

GOOD HOPE COUNTRY DAY SUMMER READING, 2020
Seventh & Eighth Grade

Students are expected to read and complete the Google Form about at least three books.

- One should come from the fiction list.
- One should come from either non-fiction or the classic list.
- The third can be from any of the lists or a book of your own choosing.

Seventh and Eighth Grade Google Form Link : Summer Reading Log - Grades 7 & 8 (2020-2021) https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSczAjC-iGwbhSoJHFCPvQwHld7KKDn7QcjCfcc9cSWkhr-Tow/viewform?usp=sf_link

A wonderful source for more books is the American Library Association's Annual List of Notable books: <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists/ncb>.

Fiction Options:

Bitter Side of Sweet By Tara Sullivan

For fans of Linda Sue Park and *A Long Way Gone*, two young boys must escape a life of slavery in modern-day Ivory Coast

Fifteen-year-old Amadou counts the things that matter. For two years what has mattered are the number of cacao pods he and his younger brother, Seydou, can chop down in a day. The higher the number the safer they are. The higher the number the closer they are to paying off their debt and returning home. Maybe. The problem is Amadou doesn't know how much he and Seydou owe, and the bosses won't tell him. The boys only wanted to make money to help their impoverished family, instead they were tricked into forced labor on a plantation in the Ivory Coast. With no hope of escape, all they can do is try their best to stay alive—until Khadija comes into their lives.

She's the first girl who's ever come to camp, and she's a wild thing. She fights bravely every day, attempting escape again and again, reminding Amadou what it means to be free. But finally, the bosses break her, and what happens next to the brother he has always tried to protect almost breaks Amadou. The three band together as family and try just once more to escape.

Inspired by true-to-life events happening right now, *The Bitter Side of Sweet* is an exquisitely written tour de force not to be missed.

"A gripping and painful portrait of modern-day child slavery in the cacao plantations of the Ivory Coast."—*The Wall Street Journal*

"A tender, harrowing story of family, friendship, and the pursuit of freedom."—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

Refugee By Alan Gratz

A tour de force from acclaimed author Alan Gratz (*Prisoner B-3087*), this timely and powerful novel tells the story of three different children seeking refuge.

Josef is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world....

Isabel is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America....

Mahmoud is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe....

All three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers - from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end.

Alan Gratz (*Prisoner B-3087*, *Projekt 1065*) delivers an action-packed novel that tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

Challenger Deep By Neal Schusterman

National Book Award and Golden Kite Award Winner

A captivating novel about mental illness that lingers long beyond the last page, *Challenger Deep* is a heartfelt tour de force by New York Times bestselling author Neal Shusterman.

Caden Bosch is on a ship that's headed for the deepest point on Earth: Challenger Deep, the southern part of the Marianas Trench.

Caden Bosch is a brilliant high school student whose friends are starting to notice his odd behavior.

Caden Bosch is designated the ship's artist in residence to document the journey with images.

Caden Bosch pretends to join the school track team but spends his days walking for miles, absorbed by the thoughts in his head.

Caden Bosch is split between his allegiance to the captain and the allure of mutiny.

Caden Bosch is torn.

Challenger Deep is a deeply powerful and personal novel from one of today's most admired writers for teens. Laurie Halse Anderson, award-winning author of *Speak*, calls *Challenger Deep* "a brilliant journey across the dark sea of the mind; frightening, sensitive, and powerful. Simply extraordinary."

The Poet X By Elizabeth Acevedo

The Poet X is also the winner of the National Book Award for Young People's Literature, the Michael L. Printz Award, and the Pura Belpré Award.

Fans of Jacqueline Woodson, Meg Medina, and Jason Reynolds will fall hard for this astonishing #ownvoices novel-in-verse by an award-winning slam poet, about an Afro-Latina heroine who tells her story with blazing words and powerful truth.

Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking.

But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers - especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, whom her family can never know about.

With Mami's determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club, she doesn't know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out. But she still can't stop thinking about performing her poems.

Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent.

"Crackles with energy and snaps with authenticity and voice

." (Justina Ireland, author of *Dread Nation*)

"An incredibly potent debut." (Jason Reynolds, author of the National Book Award finalist *Ghost*)

"Acevedo has amplified the voices of girls en el barrio who are equal parts goddess, saint, warrior, and hero." (Ibi Zoboi, author of *American Street*)

Dear Martin By: Nic Stone

"Powerful, wrenching." –JOHN GREEN, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Turtles All the Way Down*

"Raw and gripping." –JASON REYNOLDS, *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of *All American Boys*

"A must-read!" –ANGIE THOMAS, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Hate U Give*

Raw, captivating, and undeniably real, Nic Stone joins industry giants Jason Reynolds and Walter Dean Myers as she boldly tackles American race relations in this stunning #1 *New York Times* bestselling debut, a William C. Morris Award Finalist.

