HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2019  
Grades 7 and 8

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

Alexander, Kwame. **The Crossover.** Houghton Mifflin, 2014. Twins Josh and Jordan, both of whom love basketball, begin to grow apart in adolescence at the same time as their father, a former basketball star, begins to experience health issues. *Written in verse. Newbery Medal 2015*

Anthony, Lawrence. **The Elephant Whisperer: My Life with the Herd in the African Wild (Young Readers’ Edition).** Holt, 2017. Lawrence Anthony reflects on his decision to accept a group of hard-to-manage wild elephants onto his South African game reserve in an effort to ensure their survival.

Anderson, John David. **Posted.** Walden Pond Press, 2017. Eighth graders thwart a phone ban at their school with a creative use of post-it notes, until the messaging gets harmful and a group of outsider teens take a stand to promote inclusiveness and kindness.

Anderson, M. T. **The Assassination of Brangwain Spurge.** Candlewick, 2018. This is a collaboration between author M. T. Anderson and illustrator Eugene Yelchin about an inept and unlikely pair - an elf and a goblin - in which the stiff and snobby historian elf is catapulted into the goblin kingdom as a spy/unknowing assassin and is hosted by the goblin archivist, who is anxious for cultural exchanges. *National Book Award Finalist 2018*

Asimov, Isaac. **The Stars, Like Dust.** First published 1951. At the death of his father, Biron Farrill becomes involved in the plot to rebel against the Tyranni who have conquered many worlds. *Series*

Bascomb, Neal. **The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World’s Most Notorious Nazi.** Arthur A. Levine, 2013. Recounts how sixteen years after the end of World War II, a team of undercover Israeli agents captured the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in a remote area of Argentina and brought him to trial in Israel for crimes committed during the Holocaust.

Berry, Julie. **The Scandalous Sisterhood of Prickwillow Place.** Roaring Brook, 2014. The students at St. Etheldreda’s School for Girls face a difficult dilemma disguising inconvenient facts when their headmistress and her horrible brother are poisoned, and they decide that they would rather stay together and not go home to their unloving families. *The audiobook version is highly recommended.*

Bowling, Dusti. **Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus.** Sterling, 2017. New friends, a mystery, and a lot of humor help Aven, thirteen, adjust to middle school and life at a dying western theme park, where her being born armless presents many challenges.
Brody, Jessica. *A Week of Mondays*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016. Sixteen-year-old Ellison Sparks keeps reliving that terrible Monday when her boyfriend, Tristan, breaks up with her; and no matter how hard she tries, she cannot seem to set things right.

Brown, Daniel James. *The Boys in the Boat: The True Story of an American Team’s Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics (Young Readers’ Adaption)*. Viking, 2015. Adapted for young readers by Gregory Mone, this is the remarkable story of the University of Washington’s 1936 eight-oar crew team and their epic quest for an Olympic gold medal, defeating elite rivals first from eastern and British universities before challenging the German crew rowing for Adolf Hitler at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin.


Budhos, Marina. *Watched*. Wendy Lamb, 2016. Naeem, a senior in high school and an immigrant from Bangladesh, doesn’t feel at home anywhere - at home, at school, or with his friends. Tricked into shoplifting by one “friend,” he is arrested by NYPD and given a choice—go to jail or become an informant, spying on his own Muslim community.

Cameron, Sharon. *The Forgetting*. Scholastic, 2016. Seventeen-year-old Nadia lives in Canaan, a quiet city in an idyllic world, but every twelve years the people of Canaan undergo a collective Forgetting after which the people are left without any trace of memory of themselves, their families, or their lives—except for Nadia, who does not forget. *The audiobook version is highly recommended*. Series

Carriger, Gail. *Etiquette & Espionage*. Little, Brown, 2013. In an alternate England of 1851, spirited fourteen-year-old Sophronia is enrolled in a finishing school where she is surprised to learn that lessons include not only the fine arts of dance, dress, and etiquette, but also diversion, deceit, and espionage. *The audiobook version is highly recommended*. Series

Connor, Leslie. *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle*. Katherine Tegen, 2018. Mystery surrounds the death of Mason’s friend, and when a second friend goes missing, Mason falls under suspicion. Mason struggles at school with learning and is bullied, but he has a steadfast heart that allows the truth about Mason Buttle to be revealed. *National Book Award Finalist 2018*

Cooney, Caroline B. *No Such Person*. Delacorte, 2015. One of the Allerdon sisters has been charged with a pre-meditated killing, so when Lander says she did not do it, Miranda, who wants to believe her sister, finds that the evidence is pointing to Lander’s guilt.
Crossan, Sarah. *The Weight of Water.* Bloomsbury, 2013. Told in verse, this story is about twelve-year-old Kasienka who immigrates to England from Poland with her mother in search of Kasienka's father. Sadly, everyone is not friendly except for one neighbor and a cute boy she meets at the swimming pool, which is her only refuge from bullies and an unfamiliar society.

