

Young Adult
Book Reviews
2000

Titles selected by the Students of
Scarborough Middle School
and the Staff of
Scarborough Public Library's
Children's Room



Young Adult Book Reviews 2000

Welcome to Scarborough Public Library Children's Room 7th annual young adult summer reading booklet. Students from Wentworth Middle School and the staff of the Children's Room recommend their favorite books for summer reading. Thanks to the students of Mark McIntyre and Randee Sue Allen for their contributions. Titles are presented in alphabetical order and include classics, old favorites and new titles. (Hint: don't count "A" or "The" as the first word of the title.) If a book was reviewed by more than one student, a single edited review appears followed by the students' names. Titles not available at SPL are marked with an asterisk (*). A few titles are out of print and this is indicated by (o.p.) next to the title. Check your school library or other public libraries for these titles. If you can't find one of these titles, look for other works by the same author. Adult titles are grouped at the end of this booklet. Happy reading!

Among the Hidden

Margaret Peterson Haddix
1998

We read *Among the Hidden*, a futuristic story set in an overpopulated world. To prevent starvation, each family is limited to two kids. Luke is a third child, hidden and kept secret from the population police. If he is discovered, he will be disposed of. Will Luke risk his life, or will he stay hidden? Read this compelling story to find out.



Liz Smith
Amanda Chamberlain

And Then There Were None

Agatha Christie
1939

And Then There Were None, by Agatha Christie, is the best book I have ever read. It is about ten people who are invited to go to a small island by a former acquaintance named U. N. Owen. When they get there everything seems normal, but Mr. Owen is not there and then people start dying. Did I say dying? I meant they are being murdered. The remaining people conclude that the killer is one of them so everyone is at each other's back. Will the murderer finish what he started? Read this suspenseful and thrilling mystery to find out.

Courtney Mack

*Body Bags**

Christopher Golden
1999

Body Bags, sounds scary doesn't it.... When Jenna Blake starts her freshman year at Somerset University, her father gets her an interview with a doctor. Only this doctor is a coroner. When she goes, Dr. Slikowsky interviews her while performing an autopsy. Dr.

Slikowsky finds a deadly disease caused by bot flies, who plant their eggs in their victim and when hatched come out as larva. The next day in class, her professor kills a student and then dies of the bot fly disease that is spreading rapidly. Check out this amazing book of life and death. You may get spooked reading this book. Caution: some violent content.

Keleigh Wheatley

*The Coffin Quilt**
Ann Rinaldi
1999

Fanny McCoy never asked for trouble, but trouble just seems to follow her. Her family has been fighting with the Hatfield family for as long as she can remember. All the time, people gossip about what they're fighting about this time. During the election one year, Fanny's favorite sister, Roseanna, runs off with Johnse Hatfield. While every one is looking for Roseanna, Fanny goes and tells Ro that she better come home. Roseanna leaves with Johnse and then it all begins. In a time of fighting, and in war, what will Fanny do? What will happen to Roseanna? Read to find out more.

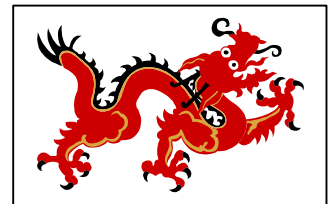
Paulie Dibner

*Cutting Loose**
Michael A. Lewin
1999

Jackie has disguised herself as a boy so she could play professional baseball. She unexpectedly finds herself in London, England, in pursuit of her best friend's murderer. She must find him for she swore she would, and Jackie doesn't break her swears. Meanwhile, Claudette, a young French girl, at the age of 10 lives in a different time period. She finds troubles of her own when her parents and brother die in a house fire. Now, she and her brothers are sold at an auction. So begins the intriguing story where three generations will intertwine.

Eliza Timpson

Dealing with Dragons
Patricia C. Wrede
1990



Princess Cimorene is bored with being a princess and learning embroidery and such. So she packs her bags and runs away, following the directions of a talking frog. She is completely unaware of what awaits her when she comes to an old shack and finds it full of dragons. From here the plot thickens with evil wizards and a plan to overthrow the dragon kingdom. Combine this with the enchanted forest, magical caves, Morwen the witch, and a stone prince, and you have one of the most enthralling fantasy books written in a long time.