Justyce McAllister is a good kid, an honor student, and always there to help a friend—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. Despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates.

Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.

Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

"Vivid and powerful." -*Booklist*, Starred Review

"A visceral portrait of a young man reckoning with the ugly, persistent violence of social injustice." - *Publishers Weekly*

The Traitor's Game By Jennifer A. Nielsen

New York Times bestseller *The Traitor's Game*, which Entertainment Weekly called "the next big YA fantasy," is perfect for fans of the Red Queen series by Victoria Aveyard and the Throne of Glass series by Sarah J. Maas.

Kestra Dallisor has spent three years in exile in the Lava Fields, but that won't stop her from being drawn back into her father's palace politics. He's second-in-command to the cruel king, Lord Endrick, which makes Kestra a valuable bargaining chip. A group of

rebels knows this -- and they snatch Kestra from her carriage as she reluctantly travels home.

The kidnapers want her to retrieve the lost Olden Blade, the only object that can destroy the king, but Kestra is not the obedient captive they expected. One of the rebels, Simon, has his hands full as Kestra tries to foil their plot, by any means necessary. As motives shift and secrets emerge, both have to decide what -- and who -- it is they're fighting for.

Rebound, By Kwame Alexander
New York Times bestseller · ALA Notable Book

* "An eminently satisfying story of family, recovery, and growing into manhood."—**Kirkus, starred review**

From the *New York Times* bestselling author Kwame Alexander comes *Rebound*, a dynamic novel in verse and companion to his Newbery Award-winner, *The Crossover*, illustrated with striking graphic novel panels.

Before Josh and Jordan Bell were streaking up and down the court, their father was learning his own moves. In this prequel to Newbery Medal winner *The Crossover*, Chuck Bell takes center stage, as readers get a glimpse of his childhood and how he became the jazz music worshipping, basketball star his sons look up to.

A novel in verse with all the impact and rhythm readers have come to expect from Kwame Alexander, *Rebound* will go back in time to visit the childhood of Chuck "Da Man" Bell during one pivotal summer when young Charlie is sent to stay with his grandparents where he discovers basketball and learns more about his family's past.

Absolutely Normal Chaos by Sharon Creech

"By turns sarcastic, tender, and irreverent, this will quickly make its way into the hands of readers who loved *Walk Two Moons*." -Kirkus

This beloved prequel to bestselling author Sharon Creech's Newbery Medal winner *Walk Two Moons* chronicles the life of a thirteen year old during her most chaotic and romantic summer ever via journal entries, filled with hilarious observations on love, death, and the confusing mechanics of holding hands.

Mary Lou is less excited about her assignment to keep a journal over the summer. Boring! Then cousin Carl Ray comes to stay with the family, and what starts out as the dull dog days of summer quickly turns into the wildest roller coaster ride of all time.

Diamonds in the Shadow, by Caroline Cooney

THE FINCH FAMILY did not know that five refugees landed from Africa on the day they went to the airport to welcome the family sponsored by their church. The Finch family only knew about the four refugees they were meeting - Andre, Celestine, Mattu, and Alake - mother, father, teenage son and daughter. Soon Jared realizes that the good guys are not always innocent, and he must make a decision that could change the fate of both families. This story presents many points of view and a fresh perspective on doing the right thing.

A Snicker of Magic by Natalie Lloyd

Midnight Gulch used to be a magical place, a town where people could sing up thunderstorms, and dance up sunflowers. But that was long ago, before a curse drove the magic away. Twelve year old Felicity knows all about things like that; her nomadic mother is cursed with a wandering heart.

But when she arrives in Midnight Gulch, Felicity thinks her luck is about to change. A “word collector,” Felicity sees words everywhere - shining above strangers, tucked into church eaves, and tangled up in her dog’s floppy ears- but Midnight Gulch is the first place she has ever seen the word “home” And then there’s Jonah, a mysterious, spiky-haired do-gooder who shimmers with words Felicity has never seen before, words that make her heart beat a little faster.

Felicity wants to stay in Midnight Gulch more than anything, but first, she’ll need to figure out how to bring back the magic, breaking the spell that’s been cast over the town...and her mother’s broken heart.