Culbertson, Kim. *The Wonder of Us.* Point, 2017. Riya and Abby were best friends in their small California town, but Riya and her family moved to Berlin for Riya's junior year, and it was hard to stay in touch. Now that the year has passed, Riya proposes that they take a two-week Grand Tour and travel around Europe to reconnect--but they have both been hiding secrets, and those secrets threaten to push them apart forever.

Dashner, James. *The Eye of Minds.* Delacorte, 2013. Kaine, a cyberterrorist, has been holding players hostage in the VirtNet, a total mind/body virtual reality immersion. Michael and his friends, skilled gamers, are hired to go off the grid to track him down. *Series*

Davies, Linda. *Longbow Girl.* Chicken House, 2016. Sixteen-year-old expert archer Merry Owen is desperate to save her family's farm in Wales. When she finds a buried chest containing an ancient and possibly valuable Welsh text, she hopes it will be the key to a fortune -- and so it is, but not in the way she expected, for it sends her and her friend James de Courcy into the past.

Deuker, Carl. *Swagger.* Houghton Mifflin, 2013. Jonas' future looks bright with a college basketball scholarship within reach, but a team member is dead and Jonas knows who is responsible. Should he keep his head down or confront the killer and put his future in jeopardy?

Eagar, Lindsay. *Hour of the Bees.* Candlewick, 2016. Twelve-year old Carolina spends the summer with her aging grandfather in New Mexico and starts to connect more deeply with her family and her Mexican-American heritage in this novel of magical realism.

Elliott, Kate. *Court of Fives.* Little, Brown, 2015. When a scheming lord tears Jess's family apart, she must rely on her unlikely friendship with Kal, a high-ranking Patron boy, and her skill at Fives, an intricate, multi-level athletic competition that offers a chance for glory, to protect her Commoner mother and mixed-race sisters and save her father's reputation. *Series*


Friedman, Laurie B. *Love or Something Like It*. Darby Creek, 2015. As summer approaches, April is conflicted about going to camp and missing time with new boyfriend Matt and her friend Sophie, who will be visiting. Is her flame with Matt strong enough to survive a long absence? *Series*

Gerber, Alyson. *Braced*. Arthur A. Levine, 2017. Rachel’s plans to start as a forward on her school’s soccer team become endangered when she learns that scoliosis, a spinal condition, requires her to wear a back brace; however, friends and family rally to support her as she rises to the challenge to lead a full life on the field and at school.

Gidwitz, Adam. *The Inquisitor’s Tale: Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog*. Dutton, 2016. On a dark night, travelers from across France cross paths at an inn and begin to tell stories of three children whose adventures take them on a chase through medieval France.

Gier, Kerstin. *Ruby Red*. Translated from the German by Anthea Bell. Holt, 2011. Sixteen-year-old Gwyneth Shepherd unexpectedly travels through time to the eighteenth century where she discovers a mystery about her real birth date and finds to her dismay that she must work with Gideon -- another time traveler who hates her! *Series*

Gratz, Alan. *Refugee*. Scholastic, 2017. In this action-packed story, three kids from three time periods on three journeys of survival fight for their lives, and ultimately, their stories converge in the end.

Grimes, Nikki. *Planet Middle School*. Bloomsbury, 2011. A series of poems describes all the baffling changes at home and at school in twelve-year-old Joylin’s transition from tomboy basketball player to not-quite-girly girl.

Hale, Nathan. *One Dead Spy: The Life, Times, and Last Words of Nathan Hale, America’s Most Famous Spy*. Amulet Books, 2012. After being swallowed by a giant history book moments before his own execution, Nathan Hale is given the chance to tell his own story as well as many other stories from American history. *Graphic novel, series*

Halpern, Jake, and Peter Kujawinski. *Nightfall*. Putnam’s, 2015. On a distant island where day and night exist on fourteen-year cycles and the islanders migrate south each sunset, three children get left behind and must find a way off the island before the Night finds them.
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Hardinge, Frances. **A Face Like Glass.** Amulet Books, 2017. In a subterranean society, a young girl named Neverfall becomes immersed in plots, poisonings, and a rising revolt; humor and intrigue fill this story of Neverfall’s victory over a society that masks true emotions.

