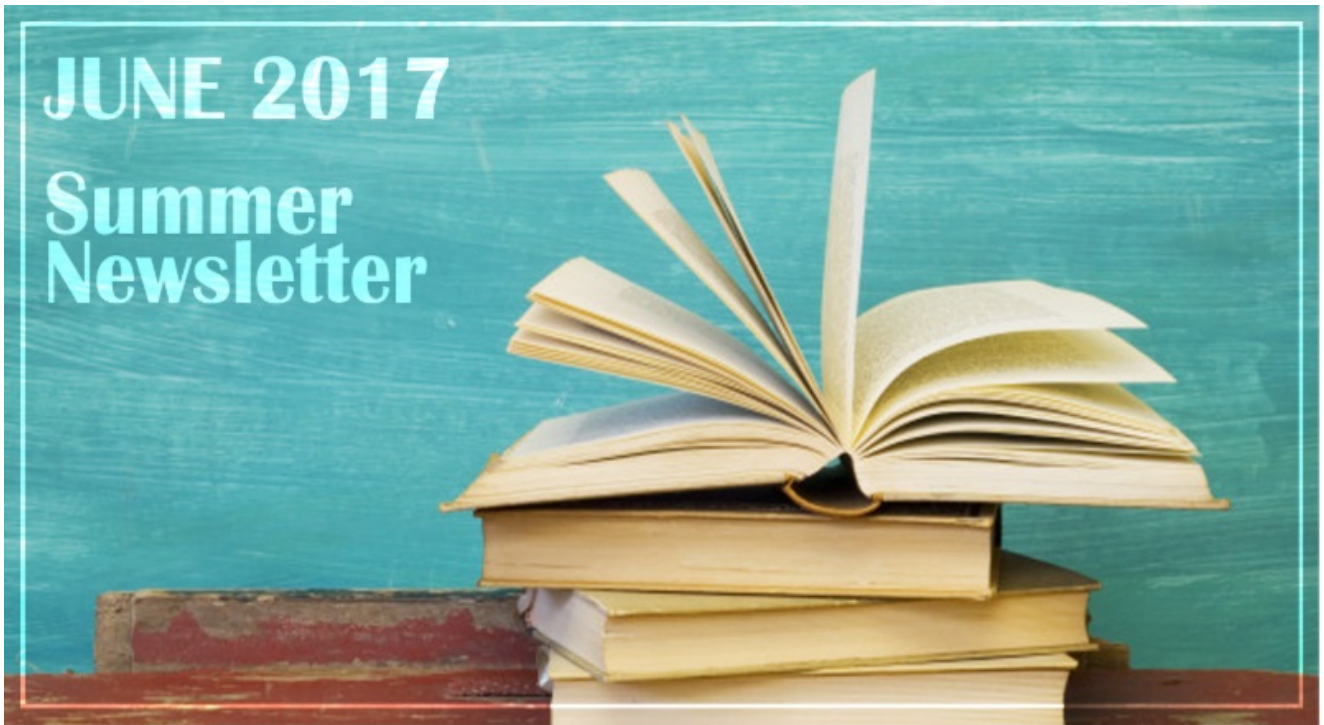


# JUNE 2017

## Summer Newsletter



## WELCOME TO THE TEAM

*As our sfl team grows, we are able to expand it our areas of expertise and support.*

### **PALAK KAMDAR, Clinician**

Palak has a B.S. and M.S. in Structural Engineering from the University of California, San Diego. Palak first became interested in teaching while at UCSD and continued tutoring students in math and science after graduation. With 7 years of experience in the engineering industry, Palak is excited to be refocusing her energy toward helping students recognize and achieve their goals.

As a practicing engineer, Palak looks to draw on real-world experiences to help her students use tangible examples to understand concepts and theory. She is determined to provide her students with strong instruction in fundamentals to aid them as they continue on their educational journeys while providing opportunities for inquiry, challenge and self-reflection.



