

8th Grade Summer Reading Adventures - 2025

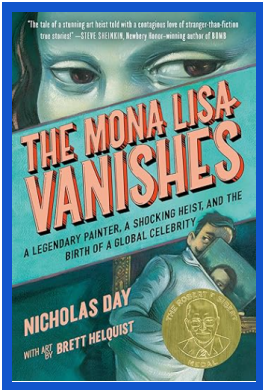
"So please, oh please, we beg, we pray.

Go throw your TV set away!

And in its place you can install,

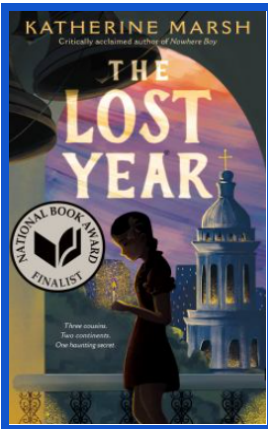
a lovely bookshelf on the wall."

- Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*



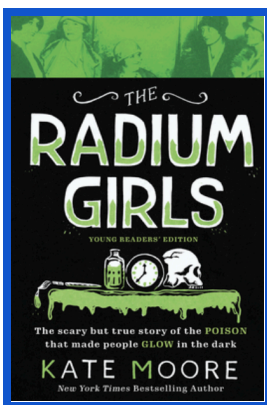
The Mona Lisa Vanishes / Nicholas Day / 2023

On a hot August day in Paris, just over a century ago, a desperate guard burst into the office of the director of the Louvre and shouted, La Joconde, c'est partie! The Mona Lisa, she's gone! No one knew who was behind the heist. Was it an international gang of thieves? Was it an art-hungry American millionaire? Was it the young Spanish painter Pablo Picasso, who was about to remake the very art of painting? Travel back to an extraordinary period of revolutionary change: turn-of-the-century Paris. Meet the infamous thieves--and detectives--of the era. And then slip back further in time and follow Leonardo da Vinci, painter of the Mona Lisa, through his dazzling, wondrously weird life. Discover the secret at the heart of the Mona Lisa--the most famous painting in the world should never have existed at all.



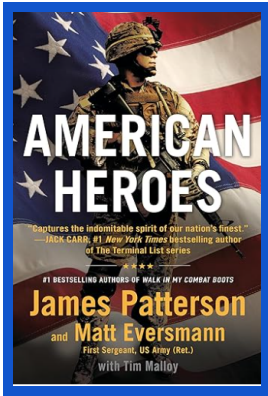
The Lost Year / Katherine Marsh / 2024

A middle-grade survival story that traces a family secret back to the Holodomor, a terrible famine that devastated Soviet Ukraine in the 1930s. Thirteen-year-old Matthew is miserable. His journalist dad is stuck overseas indefinitely, and his mom has moved in his one-hundred-year-old great-grandmother to ride out the pandemic, adding to his stress and isolation. But when Matthew finds a tattered black-and-white photo in his great-grandmother's belongings, he discovers a clue to a hidden chapter of her past, one that will lead to a life-shattering family secret. Set in alternating timelines that connect the present-day to the 1930s and the US to the USSR, Katherine Marsh's latest novel sheds fresh light on the Holodomor – the horrific famine that killed millions of Ukrainians, and which the Soviet government covered up for decades.



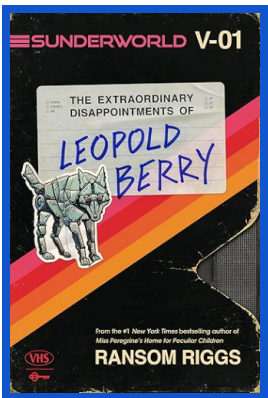
The Radium Girls: The Scary But True Story of the Poison That Made People Glow in the Dark / Kate Moore / 2016

Amidst the excitement of the early twentieth century, hundreds of young women spend their days hard at work painting watch dials for troops overseas using glow-in-the-dark paint made with radium. They are well paid and consider themselves lucky—until they begin to fall mysteriously ill. As the corporations try to cover up a shocking secret, these determined shining girls suddenly find themselves at the center of a historic, deadly scandal. Written with a captivating voice and galloping pace, *The Radium Girls* illuminates the courage and tenacity of these incredible women, whose determination to fight back led to life-changing regulation, advanced nuclear research, and ultimately saved countless lives.



American Heroes / James Patterson and Matt Eversmann / 2024

U.S. soldiers who served in overseas conflicts—from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan—share true stories of the actions that earned them some of America’s most distinguished military medals, up to and including the Medal of Honor. They never acted alone, but always in the spirit of camaraderie, patriotism, and for the good of our beloved country. This book helps readers consider the concepts of duty, sacrifice, and what it means to be an American hero. “A riveting chronicle of valor, humanity, and sacrifice, the diverse stories within the book’s pages represent the very threads that hold our flag together.” —Mark Greaney, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Chaos Agent*, a *Gray Man* novel



Sunderworld, Vol. I: The Extraordinary Disappointments of Leopold Berry / Ransom Riggs / 2024

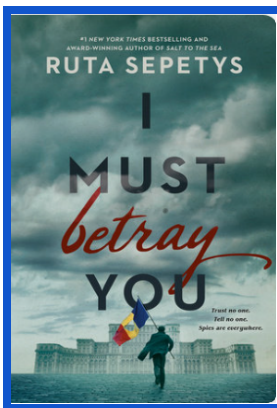
Seventeen-year-old Leopold Berry is seeing weird things around Los Angeles. A man who pops a tooth into a parking meter. A glowing trapdoor in a parking lot. A half-mechanical raccoon with its tail on fire that just won’t leave him alone. Every moment seems plucked from a cheesy 1990s fantasy TV show called Max’s Adventures in Sunderworld—and that’s because they are.

Not a good sign.

In the blurry weeks after his mother’s death, a young Leopold discovered VHS tapes of its one and only season in a box headed for the trash—and soon became obsessed.

Losing himself in Sunder was the best way to avoid two things: grieving his mother and being a chronic disappointment to his overbearing father. But when the strange visions return—at the worst possible time on the worst possible day—Leopold turns to his best

friend Emmet for help. Together they discover that Sunder is much more than just an old TV show, and that Los Angeles is far stranger than they ever imagined. And soon, he’ll realize that not only is Sunderworld real, but it’s in grave danger. Certain he’s finally been chosen for greatness, Leopold risks everything to claim his destiny, save the world of his childhood dreams, and prove once and for all that he’s not the disappointment his father believes him to be. But when everything goes terribly, horribly, excruciatingly wrong, Leopold’s disappointments prove to be more extraordinary than he ever could have imagined. How do you battle darkness when no one believes in you—not even yourself? Welcome to Sunderworld.



I Must Betray You / Ruta Sepetys / (2022)

Romania, 1989. Communist regimes are crumbling across Europe. Seventeen-year-old Cristian Florescu dreams of becoming a writer, but Romanians aren’t free to dream; they are bound by rules and force. Amidst the tyrannical dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu in a country governed by isolation and fear, Cristian is blackmailed by the secret police to become an informer. He’s left with only two choices: betray everyone and everything he loves—or use his position to creatively undermine the most notoriously evil dictator in Eastern Europe. Cristian risks everything to unmask the truth behind the regime, give voice to fellow Romanians, and expose to the world what is happening in his country. He eagerly joins the revolution to fight for change when the time arrives. But what is the cost of freedom? A gut-wrenching, startling window into communist Romania and the citizen spy network that devastated a nation.