Harrington, Kim. **The Dead and Buried.** Point, 2012. High school senior Jade is horrified to learn her father and stepmother have bought the house of a girl who was mysteriously killed the year before they moved to town. She is even more horrified to realize that the house is being haunted by the dead girl’s very mean-spirited ghost.

Henry, April. **The Girl I Used to Be.** Holt, 2016. Fourteen years ago, everyone believed Olivia’s mother had been killed by her father, but recently his remains were found in the same woods where her mother died. Who killed them? Olivia means to find out.

Hilton, Marilyn. **Full Cicada Moon.** Dial Books, 2015. Mimi grapples with society in this novel written in verse about a half-black, half-Japanese seventh grader who moves to a new town and struggles to find her identity.

Hoose, Phillip. **The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club.** Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015. Deeply ashamed of Denmark’s failure to resist the Nazi regime, fifteen-year-old Knud Pedersen resolved with his brother and a handful of schoolmates to take action against the Nazis themselves.

Howard, Tim. **The Keeper: The Unguarded Story of Tim Howard (Young Readers’ Edition).** Harper, 2015. Tim Howard’s uplifting memoir about how he grew from being a hyperactive kid from New Jersey with Tourette syndrome to becoming one of the world’s premier soccer goalkeepers.

Jarrow, Gail. **Spooked! How a Radio Broadcast and The War of the Worlds Sparked the 1938 Invasion of America.** Calkins Creek, 2018. Orson Welles led a group of talented performers in a 1938 radio production of *The War of the Worlds* which created a panic across the nation. The story of this faked “alien invasion” is a fascinating mix of theater, history, and psychology.

Kelly, Erin Entrada. **Blackbird Fly.** Greenwillow, 2015. Bullied at school, eighth grader Apple, a Filipino American who loves the music of the Beatles, decides to change her life by learning how to play the guitar.

Kincaid, S.J.  **Insignia.** Katherine Tegen, 2012. Tom, a fourteen-year-old genius at virtual reality games, is recruited by the United States Military to begin training at the Pentagon Spire as a Combatant in World War III, controlling the mechanized drones that do the actual fighting off-planet. *The audiobook version is highly recommended.*  **Series**

Khoury, Jessica. **Kalahari.** Razorbill, 2015. Five teens must try to survive in the Kalahari Desert with limited supplies while evading mercenaries and a strange silver lion.

Klass, David. **Losers Take All: A Novel.** Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015. At a sports-crazy New Jersey high school where all kids must play on a team, a group of rebels starts a soccer team designed to undermine the jock culture of the school.

Klise, James. **The Art of Secrets.** Algonquin, 2014. When a piece of quirky art donated to a school fundraising effort to help a Pakistani American family, victims of a possible hate crime, is revealed to be a valuable unknown work by a famous outsider artist, adults and teenagers alike debate who should get the money and begin to question each other’s motivations.

Landman, Tanya. **Hell and High Water.** Candlewick, 2017. In 1750s London, young Caleb’s life is upended when his father is accused of theft and shipped to America as a laborer; meanwhile, Caleb journeys to a rough seafaring town to live with his father’s estranged sister, and he begins to discover murderous plots and a smuggling operation.

McCall, Guadalupe Garcia. **Under the Mesquite.** Lee & Low, 2011. Lupita, a budding actor and poet in a close-knit Mexican American immigrant family, comes of age as she struggles with adult responsibilities during her mother’s long illness.

McNeal, Tom. **Far Far Away.** Alfred A. Knopf, 2013. When Jeremy Johnson Johnson’s strange ability to speak to the ghost of Jacob Grimm draws the interest of his classmate, Ginger Boultinghouse, the two find themselves at the center of a series of disappearances in their hometown.

Meyer, Marissa. **Heartless.** Feiwel and Friends, 2016. Long before she becomes the infamous Queen of Hearts, all Cath wants is to open her own bakery to sell her tarts and other goodies; but in this prequel to Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland,* she has caught the eye of the goofy King of the Hearts as well as the eye of Jest, the very intriguing court jester! Will she choose royal duty or true love?

