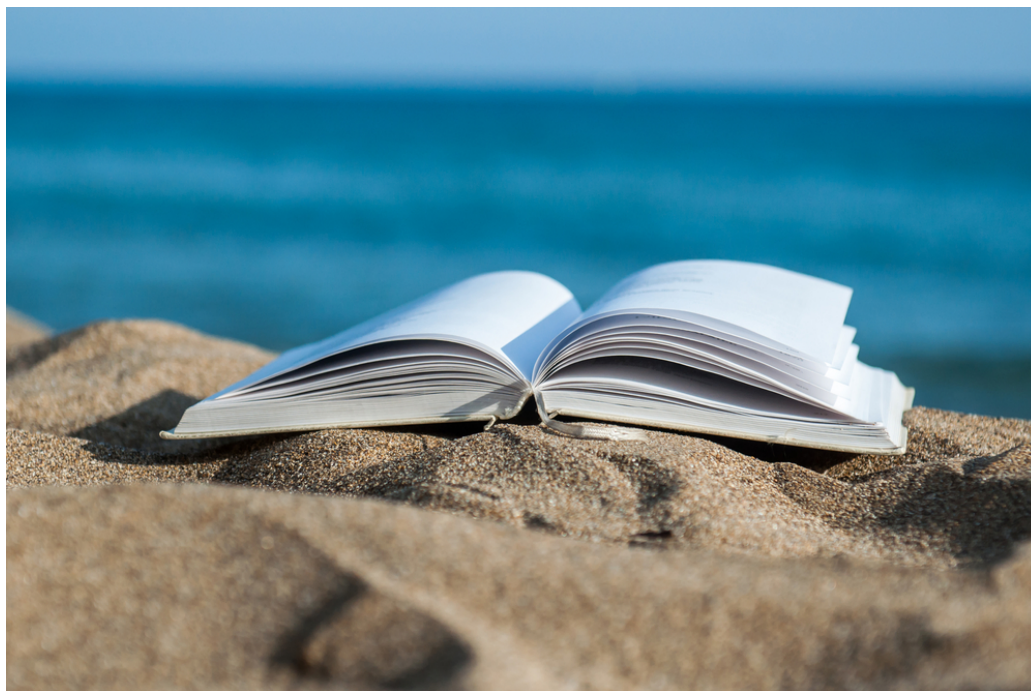


# 8 Summer Reading Books for 8th Graders



We've curated a collection of eight summer reading books for 8th graders to help students sharpen their [reading skills](#) before the upcoming school year! Here at Piqosity, we take [summer learning loss](#) seriously. Although 8th graders need time to relax and spend time with their friends over the summer, it shouldn't come at the expense of losing skills they'll need to succeed in high school. Full of contemporary stories of various genres, any 8th grader should be able to find something that fits their tastes in this list.

And to make summer reading as summery as possible, all the books on this list are about — you guessed it — summer!

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## 1. *The Summer I Turned Pretty*, Jenny Han

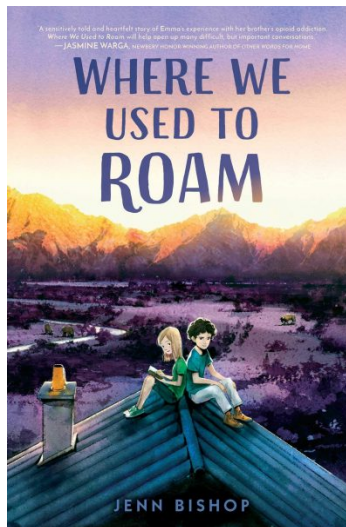
*The Summer I Turned Pretty*, the first novel in Jenny Han's trilogy of young adult romance novels, connects readers with Belly Conklin, a happy-go-lucky teenage girl who's just starting to get male attention. This refreshing coming-of-age story invites you into an entertaining love triangle between Belly and her two childhood friends, Conrad and Jeremiah Fisher.



Beautifully-written scenes of sunsets, scooping ice cream, and running on the beach give off major summer vibes that even [reluctant readers](#) will enjoy. 8th graders will easily relate to Belly, and won't be able to put down the book as the two brothers fight for her attention. Who will she end up with? You'll have to read the other two novels in the series, *It's Not Summer Without You* and *We'll Always Have Summer*, to find out!