Julie Endrizzi

The Devil's Arithmetic

Jane Yolen

1988

A young adult named Hannah hates Passover at her Grandfather's house. This is because he gets overly excited, and angry when he sees Jews in concentration camps on TV. He went to one of them in his early life. Hannah went to open the door to invite Elijah in, but she ended up in Poland in the year 1942. Hannah was called Chaya there. Before a wedding the Jews in that Polish village were captured by Nazi soldiers and taken to a work camp. Hannah is the only one there who knows the horrible things that await them. Will she survive this experience in the past?

Courtney Kleftis

Dragon's Gate

Laurence Yep

1993

Otter leaves his rich family in China for America where he works on the Great Continental Railroad. He joins his father and uncle in the Sierra Nevada Mountains to dig a tunnel through a mountain for the railroad. The work is unimaginably backbreaking, especially for fifteen-year-old Otter. He has to deal with arrogant Westerners and freezing conditions. A cave-in or avalanche could happen at any moment. The only thing that keeps him alive and working is having his friends and family by his side.

Greg Clary

Find a Stranger, Say Goodbye

Lois Lowry

1978

This book is about a 17-year-old girl named Natalie who believes that everything is perfect. When she decides to find her biological mother, she is full of questions that must be answered before she goes on to college. A decision she has to make between the mother she has always known and the mother who gave birth to her will change her life forever.

Ashley Duquette

Freak the Mighty

Rodman Philbrick

1993

Maxwell Kane is a giant. He wears size 14 shoes and is only in the 8th grade. All his life he's been an outcast, the son of a murderer. Then Kevin moves in next door. Kevin is the

same age as Maxwell, yet much smaller. He is crippled but extremely intelligent. Bionic bodies, new computers – his technological knowledge is extraordinary. So when Max and Kevin team up, they go on heroic adventures. But what will happen if the duo gets split up?

Kristi McHugh

*Go Ask Alice**
Anonymous
1971

The true story of a teenage girl and her world of drugs. Will her life ever be the same? Read the book to find out.

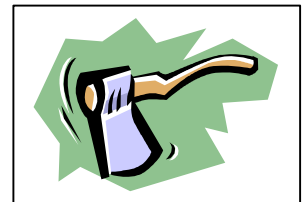
Sarah Morin

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
J. K. Rowling
1998

Harry Potter is not your average child at all. Having a visit from a giant named Hagrid, who tells young Harry of his true magical past, seems too much to ask for! Little does Harry know that Hagrid is offering him a chance to go to Hogwart's School for Wizards. Harry, accompanied by his pet owl, sets off for Hogwart's to experience a year of wizardry, a beloved broomstick game called quidditch, and other adventures plentiful enough to last a lifetime.

Kelsey Frank

Hatchet
Gary Paulsen
1987



Brian is a boy with many problems. His parents are divorcing, and he is stuck between their fights. On this particular day, Brian is on a plane to go see his father. It's one of those small planes that only allows the pilot and passenger, but when the pilot has a heart attack, Brian crashes the plane into a lake in the middle of the woods. He is forced to eat, sleep, and protect himself against wild animals as well as use all of his instincts to fight Mother Nature and stay alive.

Jesse Gadbois

The Hobbit
J. R. R. Tolkien
1984

Hobbit Bilbo Boggins goes on an adventure with an ancient wizard to rescue the townspeople of Mirkwood. As they creep through the dark cave, Bilbo discovers an

invisible ring but does not dare tell the others. As the plot thickens, he has mysterious encounters with singing elves and finally meets Smaug, the powerful dragon. At times Bilbo is tempted to give up because of starvation. Can he be a hero and survive all that lurks in the darkness?