Miller, Sarah. **The Borden Murders: Lizzie Borden and the Trial of the Century.** Schwartz & Wade, 2016. Examines the Borden murders using newspaper articles to recreate the events and the trial and acquittal of Lizzie Borden and explores Lizzie’s story to theorize what might have really happened.
Moriarty, Jaclyn. *A Corner of White.* Arthur A. Levine, 2013. Fourteen-year-old Madeleine of Cambridge, England, struggling to cope with poverty and her mother’s illness, and fifteen-year-old Elliot of the Kingdom of Cello in a parallel world, begin exchanging notes through a crack between their worlds and find they can be of great help to each other. *Series*

Muhammad, Ibtihaj. *Proud: Living My American Dream (Young Readers’ Edition).* Little, Brown, 2018. Muhammad’s powerful memoir chronicling the hard work and determination it took, despite ever-present negative and hurtful comments, to become the first Muslim-American woman to medal in fencing in the Olympics, earning her a coveted spot on Time Magazine’s “100 Most Influential People.”

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. *Dairy Queen.* Houghton Mifflin, 2006. After spending her summer running the family farm and training the quarterback for her school’s rival football team, sixteen-year-old D.J. decides to go out for the sport herself, not anticipating the reactions of those around her. *Series*

Nelson, Marilyn. *How I Discovered Poetry.* Dial Books, 2014. Looking back on her childhood in the 1950s, the author tells the story of her development as an artist and young woman through fifty eye-opening poems that also offer a larger view of the world around her: racial tensions, the Cold War era, and the first stirrings of the feminist movement.

Nielsen, Susin. *We Are All Made of Molecules.* Ember, 2016. Brilliant but socially-challenged Stewart and mean-girl Ashley must find common ground when, two years after Stewart’s mother dies, his father moves in with his new girlfriend—Ashley’s mother--whose gay ex-husband lives in their guest house in the backyard.

Nix, Garth. *Frogkisser!* Scholastic, 2017. Princess Anya has big problems. Duke Rikard, her step-stepfather, is an evil wizard who wants to rule the kingdom and has a habit of changing people into frogs, and her older sister Morven, the heir, is a wimp. With the help of the librarian Gotfried (who turns into an owl when he is upset) and the Royal Dogs, she must find a way to defeat Rikard, save her sister, and maybe even turn Prince Denholm back into a human being.

Okorafor, Nnedi. *Akata Witch.* Viking, 2011. Twelve-year-old Sunny Nwazue, an American-born albino child of Nigerian parents, moves with her family back to Nigeria, where she learns that she has latent magical powers which she and three similarly gifted friends use to catch a serial killer. *Series*


Oppel, Kenneth. *The Nest.* Simon & Schuster, 2015. Steve is an anxious boy who is visited in his dreams by wasps who say they want to save his sickly baby brother but can only do it with his help. But do they really want to help, and is he actually dreaming, and can he really help?

Phelan, Matt.  *Snow White: A Graphic Novel*.  Candlewick, 2016.  This darkly stylized, noir adaptation of the classic story is set against a backdrop of Depression-era Manhattan and depicts, in vibrant graphic-novel detail, the story of a beleaguered girl who finds shelter with seven street urchins after the sudden death of her father, a former Wall Street king, and suffers cruelty at the hands of her Queen of the Follies stepmother.  Graphic novel

Preus, Margi.  *West of the Moon*.  Amulet Books, 2014.  Norwegian folktale and myth are woven into the story of Astri, a young girl whose evil aunt sells her to a goat herder.  Astri plots to make a daring escape, rescue her younger sister, and embark on a quest to find their father.

Priest, Cherie.  *I Am Princess X*.  Arthur A. Levine, 2015.  Years after writing stories about a superheroeine character she created with a best friend who died in a tragic car accident, sixteen-year-old May is shocked to see stickers, patches, and graffiti images of the superheroeine appearing around Seattle.

Raffin, Michele.  *The Birds of Pandemonium: Life Among the Exotic and the Endangered*.  Algonquin, 2014.  Pandemonium, the home and bird sanctuary that Raffin shares with some of the world’s most remarkable birds, is a conservation organization dedicated to saving and breeding birds at the edge of extinction, with the goal of eventually releasing them into the wild.  Their stories teach us volumes about the interrelationships of humans and animals.


Ruiz Zafón, Carlos.  *The Prince of Mist*.  Little, Brown, 2010.  In 1943, in a seaside town where their family has fled to be safe from war, thirteen-year-old Max Carver and his fifteen-year-old sister Alicia, along with new friend Roland, face off against an evil magician who is striving to complete a bargain made before he died.

