

# TEEN SUMMER READING PICKS

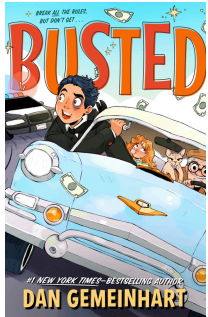
2026

Grade 6-8

Hand-picked by your Favorite Westwood Librarians!

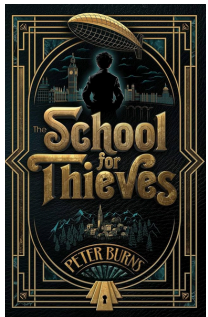
## Librarian Favorites in Children's

GN - Graphic Novel



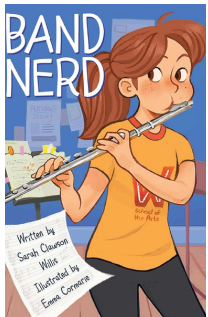
### Busted by Dan Gemeinhart

Oscar Aberdeen is a bit of an oddball, mostly due to the fact that he is the youngest resident of Sunny Days retirement home. When his grandpa suddenly served an eviction notice that threatens their place at Sunny Days, he needs to find some cash. Enter Jimmy Deluca, a shady elderly man with a reputation for being bad news, who makes Oscar an offer he can't refuse. He knows where to get some cash on the "outside" and he'll share the loot with Oscar on one condition: he busts him out of Sunny Days.



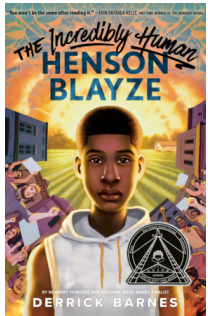
### The School for Thieves by Peter Burns

Orphaned 13-year-old Tom Morgan has spent years perfecting the art of thievery. He survives by picking strangers' pockets on the streets of London, all the while avoiding snatchers who would lock him up in a workhouse if caught. Things look grim when his friends are captured by snatchers. Then Tom receives a mysterious recruitment card promising fortune to the daring and capable. Tom soon finds himself whisked away to Beaufort's School for Deceptive Arts, an elite boarding academy for thieves, where he is told he'll learn what he needs to save his friends.



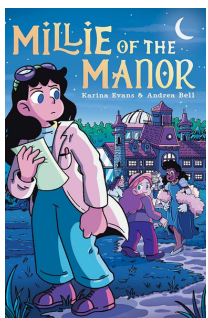
### Band Nerd by Sarah Clawson Willis GN

For 12-year-old Lucy Carver, music is the perfect escape from homework and a tough homelife. After starting at Windley School of the Arts, the high expectations makes it harder to enjoy. As things spiral out of control with her parents and her schoolwork, Lucy grows desperate for a win. Just when she thinks she's hitting all the right notes, an accident leaves her unable to play and her mother threatens to withdraw her for poor grades. Now Lucy must sabotage snobby Tollie Claybourne to get first chair flute or give up on her dream.



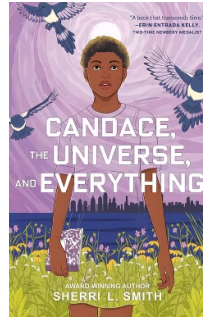
### The Incredibly Human Henson Blayze by Derrick Barnes

In a small town in Mississippi, all eyes are on Henson Blayze, a 13-year-old football phenom who many have wondered if he was super-human. After a horrifying incident forces Henson to speak out about injustice, he realizes that he isn't as loved by the people as he thought. The town is divided into two chaotic sides. When he is told to play ball again or else, Henson must decide whether he was born to entertain people who may not even see him as human, or if he's destined for a different kind of greatness.