Ashes, by Laurie Halse Anderson

Return to the American Revolution in this blistering conclusion to the trilogy that began with the bestselling National Book Award Finalist *Chains* and continued with *Forge*, which *The New York Times* called “a return not only to the colonial era but to historical accuracy.”

As the Revolutionary War rages on, Isabel and Curzon have narrowly escaped Valley Forge—but their relief is short-lived. Before long they are reported as runaways, and the awful Bellingham is determined to track them down. With purpose and faith, Isabel and Curzon march on, fiercely determined to find Isabel’s little sister Ruth, who is enslaved in a Southern state—where bounty hunters are thick as flies.

Heroism and heartbreak pave their path, but Isabel and Curzon won’t stop until they reach Ruth, and then freedom, in this grand finale to the acclaimed *Seeds of America* trilogy from Laurie Halse Anderson.

Nimona, by Noelle Stevenson

National Book Award Finalist * *New York Times* Bestseller * *New York Times* Notable Book * *Kirkus* Best Book * *School Library Journal* Best Book * *Publishers Weekly* Best Book * NPR Best Book * New York Public Library Best Book * Chicago Public Library Best Book * A Spring 2015 Indie Next List Pick

The *New York Times* bestselling graphic novel sensation from Noelle Stevenson, based on her beloved and critically acclaimed web comic. *Kirkus* says, “If you’re going to read one graphic novel this year, make it this one.”

Nemeses! Dragons! Science! Symbolism! All these and more await in this brilliantly subversive, sharply irreverent epic from Noelle Stevenson. Featuring an exclusive epilogue not seen in the web comic, along with bonus conceptual sketches and revised pages throughout, this gorgeous full-color graphic novel has been hailed by critics and fans alike as the arrival of a “superstar” talent (NPR.org).

Nimona is an impulsive young shapeshifter with a knack for villainy. Lord Ballister Blackheart is a villain with a vendetta. As sidekick and supervillain, Nimona and Lord Blackheart are about to wreak some serious havoc. Their mission: prove to the kingdom that Sir Ambrosius Goldenloin and his buddies at the Institution of Law Enforcement and Heroics aren’t the heroes everyone thinks they are.

But as small acts of mischief escalate into a vicious battle, Lord Blackheart realizes that Nimona's powers are as murky and mysterious as her past. And her unpredictable wild side might be more dangerous than he is willing to admit.

Non-Fiction Options

The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club By Philip Hoose

At the outset of World War II, Denmark did not resist German occupation. Deeply ashamed of his nation's leaders, fifteen-year-old Knud Pedersen resolved with his brother and a handful of schoolmates to take action against the Nazis if the adults would not. Naming their secret club after the fiery British leader, the young patriots in the Churchill Club committed countless acts of sabotage, infuriating the Germans, who eventually had the boys tracked down and arrested. But their efforts were not in vain: the boys' exploits and eventual imprisonment helped spark a full-blown Danish resistance. Interweaving his own narrative with the recollections of Knud himself, here is Phillip Hoose's inspiring story of these young war heroes.

The Running Dream By Wendelin Van Draanen

When Jessica is told she'll never run again, she puts herself back together—and learns to dream bigger than ever before. The acclaimed author of *Flipped* delivers a powerful and healing story.

Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run?

As she struggles to cope, Jessica feels that she's both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say act like she's not there. Jessica's embarrassed to realize that she's done the same to a girl with CP named Rosa. A girl who is going to tutor her through all the math she's missed. A girl who sees right into the heart of her.

With the support of family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may actually be able to run again. But that's not enough for her now. She doesn't just want to cross finish lines herself—she wants to take Rosa with her.

"Inspirational. The pace of Van Draanen's prose matches Jessica's at her swiftest. Readers will zoom through the book just as Jessica blazes around the track. A lively and lovely story." —
Kirkus Reviews

I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives by Caitlin Alifirenka), Martin Gand ,Liz Welch

The true story of an all-American girl and a boy from an impoverished city in Zimbabwe and the letter that changed both of their lives forever.

It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. All the other kids picked countries like France or Germany, but when Caitlin saw

Zimbabwe written on the board, it sounded like the most exotic place she had ever heard of--so she chose it.

Martin was lucky to even receive a pen pal letter. There were only ten letters, and forty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one.

That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives.

In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends --and better people--through letters. Their story will inspire readers to look beyond their own lives and wonder about the world at large and their place in it.