## 2. *Where We Used to Roam*, Jenn Bishop

Coming-of-age books are important to read, but tales of summer romance aren't for every 8th grader. That's why we're continuing this collection of summer reading books for 8th graders with another coming-of-age story, but with a twist. While navigating a friendship minefield, protagonist Emma O'Malley's popular older brother develops an addiction to opioids and is sent to rehab. Wanting to get away from her deep feelings of guilt and grief, Emma jumps on the opportunity to stay with family friends in Wyoming for the summer.



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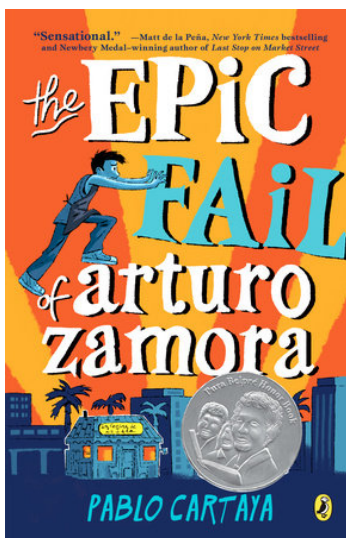
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Emma's story of shifting friendships and drug addiction will pull at the heartstrings of each 8th grader. Readers of this popular middle grade book will learn the importance of conflict resolution and how drug addiction is a sickness that affects the whole family.

### 3. *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora*, Pablo Cartaya

*Arroz con frijoles negros, congri, fricasé de pollo... Cuban food es muy deliciosa!* 8th graders interested in international foods, languages and cultures will devour this book just as easily as a Cuban churro. Seamlessly switching between English and Spanish, Cuban-American author Pablo Cartaya tells a vibrant story of family and community through the quirky voice of a 13-year-old boy on a quest to save his family's Cuban restaurant in Miami.



On the surface, Arturo is just a funny, awkward teenage boy with a crummy summer job and a crush on a cute girl who lives in his apartment complex. But a much more profound character develops when he ditches his typical summer activities, like playing basketball and drinking mango smoothies, to fight for his family. The book's themes will deepen any 8th grader's understanding of cultural identity, gentrification, and what it means to be part of a community.

### 4. *Amy and Roger's Epic Detour*, Morgan Matson

Our top summer reading books for 8th graders have already brought you from North Carolina's steamy coast, over the bison-filled plains of Wyoming, to the culturally rich city of Miami. Let's continue this road trip with Amy and Roger!

Bestselling author Morgan Matson tells the adventurous story of

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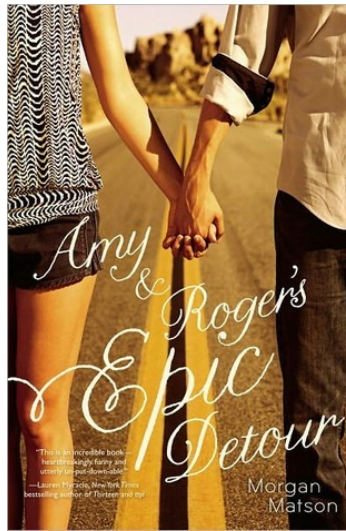
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Amy Curry, a high school senior who learns that life is about the journey, not the destination. Still grieving from her father's fatal car accident, Amy faces her fear of getting behind the wheel and embarks on a cross-country journey with the son of an old family friend. As they drive on beautifully desolate highways through the mountains of Colorado and peaceful plains of Kansas, Amy opens her broken heart, deals with her trauma, and rediscovers herself.



Although Cali to Connecticut is a long journey, all the humor, drama and adventure make it fly by. Music-lovers in particular will find this book compulsively readable. Interspersing epic road trip playlists throughout the book, Matson gives insight into how the characters are feeling and foreshadows what will happen to them next.

## 5. *If It Makes You Happy*, Claire Kann

The next featured book in this collection of summer reads for 8th graders is a powerful coming-of-age story featuring a queer, Black, and plus-sized teenage protagonist.

While juggling her unusual relationships with Dallas and Kara, Winnie spends her summer days working at her Grandma's diner. When Winnie devises a plan to enter a televised cooking competition to make money for the diner that she hopes to inherit one day, she runs into one problem: Her grandmother forbids it. Given the title of the book, it comes as no surprise that Winnie prioritizes herself and enters the competition.



Unapologetically confident, Winnie demonstrates the importance of embracing your sexuality and cultural identity and establishing boundaries in relationships. Before reading, please be aware that this book has several trigger warnings, such as fatphobia, homophobia, and racism.