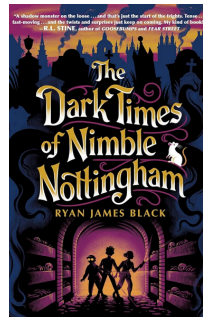
### Millie of the Manor: A Graphic Novel by Karina Evans and Andrea Bell GN

Amy loves a good mystery, but after being invited to a murder-mystery-themed birthday party all she can think about is her social anxiety messing everything up. When she finds out that each guest is assigned a character for the night, she's excited to be "Millie Morgan," a scientist looking to solve the murder and clear her name. But when evidence piles up and clues begin to incriminate her alter ego, Amy's anxiety comes rushing back. With the help of her new friends, Amy must learn to navigate her own anxiety AND prove her character's innocence.



### Candace, the Universe, and Everything by Sherri L. Smith

Candace Wells opens up her locker to find a mysterious notebook inside. The only thing inside is a name and year: Tracey Auburn, 1988. Things get strange when Candace writes in the book and Tracey writes back. She then hears from Loretta, the person who had the locker in 1948. Candace, Loretta and Tracey meet up in the present day and Loretta explains that she needs help researching this portal in the locker and others that are across Chicago.



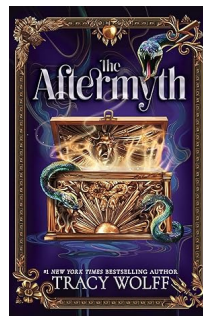
### The Dark Times of Nimble Nottingham by Ryan James Black

Nimble and his dog, Winnie, have been doing their best to survive the streets of WWII London. When a bomb falls onto Gravenhurst Manor, Nim wants to quickly get inside and hunt for things to sell for food. Then Mouse, a member of a local street gang, invites himself along. Inside they find more than just crumbling walls- beneath the Manor lies a secret room with a locked safe. Of course, Nim cracks the safe and unknowingly unleashes a monster. It is now up to Nim and Mouse to put a stop to what they started.



### Confessions from the Group Chat by Jodi Meadows

Virginia just wants to fit in, which means she sometimes says nasty things she doesn't actually mean in her friend's group chat. But after a blowout fight with the Queen Bee herself, her mean texts are posted online for everyone to see! Then a mystery boy texts Virginia by accident and quickly becomes her closest confidante. She doesn't want him to know which classmate she is because then he'll connect her to the mean texts ALL OVER THE INTERNET). She likes him, but she really likes Grayson, too.



### The Aftermyth by Tracy Wolff

Penelope Weaver has spent her whole life preparing to attend Anaximander's Academy, where she knows she's an Athena. When her and her twin brother Paris arrive, it appears fate has other plans. Penelope is instead placed with students who are anything but practical and who prefer parties to rules. And that's just the beginning. As the world around her shifts and cracks, Penelope is asked to forget everything she thought she knew to help create a better story...even if that changes every plan and breaks every rule.



### Nightmare on Nightmare Street by R.L. Stine

Joe Ferber has just moved into a house with his family that is straight out of a horror movie. As he tries to fall asleep that first night, his light begins to flash and a doll appears in his bed... and then Shawn Hannigan wakes up from a dream. Shawn and his little sister are living in that same house with their mother. After the first day of school, a stranger claiming to be his mom picks him up and tells him he doesn't have a sister. Now both boys have to figure out their nightmares...

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## Librarian Favorites in YA



### Change of Plans by Sarah Dessen

Finley has just graduated high school and plans to follow her boyfriend Colin to state school for college after summer break. But then she goes on a last-minute trip with her distant mom to a family vacation house that Finley didn't know existed and is now about to be sold. And when Colin breaks up with Finley over video call, she impulsively tosses her cellphone into the lake. Forced offline, Finley distracts herself by getting a diner job, bonding with estranged family, and making new friends. By the end of the summer, nothing will be the same.



### This Could All Go Bad by Spencer Hall

Jensen would describe himself as risk-averse (other people would say coward), so when his two best friends, Maleek and Cooper, show up at his window late at night to convince him to come out on a life-changing adventure of dares, he's skeptical, to say the least. But Maleek needs him to help defeat a team of girls (including Jensen's crush, Leslie) in a competition to finish a list of dares. This is the final night before the end of eighth grade, so Jensen knows it's now or never: it's time to face his fears and start taking risks.