Chasing Lincoln's Killer James L. Swanson

Based on rare archival material, obscure trial manuscripts, and interviews with relatives of the conspirators and the manhunters, *Chasing Lincoln's Killer* is a fast-paced thriller about the pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth: a wild twelve-day chase through the streets of Washington, D.C., across the swamps of Maryland, and into the forests of Virginia. This book, based on Swanson's adult bestseller, "Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer," is a true account for young readers about John Wilkes Booth's assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States. Exclusive Bonus Material: Features fascinating facts from this time in history!

"...the rich details and suspense are ever present. Excellent black-and-white illustrations complement the text. Readers will be engrossed by the almost hour-by-hour search and by the many people who encountered the killer as he tried to escape. It is a tale of intrigue and an engrossing mystery. With the approaching bicentennial of Lincoln's birth, this is a most welcome addition to all libraries." — *School Library Journal*

"Swanson provides a fast-paced account of the assassination of the sixteenth president. Though Booth remains his principal focus, the author cuts cinematically among the actions of the other conspirators... Swanson's colorful account will hold readers' interest throughout." — *Booklist*

"Readers will find the list of the people involved a terrific help in keeping track of the large cast of characters. The sequence of events leading up to and following the assassination is meticulously detailed." — *Kirkus Reviews*

Escape from Alcatraz (Encounter: Narrative Nonfiction Stories) by Eric Braun

What's more exciting than a prison break? Frank Morris and John and Clarence Anglin escaped from Alcatraz in 1962 and have never been caught. Many authorities are certain they died crossing San Francisco Bay. Relatives claim they made it to Brazil. The theories of what happened to them are endless. Find out the facts from people who dealt with the men and the case first-hand. This is one mystery you'll definitely want to solve.

Witches: The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem by Rosalyn Schanzer

Tackling the same twisted subject as Stacy Schiff's much-lauded book *The Witches: Salem, 1692*, this Sibert Honor book for young readers features unique scratchboard illustrations, chilling primary source material, and powerful narrative to tell the true tale.

In the little colonial town of Salem Village, Massachusetts, two girls began to twitch, mumble, and contort their bodies into strange shapes. The doctor tried every remedy, but nothing cured

the young Puritans. He grimly announced the dire diagnosis: the girls were bewitched! And then the accusations began.

The riveting, true story of the victims, accused witches, crooked officials, and mass hysteria that turned a mysterious illness affecting two children into a witch hunt that took over a dozen people's lives and ruined hundreds more unfolds in chilling detail in this young adult book by award-winning author and illustrator Rosalyn Schanzer.

With a powerful narrative, chilling primary source accounts, a design evoking the period, and stylized black-white-and-red scratchboard illustrations of young girls having wild fits in the courtroom, witches flying overhead, and the Devil and his servants terrorizing the Puritans, this book will rivet young readers with novelistic power.

Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yoshitsune, by Pamela S. Turner and Gareth Hinds

This epic warrior tale reads like a novel, but this is the true story of the greatest samurai in Japanese history.

When Yoshitsune was just a baby, his father went to war with a rival samurai family—and lost. His father was killed, his mother captured, and his surviving half-brother banished. Yoshitsune was sent away to live in a monastery. Skinny, small, and unskilled in the warrior arts, he nevertheless escaped and learned the ways of the samurai. When the time came for the Minamoto clan to rise up against their enemies, Yoshitsune answered the call. His daring feats and impossible bravery earned him immortality.

The Whydah: A Pirate Ship Feared, Wrecked, and Found, by Martin W. Sandler

A 2018 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults Finalist

The exciting true story of the captaincy, wreck, and discovery of the *Whydah* — the only pirate ship ever found — and the incredible mysteries it revealed.

The 1650s to the 1730s marked the golden age of piracy, when fearsome pirates like Blackbeard ruled the waves, seeking not only treasure but also large and fast ships to carry it. The *Whydah* was just such a ship, built to ply the Triangular Trade route, which it did until one of the greediest pirates of all, Black Sam Bellamy, commandeered it. Filling the ship to capacity with treasure, Bellamy hoped to retire with his bounty — but in 1717 the ship sank in a storm off Cape Cod. For more than two hundred years, the wreck of the *Whydah* (and the riches that went down with it) eluded treasure seekers, until the ship was finally found in 1984 by marine archaeologists. The artifacts brought up from the ocean floor are priceless, both in value and in the picture they reveal of life in that much-mythologized era, changing much of what we know about pirates.

In The Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives, by Kenneth C. Davis

Did you know that many of America's Founding Fathers—who fought for liberty and justice for all—were slave owners?

