-year-old Gabriella's parents to leave Cuba while she stays behind with her grandparents. When she does join her parents in New York City, Gabriella finds that everything has changed for her: sights, sounds, smells, language and climate. Memoir. Grades pre-K to 3.

Turtle's Race with Beaver *by Joseph Bruchac.* Turtle wakes up from hibernation to discover that an aggressive beaver has taken over her pond, challenging her to a race to determine who can stay. This book offers lessons on cross culturalism, sharing, cooperation, perseverance and humility. Fiction. Grades K-3.

Early Readers

I Spy Fly Guy *by Tedd Arnold.* This book brings us a new adventure about Fly Guy playing hide-and-seek with his pal Buzz. Fiction. Grades preschool – 3.

Fancy Nancy: Budding Ballerina *by Jane O'Connor.* Fancy Nancy loves going to ballet class so much that she decides it's time to give her family ballet lessons. Fiction. Grades preschool-3.

Are You Ready to Play Outside (An Elephant and Piggie Book) *by Mo Willems.* Piggie is excited to play in the sunshine, but a rainy day threatens to ruin the fun. Fiction. Grades preschool-2.

Pete the Cat: Pete at the Beach *by James Dean.* Pete spends the day at the seashore with his family. His brother offers to give him surfing lessons, but the water looks scary. Fiction. Grades preschool-3.

Elementary Books

Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear *by Lindsay Mattick.* The tale of the real black bear that inspired the character of Winnie-the-Pooh is told with beautiful watercolor illustrations. Non-fiction. Grades K-3.

George Bellows: Painter with a Punch! *by Robert Burleigh.* This is the biography of a baseball player turned artist who spent most of his adult life in New York City capturing the energy of its people, from inside the boxing ring to swimmers diving into the East River. Biography. Grades 3-7.

Willie and Me *by Dan Gutman.* Part of the Baseball Card Adventures Series books, 13-year-old Stosh can use baseball cards to travel in time. This is the perfect mix of action and history for the youngest baseball fans. Fiction. Grades 3-7.

Postcards From(Postades Desde) New York City: (Traveling with Anna/Viajando Con Ana) *by Laura Crawford.* When visiting New York City, Anna sends postcards home detailing the famous landmarks she visits. Fiction. Bilingual. Grades 4-7.

Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. *by Doreen Rappaport.* This pictorial biography uses stunning watercolors and Dr. King's own words mixed with the author's prose to depict one of the world's greatest civil rights leaders. Biography. Grades K and up.

Through My Eyes *by Ruby Bridges.* This moving memoir of the first black student to attend an all-white school in 1960 is rich in history, simple in language and illustrated with photographs. Memoir. Grades 3-7.

Tibet Through the Red Box *by Peter Sís.* This is the author's story of being separated from his father as a child, and years later, receiving a red box containing his father's diary from his time in Tibet. Memoir. Grades 4-6.

The Year of the Dog *by Grace Lin.* Grace is the daughter of Taiwanese immigrants who is celebrating the Year of the Dog. This is the year she is supposed to find herself as she struggles to integrate her two cultures. Fiction. Grades 3-7.

Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel *by Nikki Grimes.* Dyamonde is a third grader coping with her parents' divorce, her move to a new neighborhood and school. She's a smart, confident girl seeking a new best friend. Fiction. Grades 2-4.

Middle School Readers/Tweens

10 True Tales: Heroes of 9/11 *by Allan Zullo.* A book of stories about the events on the day of September 11, 2001, this book focuses on character and is a tribute to the first responders at the Pentagon, the World Trade Center and those who fought back on United Flight 93. Non-fiction. Grades 4-7.

Bird in a Box *by Andrea Davis Pinkney.* During the Great Depression, in a small town in upstate New York, three children find hope in the boxing matches of Joe Lewis as he fights to become the country's next heavyweight champion. Fiction. Grades 3-7.

Mack McGinn's Big Win *by Coleen Murtagh Paratore.* This is a book about a competitive boy from a family of athletes trying to live up to his parents' expectations and the problems he faces when he and his family move to a new, upwardly mobile neighborhood. Fiction. Grades 5-9.

Hoggee *by Anna Myers.* This book is about a boy who works on the Erie Canal driving the mules that pull the boats along the canal. Howard learns about himself as he struggles to find food, understands his brother and befriends an older man and his family. Fiction. Grades 5-9.

Steel Drumming at the Apollo: The Road to Super Top Dog *by Trish Marx.* A group of 7 musicians from Schenectady, NY, win a talent competition and compete in a series of amateur nights at the famous Apollo Theater in Harlem. The story is told in photo-essay format and includes a CD of the students' music. Non-fiction. Grades 5 and up.

A Long Walk to Water: Based on a True Story *by Linda Sue Park.* Nya is an 11-year-old girl in Sudan in 2008 and Salva is a boy in 1985, one of the "lost boys" of Sudan. Their story is told simultaneously and their lives intersect in a surprising and moving way. Non-fiction. Grades 5-8.

Sweetgrass Basket *by Marlene Carvell.* Told in prose poetry and alternating voices, this story is based on true experiences of Native American children around 1900. After their mother dies, two Mohawk sisters are sent to an off-reservation school. Historical fiction. Grades 5-8.

Flamethrowers-Guardians of the Game *by J. Alan Childs.* Kenny lives in a hockey town, in a hockey family. His dad was a pro and Kenny hates hockey. He discovers a stone box in a cave which contains a stick. So begins Kenny's discovery of a sport new to him but ancient to the indigenous people who have always played this game. Fiction. Grades 5-8.

Behind the Mountains *by Edwidge Danticat.* Celiane and her family leave her mountain village in Haiti to join her father who has immigrated to Brooklyn five years ago. The book is in journal format in which 13-year-old Celiane tells the story of an immigrant. Fiction. Grades 5-12.

A Tugging String: A Novel about Growing Up During the Civil Rights Era *by David Greenberg.* Duvy's father is a civil rights lawyer who represents Martin Luther King, Jr. and the protesters in the voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery. We learn about 12-year-old Duvy's daily life from his worries about his baseball game to the sometimes scary and noble impact that his father's work had on the family. Memoir. Grades 4-8.

Forgotten Bones: Uncovering a Slave Cemetery *by Lois Miner Huey.* A skeleton head rolls off a dirt pile at a construction site in Albany, NY, and an archaeology dig is begun. The bones of 18th-century slaves are discovered and photos, illustrations and diagrams help us understand what their lives were like. Non-fiction. Grades 4-8.

Heat *by Mike Lupica.* Michael is a 13-year-old little league pitcher living in the shadow of Yankee Stadium. This is a great story for baseball lovers and one in which the main character struggles in order to achieve his goal. Fiction. Grades 5-9.

Roller Girl *by Victoria Jamieson.* While this book is about the sport of roller derby and was written by a real-life derby girl, the story is one of friendship and determination as experienced by 12-year-old Astrid. Fiction. Grades 4-8.