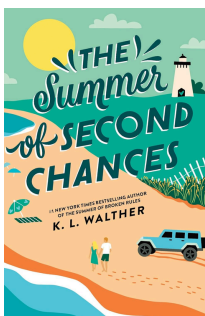
### Until the Clock Strikes Midnight by Alechia Dow

Darling and Calamity both want the same thing: for mortal Lucy to avoid an Unhappily Ever After. If successful, they'd win the coveted mentorship with the Mortal Outcome Council. However, there's only one spot available, and they have differing ideas on what Lucy's life should look like. Darling, an unapologetically big and loud fairy, wants to push Lucy toward a Happily Ever After. Calamity, a scowling and practical Misfortune, thinks Lucy should aim for stability.



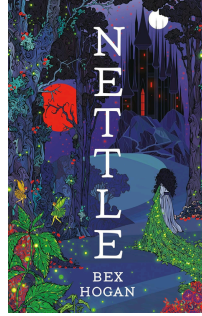
### Red Star Rebels by Amie Kaufman

It's 2067, and the Graves family has transformed Mars into a chaotic patch of settlements. You can buy a piece if you're rich. Enter Hunter Graves, the handsome, ambitious grandson of the man who settled Mars. After an emergency evacuation Hunter is left behind. Also stranded: Cleo, a stowaway with no intention of dying today. As their oxygen starts to run out, they discover that the base is actually being targeted by mercenaries and is set to explode in 8 hours. Hunter and Cleo have 8 hours to stop the explosion... and fall in love.



### The Summer of Second Chances by K.L. Walther

Olivia Lupo is postponing college to work at a bookstore and be there for her ailing grandmother, Annie. Annie, has dementia, and Olivia can't bear the thought of being so far from home when Annie needs her. So when her stepmom asks the family to spend three weeks of the summer on Martha's Vineyard, Olivia plans to say no...until she discovers an old box Annie filled with photos and memories from her own time there. Olivia decides to follow in her grandmother's footsteps of her time on the island years ago.



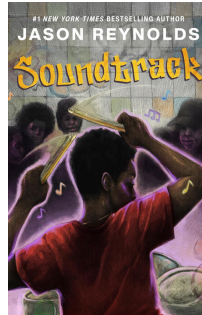
### Nettle by Bex Hogan

A wild misfit in the human world, Nettle is enthralled by the glamour of the faery realm. To try to save her beloved grandmother who is fading in her world, Nettle makes a pact with the faery king. He'll heal her grandmother in exchange for Nettle completing three tasks. She agrees, not realizing that deception lurks in this enchanted place, and that she has been tricked...



### Under a Fire-Red Sky by Geraldine McCaughrean

As WWII looms, children are evacuated from London homes and sent to the countryside for their safety. Just as her train is scheduled to leave Greenwich, however, teenage Gemmy hops off, prompting three other teens in her railcar—Olive, Lawrence, and Franklin—to follow suit. Each one has their own reasons for remaining in London. But as the Blitz begins, the four friends must rely on one another to survive.



### Soundtrack by Jason Reynolds

Stuy was raised on music. His mother, a former drummer of a punk band, passed along her percussion wisdom. Now, Stuy is kicked out by his mom's new abusive boyfriend and is out on his own at only eighteen. He's crashing on his Uncle Lucky's couch while pursuing his dream of starting a band like the one his parents were in. Stuy forms a band with Dunks, Keith, Alexis, and Frankie—all wicked musicians who also become fast friends. (Listen on Libby!)



### Self Portrait by Ludwig Volbeda

Jip (sounds like Yip) has an assignment from school for spring break: draw a self-portrait. That should be easy for someone who can draw so well. Yet Jip's thoughts keep wandering. To the new boy in class, to beetles and fireflies, to twilight dreaming, to the party next Friday, and especially to the boy who changed Jip's world once and for all.



### The Book of Murmurs by Candice Purwin

When tragedy strikes her household and her book of spells is stolen, Little Moon is spirited away to the strange, shimmering world of The Fault. In this land rich in lore and crackling with magic, she must find allies, discover her true name, and channel the stories of her matrilineal line to battle the fearsome Shenk.

GN