Heather Scamman

Holes

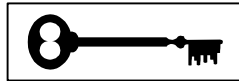
Louis Sachar
1998

After Stanley Yelnats is convicted of stealing, he has a choice between jail or Camp Green Lake. When he gets to Camp Green Lake, there's no lake, just a big dry patch of land. Every day at this Juvenile Center they have to dig a hole 5 feet by 5 feet. The day they are supposed to go home, his crazy counselors Mr. Sin and Mr. Pendanski won't let Stanley be released. Stanley and Zero run away into a cave to hide from the counselors. Then, they are attacked by Yellow-Spotted Lizards, the deadliest creatures on Earth. Will they survive?

Billy McHugh

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key

Jack Gantos
1998



Joey Pigza is wired. In fact, his whole family is wired like a “high voltage line.” When Joey’s meds wear down, trouble always seems to result. Joey suffers from a condition called Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, commonly known as ADHD. His antics in the classroom make Joey a challenge for his teacher, the principal, as well as his classmates. Joey’s impulsiveness results in him being moved to a special education center where he can get the help that he needs. Joey’s mother becomes his greatest advocate and they struggle together to overcome his problems. The author portrays the events in a humorous fashion, making this book a favorite for read aloud. It is an inspirational story for those of us whose lives have been touched by ADHD.

Randee-Sue Allen

King of Shadows

Susan Cooper
1999

Have you ever felt lost between two worlds? Dabbling between reality and something unknown? This riveting tale bounds between fantasy and historical fiction. Nat Field is haunted by a secret, which he is determined to hide from everyone, especially the actors in his drama troupe. His world disintegrates until he finds refuge in Elizabethan England. Follow Nat to a London of theater and magic and watch what unfolds!

Maureen Driscoll, Scarborough Public Library

Locadio's Apprentice (o.p.)
Chelsea Quinn Yarbrow
1984

Enecus Cano must choose a profession in which to be apprenticed. He wants to be a doctor but knows that his parents do not have the money. However, Locadio accepts him as an apprentice and Enecus learns medicine. His knowledge is tested when Mount Vesuvius erupts and the entire population of Pompeii is at risk. Will Enecus be able to help or will he too be swept away by the erupting volcano?

Kristin Caldwell, Scarborough Public Library

Lost on a Mountain in Maine
Donn Fendler
1978

Lost on a Mountain in Maine is a true story of a boy who loses his way and is forced to survive in the wilderness for seven days with only the clothes on his back. He comes face to face with a bear and meets up with some thirsty bloodsuckers and some hungry mosquitoes. Will he ever find his way out of the woods, or will his fate be in the dark woods of Maine? To find out, you will have to read this book.

Liz Smith

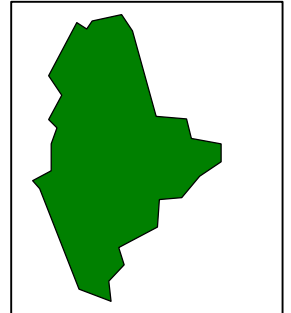
Mine Eyes Have Seen
Ann Rinaldi
1997

Annie is the daughter of anti-slavery activist John Brown. John Brown intends to start a revolution that will lead the slaves to rise up against their masters. Annie travels to Maryland to care for her father and brothers while they await the raid on the arsenal in Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Annie is also appointed lookout to watch for strangers who might be against John Brown's plans. She discovers that her real role is to serve as witness to the events that happen. Will John Brown go through with his raid? What will happen to Annie and the others? Read this historical fiction to find out.

Kristin Caldwell, Scarborough Public Library

Murder Must Advertise
Dorothy L. Sayers
1961

Lord Peter Wimsey is called to investigate the death of an employee at Pym's Publicity.



As Lord Peter starts his normal investigation, something doesn't feel right about Pym's. Lord Peter learns that this isn't just a death of one man, but five others perish for the same reason. To discover the felon, and an underground drug trade, read *Murder Must Advertise*.

Nick Lapiana

N or M?
Agatha Christie
1941

N or M? is about the elderly couple Tommy and Tuppence. Tommy is asked to be a spy for England during World War II, and he's supposed to go to Sans Souci, where the last spy was killed. His job is to find out who the head of German intelligence is. Being her sneaky self, Tuppence follows Tommy and helps him in his investigation. Will they live to tell Grant, the person who hired them, what they have figured out about the not-so-normal people at Sans Souci? Read the book and find out!