Through the powerful stories of five enslaved people who were “owned” by four of our greatest presidents, this book helps set the record straight about the role slavery played in the founding of America. From Billy Lee, valet to George Washington, to Alfred Jackson, faithful servant of

Andrew Jackson, these dramatic narratives explore our country's great tragedy—that a nation “conceived in liberty” was also born in shackles.

These stories help us know the real people who were essential to the birth of this nation but traditionally have been left out of the history books. Their stories are true—and they should be heard.

The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives, by Dashka Slater

One teenager in a skirt.

One teenager with a lighter.

One moment that changes both of their lives forever.

If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.

Winner of the Stonewall Book Award—Mike Morgan & Larry Romans Children's & Young Adult Literature Award

YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults Finalist

Hidden Figures: Young Readers Edition, by Margot Lee Shetterly

Now in a special new edition perfect for young readers, this is the amazing true story of four African-American female mathematicians at NASA who helped achieve some of the greatest moments in our space program. Soon to be a major motion picture.

Before John Glenn orbited the earth or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as “human computers” used pencils, slide rules, and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. This book brings to life the stories of Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Christine Darden, four African-American women who lived through the Civil Rights era, the Space Race, the Cold War, and the movement for gender equality, and whose work forever changed the face of NASA and the country.

Classic Options:

Peter Pan By J.M Barrie

The character of Peter Pan first came to life in the stories J. M. Barrie told to five brothers -- three of whom were named Peter, John, and Michael. Peter Pan is considered one of the greatest children's stories of all time and continues to charm readers one hundred years after its first appearance as a play in 1904.

Little Women

Generations of readers young and old, male and female, have fallen in love with the March sisters of Louisa May Alcott's most popular and enduring novel, Little Women. Here are talented tomboy and author-to-be Jo, tragically frail Beth, beautiful Meg, and romantic, spoiled Amy,

united in their devotion to each other and their struggles to survive in New England during the Civil War.

It is no secret that Alcott based *Little Women* on her own early life. While her father, the freethinking reformer and abolitionist Bronson Alcott, hobnobbed with such eminent male authors as Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne, Louisa supported herself and her sisters with "woman's work," including sewing, doing laundry, and acting as a domestic servant. But she soon discovered she could make more money writing. *Little Women* brought her lasting fame and fortune, and far from being the "girl's book" her publisher requested, it explores such timeless themes as love and death, war and peace, the conflict between personal ambition and family responsibilities, and the clash of cultures between Europe and America.

Treasure Island, by Robert Louis Stevenson

The most popular pirate story ever written in English, featuring one of literature's most beloved "bad guys," *Treasure Island* has been happily devoured by several generations of boys—and girls—and grownups. Its unforgettable characters include: young Jim Hawkins, who finds himself owner of a map to Treasure Island, where the fabled pirate booty is buried; honest Captain Smollett, heroic Dr. Livesey, ambiguous Long John Silver - one moment a friendly, laughing, one-legged sea-cook . . .and the next a dangerous pirate leader- and many more! The unexpected and complex relationship that develops between Silver and Jim helps transform what seems at first to be a simple, rip-roaring adventure story into a deeply moving study of a boy's growth into manhood, as he learns hard lessons about friendship, loyalty, courage and honor—and the uncertain meaning of good and evil.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, by Lewis Carroll

On a golden afternoon, young Alice follows a White Rabbit, who disappears down a nearby rabbit hole. Quickly following him, she tumbles into the burrow - and enters the merry, topsy-turvy world of Wonderland. A series of whimsical escapades and nonsensical obstacles dictate Alice's journey, which culminates in a madcap encounter with the Queen of Hearts - and her army of playing cards! Is it all a dream, or just an alternate reality...?

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, by Betty Smith

The American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century.

From the moment she entered the world, Francie needed to be made of stern stuff, for the often harsh life of Williamsburg demanded fortitude, precocity, and strength of spirit. Often scorned by neighbors for her family's erratic and eccentric behavior—such as her father Johnny's taste for alcohol and Aunt Sissy's habit of marrying serially without the formality of divorce—no one, least of all Francie, could say that the Nolans' life lacked drama. By turns overwhelming, sublime, heartbreaking, and uplifting, the Nolans' daily experiences are tenderly threaded with family connectedness and raw with honesty. Betty Smith has, in the pages of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, captured the joys of humble Williamsburg life—from "junk day" on Saturdays, when the children of Francie's neighborhood traded their weekly take for pennies, to the special excitement of holidays, bringing cause for celebration and revelry. Betty Smith has artfully caught this sense of exciting life in a novel of childhood, replete with incredibly rich moments of universal experiences—a truly remarkable achievement for any writer.