**Areas of Focus: Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus, AP Biology, AP Physics, Honors Math & Science, SAT Math, Middle School & High School Test prep, Study & Organizational Skills**

[Read about our SFL Team Members](#)

*Sfl's Guide To*  
***Summer***  
***Reading***

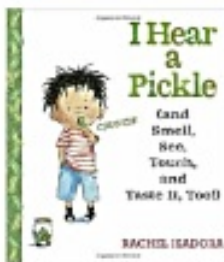
*book recommendations for ages*  
5-7 8-10 11-13 14+

**Sfl** Strategies for Learning

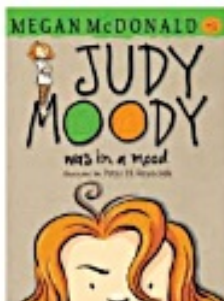




**How Do Dinosaurs Choose Their Pets?** by Jane Yolen  
 "Can I keep it? It's so cute!" Brimming with laugh-aloud humor, enormous dinosaur children surprise their parents by bringing home a wild menagerie of highly unusual pets!"



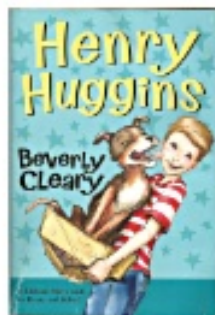
**Hear a Pickle (and Smell, See, Touch and Taste It, Too!)** by Rachel Isadora  
 "Open your eyes and ears and explore your five fabulous senses!"



**Judy Moody (series)** by Megan McDonald  
 "Judy Moody, third-grader, avid collector, Tutor Tot, Saver of the Planet, and future doctor . . . but most of all, famous for her many moods. She's a mood maniac. ROAR!"



**Fantastic Mr. Fox** by Roald Dahl  
 "Someone's been stealing from the three meanest farmers around, and they know the identity of the thief. Working alone they could never catch him; but now fat Boggis, squat Bunce, and skinny Bean have joined forces, and they have Mr. Fox and his family surrounded."



**Henry Huggins** by Beverly Cleary  
 "Just as Henry Huggins is complaining that nothing exciting ever happens, a friendly dog sits down beside him and looks pleadingly at his ice-cream cone. From that moment on, the two are inseparable."

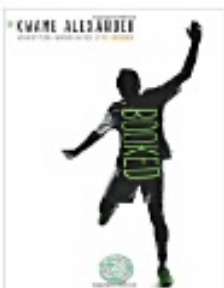
## Ages 5-7



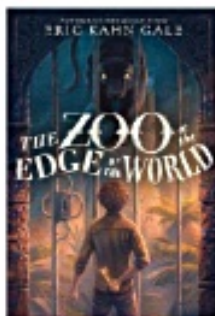
**The Mighty Miss Malone** by Christopher Paul Curtis  
 "We are a family on a journey to a place called wonderful" is the motto of Deza Malone's family. When the Great Depression hits, her beloved father leaves to find work, Deza, Mother, and her brother go in search of him."



**Wonder** by R.J. Palacio  
 "August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face."



**Booked** by Kwame Alexander  
 "Nick learns the power of words as he wrestles with problems at home, stands up to a bully, and tries to impress the girl of his dreams. Helping him along are his best friend, teammate Coby, and The Mac, a rapping librarian."



**The Zoo at the Edge of the World** by Eric Kahn Gale  
 "Mariin is not slow, or mute; what he is is a stutterer, and that makes it impossible for him to convince people otherwise. What he is also is a Rackham: the younger son of the world-famous explorer Ronan Rackham, the owner and proprietor of the Zoo at the Edge of the World."



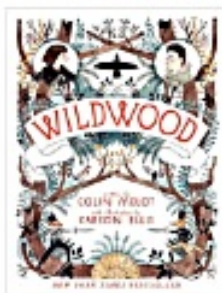
**The Girl Who Could Fly** by Victoria Forester  
 "You just can't keep a good girl down... unless you use the proper methods. Piper can fly. So it seems only fitting that she leave her parents to attend a top-secret, school for kids with exceptional abilities."

## Ages 8-10





**Mister Max: The Book of Secrets (series)** by Cynthia Voigt "Someone is breaking windows and setting fires in the old city, but the shopkeepers won't say a word about the culprits. ...When the mayor begs for help, Max agrees to take the case, putting himself in grave danger."



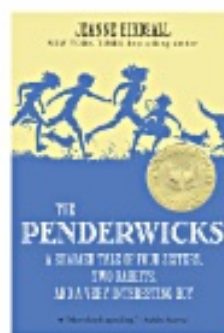
**Wildwood (series)** by Colin Meloy "Prue and her friend Curtis uncover a secret world in the midst of violent upheaval—a world full of warring creatures, peaceable mystics, and powerful figures with the darkest intentions."