## 6. *The Square Root of Summer*, Harriet Reuter Hapgood

Science and the fantastical element of time travel are beautifully incorporated into *The Square Root of Summer*, a sweeping love story with a side of grief and loss. Gottie Oppenheimer, the novel's protagonist, is a teenage math whiz who's forced to revisit painful memories when she's sent back in time. Gottie can't figure out what is happening to her, so she turns to science to help her.



The math and physics-related drawings you'll find throughout the book make this read adorably nerdy, securing our sixth spot in our collection of books for grade 8. Eighth graders with a love for STEM will find this a compelling read, and ones with a love for reading may discover an appreciation for the sciences.

## 7. *Alex, Approximately*, Jenn Bennett

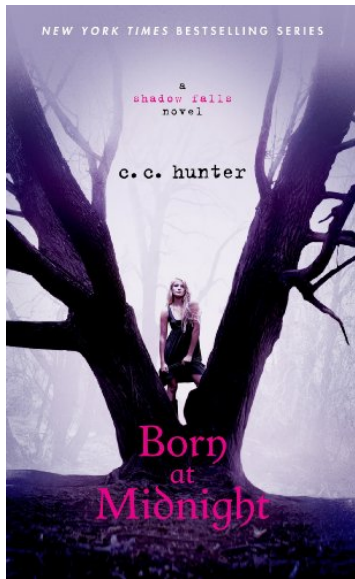
Less math-y and perhaps even more adorable than the one above, *Alex, Approximately* is a teen spin on the delightful 90's rom-com *You've Got Mail*.

Written by Jenn Bennet, this lighthearted book will whisk you away into a dreamy summer romance. After pining over her online crush "Alex" for months, Bailey Rydell moves in with her father, who happens to live in the same Southern Californian town as him. Caught up in an online fantasy, she decides to keep it a secret. In the meantime, she gets involved with Porter Roth, her

alluring coworker whom she loves to hate. Will Bailey choose her online soulmate Alex or her annoyingly hot coworker Porter? Or, **spoiler alert:** could Alex and Porter be the same guy?

## 8. *Born at Midnight*, C.C. Hunter

A list of summer reads isn't complete without a story set in a summer camp. The first in a paranormal romance series, this novel tells the story of a troubled teen who's shipped

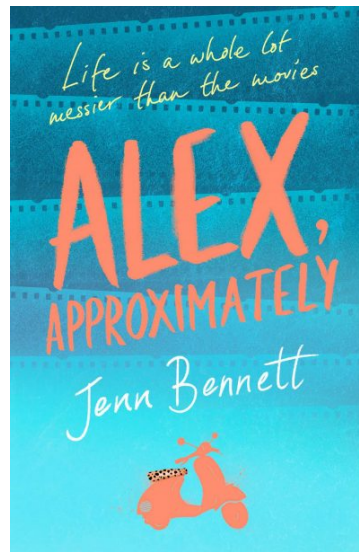


off to summer camp for juvenile delinquents. Students with a love for darker stories and fantasy will be entranced by this read.

What Kylie Galen discovers at Shadow Falls camp is more than she could have ever imagined, and is thrown into a paranormal world. With a werewolf and a half-fae fighting for Kylie's attention, this page-turner will give you major *Twilight* vibes. Offering more than just your typical teenage boy drama, C.C. Hunter invites readers on Kylie's journey of self discovery as she struggles to figure out who she is and where she belongs.

## Improve Reading Comprehension with Piqosity

We hope this collection of 8 summer reading books for 8th graders leaves you motivated to use summer as an opportunity to keep your reading skills fresh! We created this list because we



believe that reading leads to better academic outcomes. Having a strong vocabulary is a key component of reading comprehension, so we've provided the following extensive vocabulary flash card lists for all ISEE levels, perfect for test prep or vocabulary-building of any kind:

- [ISEE Lower Level Vocabulary](#)
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We are constantly adding new courses and material, so make sure to [sign up for free](#) with Piqosity today!

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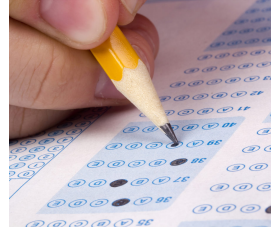


Sara holds a BA in English and Linguistics from The University of Texas at Austin. A native Houstonian, she began writing for Piqosity in 2021.

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to come to light" or "to take place." In this case, convey means "to deliver," list means "to tilt or lean."



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