Katie Cella

*October Sky**
Homer Hickum, Jr.
1999

Homer Hickum lived in a small, West Virginia mining town called Coalwell. Everybody in this town grew up to become a miner unless they got out on a football scholarship. Homer dreamed about helping Warner von Bron build rockets at Cape Canaveral. His father and brother discourage him, but he still builds mini-rockets and launches them. Homer and his friends make it to the national science fair with their experiment. Will they win? Will he get a scholarship to college and a ticket out of Coalwell?

Brian Vautin

*The Other Side of Dark**
Joan Lowery Nixon
1986

Imagine waking up in a room that you don't recognize and in a body that's not yours. Well, that's the way seventeen-year-old Stacy McAdams felt when she awoke from a four-year coma caused by a gunshot. Stacy not only finds out that she is the only eyewitness to her wound, but more devastatingly, to her mother's murder. Stacy tries to remember the killer, but so far all she can recall is what his body looks like. The face is still a blur. However, the killer isn't about to let her fit in the last piece of this puzzle. Joan Lowery Nixon has written another nail-biting mystery. This is a motivating page-turner. Will the killer subject Stacy to the same fate as her mother? To find out you will have to read *The Other Side of the Dark*.

Maia Hazelwood

The Red Badge of Courage
Stephen Crane
1962

The Red Badge of Courage is an incredible story of a youth's participation in the Civil War. It is not merely a war story; it is actually about the bravery and psychological struggle that soldiers go through. Stephen Crane does an amazing job of describing the cacophony of the muskets, and the foul stench of the gunpowder. I would recommend this book to anyone who craves adventure.

Ryan Beaudoin

Romeo and Juliet
William Shakespeare

Life was perfect for young Romeo, until he met the girl of his dreams. It would have been ideal except the woman he fell in love with was the daughter of his father's archenemy. Their love was forbidden by all, and they will have to pay the ultimate price for their feelings. This book was by far the greatest play ever written by Shakespeare.

Joe Donahue

The Ruby in the Smoke
Philip Pullman
1994

There is smoke around you and you are being pulled in. Your heart is beating. The smoke around you is suffocating. As you step into the darkness, you see that the walls are spinning around you. All of a sudden you see two evil-looking men. Then you realize that one of them is your father. This is how 16-year-old Sally Lockhart feels as she is torn over the harrowing tale of *The Ruby in the Smoke*.

Billie-Jo Beeler

Tangerine
Edward Bloor
1997

The soccer goalie at Tangerine Middle School may be legally blind, but Paul Fisher, a.k.a. "Mars" or "the Fisher Man", sees things that others miss. Like how mean his football star brother is. Like how his teammates trust and support each other, on or off the playing field, in spite of their differences. This action packed story, written in diary style, has strong characters, lots of soccer, and a likable, funny and decent hero.

Marilyn Taylor, Scarborough Public Library

Torn Away
James Heneghan
1994

Living alone in Northern Ireland, thirteen-year-old Declan attempts to avenge his family's deaths by joining the IRA to fight the British. His father was murdered when Declan was very young, and his mother and sister were recently killed in a bombing. During his harassment of the British troops, Declan is captured by the British and shipped to his uncle's house in Canada. He vows to return and continue his fight. Will Declan return to Ireland? Will he stay in Canada with his uncle? Will Declan finally find peace?

