

# reading

@ Wellesley Middle School

## Welcome to Reading Reality at Wellesley Middle School!

THE GOAL of Reading Reality is for you to connect to an important topic by reading a book. You will read your book and then have a chance to talk about it in a book group discussion with your peers and share what you discussed with the other students in your homeroom.



THE BOOKS are all realistic fiction (and one non-fiction that is too good to leave out) and were written for people your age. They cover a variety of topics, varying in intensity and style.

Each book addresses something that you have been introduced to in Connections this year. These books are intended to entertain as well as to inform. **Please choose a book you have not read before.**

### HERE'S HOW IT WILL WORK:

1. On Feb 6, will receive this information and hear about the book choices. Please bring this home to discuss with your parents and return your choice and parent signature by **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11**. (It is extremely important your choices are returned as soon as possible because the books need to be ordered.)
2. You will meet with your groups and receive your books and on March 6.
3. April 3 is Reading Reality day! The whole day will be devoted to discussing and sharing about your book. (more information on this to follow)

---

**Please check off the book you would like to read for Reading Reality and return this form with your name, homeroom, and parent signature to your homeroom teacher or to the library by **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11**.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Bystander</u> by James Preller                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Pedro and Me</u> by Judd Winnick      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Does My Head Look Big in This</u> by Randa Abdel-Fattah | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Rules of Survival</u> by Nancy Werlin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Orchards</u> by Holly Thompson                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Speak</u> by Laurie Halse Anderson    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Parrotfish</u> by Ellen Wittlinger                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tears of a Tiger</u> by Sharon Draper |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Totally Joe</u> by James Howe         |

I give my child \_\_\_\_\_ in homeroom \_\_\_\_\_ permission to read the book checked off above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
parent signature

Parents, if you have any questions or concerns about this program, please contact the librarian, Sarah Chessman (sarah\_chessman@wellesley.k12.ma.us), or principal, Mark Ito (mark\_ito@wellesley.k12.ma.us).

You may also email your child's choice and your permission directly to sarah\_chessman@wellesley.k12.ma.us if it is more convenient.

# Reading Reality Book List

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Bystander</b><br/>James Preller<br/>2009<br/>240 pages</p>     | <p>Eric is the new kid in town and just starting seventh grade. When a kid named Griffin, who seems to be cool and popular, tries to befriend him, Eric feels a little less lonely. But soon Eric discovers that his new friend is a ruthless bully that rules the school and has all the adults fooled. Eric wants to do the right thing, but in a shocking turn of events, he becomes Griffin's next target.<br/><b>bullying, choices</b></p>   | <p><b>Does My Head Look Big in This</b><br/>Randa Abdel-Fattah<br/>2007<br/>368 pages</p> | <p>When sixteen-year-old Amal makes the decision to start wearing the hijab (traditional Muslim head covering) full-time, everyone has a reaction. Her parents, her teachers, her friends, people on the street. She stands by her decision to embrace her faith and all that it is, even if it does make her different from everyone else and embarks on a spiritual and emotional journey, all while having a crush on a classmate and being there for her girlfriends.<br/><b>religious-identity</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Orchards</b><br/>Holly Thompson<br/>2011<br/>327 pages</p>     | <p>After a classmate commits suicide, Kana Goldberg—a half-Japanese, half-Jewish American—wonders who is responsible. She and her cliquey friends said some thoughtless things to the girl. Her parents pack her off to her mother's ancestral home in Japan for the summer. There Kana spends hours under the hot sun tending to her family's <i>mikan</i> orange groves. Kana's mixed heritage makes it hard to fit in at first, especially under the critical eye of her traditional grandmother, who has never accepted Kana's father. But as the summer unfolds, Kana gets to know her relatives, Japan, and village culture, and she begins to process the pain and guilt she feels about the tragedy back home.<br/><b>bullying, suicide, race</b></p> | <p><b>Parrotfish</b><br/>Ellen Wittlinger<br/>2007<br/>294 pages</p>                      | <p>Angela Katz-McNair has never felt quite right as a girl, but it's a shock to everyone when she cuts her hair short, buys some men's clothes, and announces she'd like to be called by a new name, Grady. Grady is happy about his decision to finally be true to himself, despite the practical complications, like which gym locker room to use. And though he didn't expect his family and friends to be happy about his decision, he also didn't expect kids at school to be downright nasty about it. But as the victim of some cruel jokes, Grady also finds unexpected allies in this thought-provoking novel that explores struggles any reader can relate to.<br/><b>gender-identity, isolation</b></p> |
| <p><b>Pedro and Me</b><br/>Judd Winick<br/>2000<br/>192 pages</p>    | <p>Presented in graphic novel format, this is the story of the life-changing friendship between the author, a cartoonist from Long Island, and Pedro Zamora, an HIV-positive AIDS activist, which was filmed on MTV's Real World San Francisco. This powerful book follows Judd Winick's apprehension turned admiration for his housemate and close friend.<br/><b>sexual identity, alienation, AIDS</b></p>  | <p><b>Rules of a Survival</b><br/>Nancy Werlin<br/>2006<br/>259 pages</p>                 | <p>Matt and his sisters have never before known a moment of peace in a household ruled by their unpredictable, vicious mother. Matt protects his sisters and tries to keep them out of harm's way. When Matt meets with Murdoch, a man who puts himself between an abusive father and his son, Matt is determined to know him better. Matt knows he needs to get his sisters safe, but is worried what might his desperation lead him to do.<br/><b>abuse, survival</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Speak</b><br/>Laurie Halse Anderson<br/>1999<br/>208 pages</p> | <p>A traumatic incident has left Melinda virtually unable to speak, friendless, and isolated at the beginning of her freshman year in high school. Rather than speak up and tell the truth about what happened, Melinda withdraws into herself, her grades plummet, she cuts school, and slips deeper and deeper into depression. Working to express herself through her only passion, art, she tries desperately to find her voice.<br/><b>isolation, social anxiety, trauma</b></p>   | <p><b>Tears of a Tiger</b><br/>Sharon Draper<br/>1994<br/>162 pages</p>                   | <p>Tigers don't cry, or do they? After the death of his longtime friend and fellow Hazelwood Tiger, Andy, the driver of the car, blames himself and cannot get past his guilt and pain. While his other friends have managed to work through their grief and move on, Andy allows death to become the focus of his life. In the months that follow the accident, the lives of Andy and his friends are traced through a series of letters, articles, homework assignments, and dialogues, and it becomes clear that Tigers do indeed need to cry.<br/><b>grief, race, isolation</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Totally Joe</b><br/>James Howe<br/>2007<br/>208 pages</p>      | <p>When Joe is first given the assignment to write about himself from A to Z, an "alphabetography," he is skeptical. After he digs in and begins, however, he finds that the words flow. Joe bares his soul about friends, school issues like bullying, not being a "guy's guy," his family, and his secret boyfriend Colin. Joe finds in the end that he is more than happy to just totally be himself.<br/><b>sexual identity, bullying</b></p>   |   |  |