**Mysterious Benedict Society (series)** by Trenton Lee Stewart "Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" When this peculiar ad appears in the newspaper, dozens of children enroll to take a series of mysterious, mind-bending tests.



**The Westing Game** by Ellen Raskin "A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. No one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune."



**The Penderwicks (series)** by Jeanne Birdsall "This summer the Penderwick sisters have a wonderful surprise: a holiday on the grounds of a beautiful estate called Arundel. Soon they are busy discovering the summertime magic of Arundel's sprawling gardens, treasure-filled attic, tame rabbits, and the cook who makes the best gingerbread in Massachusetts."

*Ages 11-13*



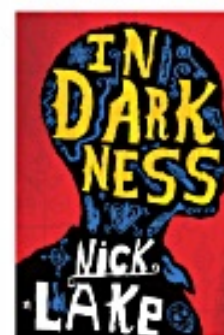
**Good Kings Bad Kings** by Susan Nussbaum "A group of typical teenagers—alienated, funny, yearning for autonomy—except that they live in an institution for juveniles with disabilities. This unfamiliar, isolated landscape is much the same as the world outside."



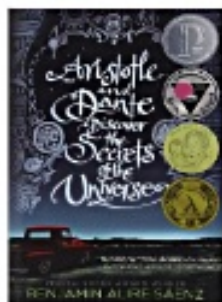
**Monster** by Walter Dean Myers "Presented as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives."



**The Book Thief** by Markus Zusak "It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing books."



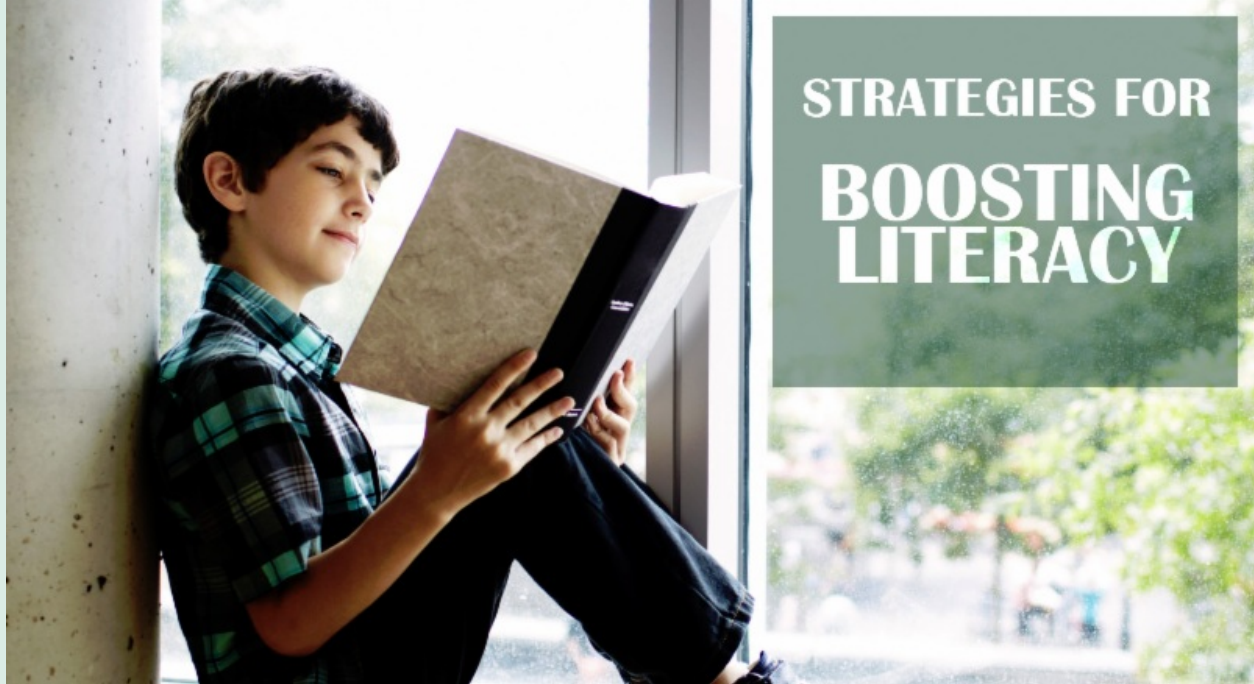
**In Darkness** by Nick Lake "In the aftermath of the Haitian earthquake, a boy is trapped beneath the rubble of a ruined hospital, thirsty, terrified and alone. Shorty is a child of the slums, a teenage boy who has seen enough violence to last a lifetime, and who has been inexorably drawn into the world of the gangsters."



**Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe** by Benjamin Alire Sáenz "Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When the two meet have nothing in common at first."

*Ages 14+*

Sources: Scholastic.com, Art of Simple.net, Bookriot.com



## Strategies for Boosting Literacy Over Summer

### Minute Comprehension

This literacy strategy is best exercised early on in a classroom setting, or in a self-taught environment if you're practicing reading comprehension skills on your own. Readers should be given a page of text, or other relatively short passage that they can finish reading within one minute. After the minute is over, the reader should turn over the page, and take thirty seconds to write down everything they remember from the passage - every single detail and piece of information that comes to mind. This isn't about prioritizing information, it's about identifying how much information a reader is able to absorb. After that thirty seconds or so, the reader should then return to the passage for another minute. After that minute, they should turn the page over again, and write out any information they remember that they didn't specify before. With this exercise, readers can better gauge how much information they're capable of absorbing at a time. Pacing is as much a factor in reading comprehension is anything, and understanding where your skills currently stand before a lesson is as important as knowing where you want them to be after the lesson.

### Vocabulary List

Much of literacy comes down to understanding, misunderstanding, or simply not knowing the definition of certain words. The right vocabulary can make or break your ability to comprehend a text.

Take, for instance, the following excerpt from Jack London's *Call of the Wild*:

"Buck had accepted the rope with quiet dignity. To be sure, it was an unwonted performance: but he had learned to trust in men he knew, and to give them credit for a wisdom that outreached his own. But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, he growled menacingly. He had merely intimated his displeasure, in his pride believing that to intimate was to command."

The vocabulary listing technique asks that the reader write out words he or she does not quite know the definition of, on a separate sheet of paper. Even if they're familiar with the word, but feel unclear on the way the word is being used - they should write down any and all words, phrases, and terms that they are uncertain of. After reading the text, they should search for each word and phrase's definition, write it down, and re-read the text using these new-found definitions as a key.

Given the example above, perhaps the reader is unsure of what the words *unwonted*, *outreached*,

and intimate mean, effectively preventing them from understanding the full meaning of the text. If the reader is just starting this exercise, they should note in which ways their understanding of the text has improved based on their improved vocabulary. In the above example, they'll learn that unwonted means unusual, indicating that the dog character in the novel is trusting of his owners, even when he is unsure of their motives, and so on.

### Coded Annotations

This exercise works best if the text has been printed on a worksheet, since it requires the reader to write between the lines and within the margins. One reason literacy and comprehension can be so difficult for readers is the inability to manage large walls of text. Visually, it can be overwhelming, not to mention difficult to track individual sentences and segments when trying to draw meaning from the words. Readers often have many thoughts running through their heads when they read: What does this word mean? What is the writer implying with this sentence? I didn't know this fact. I did know this fact. I don't believe this assertion. And so on. It helps to mark down these thoughts when reading, but writing lengthy annotations can distract the reader from the text, which is counter-productive to these literacy strategies. Instead, the reader can use symbols to denote certain thoughts. For example:

- ? for "I don't understand"
- ! for "I learned something new"
- ~ for "I don't believe this/agree with this"
- + for "I want to learn more about this"
- - for "I don't think this is important"
- \* for "I think this is an important theme"
- = for "I think this is a parallel to something else"

This way, the reader can quickly return to points they felt were relevant without needing to scan the next over and over again.

### Headlining

One good literacy strategy to practice at the end of a reading session or class is to ask the student or reader to create a newspaper headline, detailing the lesson. Newspaper headlines are generally no longer than two lines, and serve to convey only the most weighty, relevant information from the story it's representing. It's no use comprehending bits and pieces of a story if you don't understand the big picture, and how those details work together to convey it. By making the reader write out mock newspaper headlines for the excerpt, story, or other body of text they've read, it encourages them to identify the most important, overarching theme of the work. This is a key skill necessary for effective comprehension.

PARIS, C. "7 Literacy Strategies That Work: Improve Reading Comprehension Today."Udemy Blog. N.p., 4 Mar. 2014. Web. 07 June 2017.

### [Link to Full Article](#)