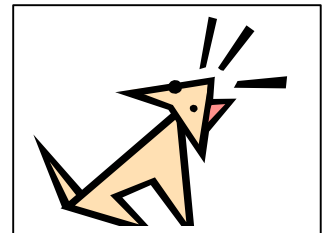
Kristin Caldwell, Scarborough Public Library

When Zachary Beaver Came to Town
Kimberly Willis Holt
1999

Perched on the roof of the Bowl-a-Rama in Antler, Texas, Toby and his friend Cal observe the world around them. Of special interest is the arrival of the trailer containing "the fattest boy in the world". Toby and Cal lined up with their neighbors and paid \$2 to see Zachary Beaver, but the boys want to know more and eventually the "curiosity" becomes a friend. Toby has other concerns during the summer: his mother has gone to Nashville to become a star, Cal's brother is fighting in the war in Vietnam, and Toby is in love. Kimberly Willis Holt won the National Book Award for *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*, she also wrote *My Louisiana Sky*, one of ALA's Top Ten Best Books for Young Adults in 1998.

Marilyn Taylor, Scarborough Public Library

Where the Red Fern Grows
Wilson Rawls
1961



Billy Colman lives with his parents and his three sisters in the Ozarks. Ever since he was a child, he has wanted to have two coonhounds of his own. His parents won't buy him dogs because they cost about seventy-five dollars each. One day, when Billy was walking along the river emptying his hunting traps, he found a fisherman's magazine. In the back of the magazine, there was an ad for coon hound pups for only twenty-five dollars each. Billy saves the money and buys the dogs. He trains them to be the best hunting team in the valley. What will become of this dynamic duo? Read the book to find out.

Matt Libby

*Wild Magic**
Tamora Pierce
1992

Ouna thought it was just a joke when a girl asked her for apprenticeship. It was no joke. Daine has no family except a horse, Cloud. Ouna takes Daine in as an apprentice. She

helps Ouna out in her job, taking care of horses. Along the way, they encounter every sort of danger. How will they fare? This is a great book for any lover of fantasy.

Sara Bereman

A Wind in the Door

Madeline L'Engle

1973

Meg Murry, a young girl who worries and panics easily, gets selected to go on a frightening adventure. A dragon and a boy named Calvin come with her to save her brother from an illness that could lead to death. The Eurthopia is taking over, and Meg and Calvin have to solve three tests. Mr. Jenkins, Meg's principal, is the first test, and when Meg selects the right Mr. Jenkins, the Eurthopia fades away. Mr. Jenkins then comes with Meg and the dragon. The last test involves getting a faralando to open. When it does, Meg and Mr. Jenkins get caught by the shrieking and swirling Eurthopia. Will Meg save Charles or will the Eurthopia get them all?

Laura Wood

Wise Child

Monica Furlong

1987

Magic, good versus evil, supernatural powers... travel back in time to a Scottish village where a strong-willed, independent young girl lives. Wise Child, abandoned by her parents, is taken in by the strange, yet beautiful Juniper. Follow Wise Child's exciting journey through ancient Celtic lore, magic, and the comfort of finally finding a home.

Maureen Driscoll, Scarborough Public Library

A Wizard of Earthsea

Ursula K. LeGuin

1975

Duny is a wizard who lives on the island Gont in the fantasy land of Earthsea. He receives his "true name," Ged, and goes to wizard school on the island of Rote. While there, he makes two good friends, Vetch and an animal named on Otak, and an enemy named Jasper. Jasper challenges Ged to a wizard's duel, and Ged ends up releasing a powerful and very evil spirit from the land of the dead. To get the spirit back to where it belongs, in the underworld, Ged must go to the far reaches of Earthsea and defeat the evil that he let loose. Will Ged resolve his conflict with the "shadow" or will it haunt him for the rest of his life?

Kelsey Sheehan

A Wrinkle in Time
Madeline L'Engle
1962

Three young kids named Charles, Wallace, Meg, and their friend Calvin, try to save Meg, Charles, and Wallace's Dad. They meet three witches named Mrs. Who, Mrs. Whatsit, and Mrs. Which. These witches are very old and teach the young kids about a tesseract, which will wrinkle time. They travel through a black hole that brings them into the future. They try to save their father, but first they have to meet a lot of weird people and see a lot of weird planets. Will they save their father and wrinkle time by the tesseract with these three witches?