Sands, Kevin.  *The Blackthorn Key*.  Aladdin, 2015.  In 1665 London, fourteen-year-old Christopher Rowe, apprentice to an apothecary, and his best friend Tom try to uncover the truth behind a mysterious cult, following a trail of puzzles, codes, pranks, and danger toward an unearthly secret with the power to tear the world apart.  Series

Schlitz, Laura Amy.  *The Hired Girl*.  Candlewick, 2015.  Fourteen-year-old Joan Skraggs chronicles her life in a journal when she leaves her family’s farm in Pennsylvania to work as a hired girl in Baltimore in the summer of 1911.  *Scott O’Dell Award for Historical Fiction 2016*
Sedgwick, Marcus.  **She Is Not Invisible.**  Roaring Brook, 2014.  When her father disappears, a blind London teenager kidnaps her younger brother -- her eyes to the world -- and embarks on a quest to find her father and solve the mystery of his disappearance.

Sepetys, Ruta.  **Between Shades of Gray.**  Philomel, 2011.  On a calm, beautiful night in 1941 Lithuania, a time in the country’s history about which very little is written, fifteen-year-old Lina’s life is torn apart as she and her family are forced from their home and sent to work in labor camps along the harsh Arctic Circle as part of Stalin’s forced relocation program.

Sheinkin, Steve.  **Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team.**  Roaring Brook, 2017.  Tells the fascinating story of the beginning of American collegiate football and the role that coach Pop Warner, football great Jim Thorpe, and the legendary Carlisle Indian Industrial School contributed to the development of the sport.

Stead, Rebecca.  **Goodbye, Stranger.**  Wendy Lamb, 2015.  As Bridge makes her way through seventh grade on Manhattan’s Upper West Side with her best friends, curvaceous Em, crusader Tab, and a curious new friend - or more than friend - Sherm, she finds the answer she has been seeking since she barely survived an accident at age eight: "What is my purpose?"

Stevenson, Robert Louis.  **Treasure Island.**  First published 1883.  A classic pirate story reproduced in movies and TV shows more than any other, *Treasure Island* tells the tale of the quest for treasure by Jim Hawkins and pirate Long John Silver. The book introduces the now infamous pirate song "Fifteen men on the dead man’s chest--Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

Stroud, Jonathan.  **The Amulet of Samarkand.**  Hyperion, 2003.  This story is set in present-day London where Nathaniel, a young magician’s apprentice, calls up the djinni Bartimaeus to steal the Amulet of Samarkand from another magician, and they both get caught up in a vast conspiracy of treason and murder.  *Series*

Sundquist, Josh.  **Love and First Sight.**  Little, Brown, 2017.  When Will decides to have surgery that can potentially restore his vision, he finds that those he cares about may be keeping secrets.

Thompson, Holly.  **Orchards.**  Ember, 2011.  Sent to Japan for the summer after an eighth-grade classmate’s suicide, half-Japanese, half-Jewish Kana Goldberg tries to fit in with relatives she barely knows and reflects on the guilt she feels over the tragedy back home.

Tolkien, J. R. R.  **The Hobbit, or, There and Back Again.**  First published 1937.  Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit, lives comfortably in his hobbit-hole until the day the wandering wizard Gandalf chooses him to take part in an adventure from which he may never return.  *Series*
Vail, Rachel. **Well, That Was Awkward.** Viking, 2017. Gracie has forgotten how to breathe, move, or do anything when confronted with A. J. who is suddenly so good looking! Then to top things off, her best friend Sienna wants Gracie to compose texts to send to A. J. as if they were from her... but the replies are weirdly unlike A. J.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. **Flipped.** Alfred A. Knopf, 2001. This is a classic romantic comedy of errors told in alternating chapters by two teenagers describing how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.

Volponi, Paul. **Game Seven.** Viking, 2015. Julio Ramirez, a sixteen-year-old shortstop in Cuba who dreams of playing with the national team, finds that he must choose between his country and family and his father who long ago defected to the U.S.

Watson, Jude. **Loot: How to Steal a Fortune.** Scholastic, 2014. When notorious jewel thief Alfie McQuinn is killed on a job, his last words to his son, March, are to "find jewels," and this instruction leads the boy to Jules, the twin sister he never knew he had—and the perfect partner to carry on the family business. **Series**

Watson, Renée. **Piecing Me Together.** Bloomsbury, 2017. Tired of being singled out at her mostly white private school as someone who needs support, high school junior Jade would rather participate in the school’s amazing Study Abroad program than join Women to Women, a mentorship program for at-risk girls. **Coretta Scott King Award 2018**

Wolk, Lauren. **Wolf Hollow: A Novel.** Dutton, 2016. Twelve-year-old Annabelle must learn to stand up for what is right in the face of a manipulative and violent new bully who targets people Annabelle cares about, including a homeless World War I veteran.
All book summaries are provided by the publisher or written by committee members.

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