Alex Coupe

Adult Books

A Child Called "It"
Dave Pelzer
1995

A compelling, true story that will have you realizing the little luxuries that we enjoy shouldn't be taken for granted. Reading this will make you want to reach out and help this boy, who isn't even considered a real boy, but an "It." An outcast in school and at home, staying alive is a daily struggle for David. His fight for food gets harder and harder. Everyday he wonders if his mother thinks he has been a "bad boy." What will that mean? What torturous "game" will she play on him next? Will he ever be free?

Katherine DiFiore

Crewel Lye: a caustic yarn
Piers Anthony
1985

In a land of magic and power, named Xanth, a young magician was born. She had the ultimate magical power of things becoming what she thinks them to be. For example, if you were ultimately stupid and she thought you were a genius, you would become temporarily a genius (until she left). She met a ghost named Jordan. Jordan once was a man who had a "talent" (magic power) that was so powerful, he almost couldn't be killed. He could heal himself, sometimes, from almost all near-death experiences. He tells Ivy the story of his life and how he finally became a ghost. From a woman he loved and an evil magician who couldn't decide for himself ... the cruel lie killed him. He was murdered three times by the woman he loves, each time bringing her back, but why? Why bring her back? What was his reason?

Paul Peters IV

Daughter of Time
Josephine Tey
1977



This is the light, yet intriguing story of a hospital-bound Police Constable. Confined to his bed, Grant searches wildly for an escape from boredom. A portrait of Richard III catches his attention and so begins a deep research of the dubious monarch. Enlisting the help of Brent Carridine, their research may well rewrite British history. This novel is worthy of attention.

Andy Mills

Ender's Game
Orson Scott Card
1985

Ender's Game is a futuristic science fiction novel about an inter-species war between the humans and the buggers. During this time, couples are required to have two children. These children would be tested for any military intelligence. If they possessed some, they were sent to a military camp in space where they would learn the fundamentals of warfare. The government required only two children and it was shameful to have a third. It was even more shameful to be a third child. One such third, Ender Wiggin, made it through Battle School and is now expected to save the human race. Can he do it?

Noah Cohen

The Lost Boy
Dave Pelzer
1997

An inspiring sequel to the wonderful book *A Child Called "It"*. Dave Pelzer was abused growing up and now is in foster care, but his mother wants him in a mental hospital. She will stop at nothing to put him away. Read *The Lost Boy* to see what happens in this amazing true story.

Danielle O'Halloran

The Shining
Stephen King
1977

This gripping classic horror novel by Stephen King will keep you reading by day and scared by night. The Torrance family is a bit of a dysfunctional family. Jack Torrance is an author who used to have a drinking problem and is asked to be the caretaker of a hotel up in the mountains for the winter. The family is forced to stay in the hotel because the roads are all snowed in. When the son Danny starts to get frightening visions in the hotel and Jack starts to get a bad case of cabin fever, things begin to get much worse.

Steven Hayworth
Eric Verge

Summer Sisters
Judy Blume
1998

When Caitlyn asks Vix to stay with her in Martha's Vineyard for the summer, Vix is ecstatic! Caitlyn is beyond your typical teenage girl and Vix is surprised that someone of her stature wants to be with her. The girls grow inseparable as the summer progresses, but things begin to change. When love arises, Vix is caught between staying with her first and long-time boyfriend or going to college under a special scholarship. Vix's logical thinking gains her a good job, but Caitlyn's exotic way of living worries her, especially when Caitlyn doesn't return from one of her numerous trips. As they grow apart, and Caitlyn makes many surprising choices, Vix will never forget the days on the beach. She will never forget her "summer sister."

Becka Johnson

2001: A Space Odyssey
Arthur C. Clarke
1968

The year is 2001, and a journey is about to take place like no other. Dave Bowman and Frank Poole are about to lead a trip to Saturn. The ship's manual computer, Hal, is able to have intelligent conversations with the crew. Soon after, the mission goes haywire, and Bowman is the only one still alive on the ship. Can he keep his mind going straight and finish the mission? More importantly, can he figure out the true purpose of this voyage? Read and find out.

Tim Erwin

This booklet is also available on the web at

<http://www.library.scarborough.me.us/Children/ya2000.pdf>

