

Under normal operating conditions, the DC metro area is ripe with summer events and opportunities for enrichment in the Humanities. All of the museums in the following list typically have great regular daily exhibits to visit. With the possibility that museum closures and event cancelations due to the risk of Covid-19 may continue through the summer, we are including links to their websites so you can check availability before venturing out. Many are offering virtual opportunities and activities.

Rising Sixth Graders: Movement and Activism

Local Day Trips: The following Smithsonian museums on the Mall in Washington: [National Museum of African Art](#), [Freer Gallery and Sackler Gallery](#) (Asian Art), The [National Gallery of Art](#), [Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden](#), [National Museum of the American Indian](#), [National Museum of Natural History](#), [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#). Also, the [National Geographic Museum](#).

Book Suggestions:

- *The Hate you Give* by Angie Thomas (Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.)
- *Smile* by Raina Telgemeier (Eisner Award-winning graphic memoir. Raina just wants to be a normal sixth grader. But one night after Girl Scouts she trips and falls, severely injuring her two front teeth. What follows is a long and frustrating journey with on-again, off-again braces, surgery, embarrassing headgear, and even a retainer with fake teeth attached. And on top of all that, there's still more to deal with: a major earthquake, boy confusion, and friends who turn out to be not so friendly.)
- *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson (Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement.)
- *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Hunt (Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities.)

Rising Seventh Graders: U.S. History from Colonization through the Civil War

Local Day Trips: In Washington D.C.: [Smithsonian American Art Museum](#), the [National Portrait Gallery](#), [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#), [National Museum of](#)

[American History](#), the [National Archives](#), [Frederick Douglass House](#) (Anacostia), [President Lincoln's Cottage](#) (Rock Creek Church Road, NW), [Ford's Theater](#) (10th St., NW)

In Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia: [Mount Vernon](#) (Alexandria); [Monticello](#) (Charlottesville); [Manassas National Battlefield](#) (Prince William County); [Antietam National Battlefield](#) (Sharpsburg); [Monocacy National Battlefield](#) (Frederick); [Harpers Ferry National Historical Park](#) (West Virginia); [Fort McHenry](#) (Baltimore); the [Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#) (Washington DC to Cumberland, MD), [USS Constellation](#) (Baltimore).

National Parks: The National Park Service has many historical sites across the country. If you are traveling, [check their website](#) for parks around the country.

Book Suggestions:

- *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare (An orphaned young woman moves from the Caribbean to live with her aunt and uncle in the Puritan settlement of Wethersfield, Connecticut and struggles to find her place in a very different world.)
- *A Break with Charity: A Story about the Salem Witch Trials* by Ann Rinaldi (While waiting for a church meeting in 1706, Susanna English, daughter of a wealthy Salem merchant, recalls the malice, fear, and accusations of witchcraft that tore her village apart in 1692.)
- *The Fighting Ground* by Avi (Thirteen-year-old Jonathan goes off to fight in the Revolutionary War and discovers the real war is being fought within himself.)
- *The Girls* by Amy Goldman Koss (Each of the girls in a middle-school clique reveals the strong, manipulative hold one of the group exerts on the others, causing hurt and self-doubt among the girls.)

Rising Eighth Graders: U.S. History from the 1870s to the Cold War

Local Day Trips: [Smithsonian American Art Museum](#), the [National Portrait Gallery](#), [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#), [National Museum of American History](#), [Baltimore Immigration Museum](#) (Locust Point), [Baltimore Museum of Industry](#) (Key Hwy.), [B & O Railroad Museum](#) (Baltimore).

National Parks: The National Park Service has many historical sites across the country. If you are traveling, [check their web site](#) for parks around the country.

Book Suggestions:

- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith. (A classic coming of age story of an Irish American adolescent girl struggling to survive life in a tenement in early 20th Century New York.)
- *Uprising* by Margaret Peterson Haddix. (The story of the shirtwaist factory strike and the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in 1911 from the perspective of two immigrant girls and the daughter of a wealthy businessman. Excellent history about industrialization and labor in early 20th Century America.)
- *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse (The hardships of living in Oklahoma during the dust bowl in the 1930s told in a series of poems.)

- *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor (The story of the children of an African American family living in rural Mississippi during the Depression. An instance story of the horrors of growing up in the Jim Crow South.)
- *Red Moon at Sharpsburg* by Rosemary Wells (As the Civil War breaks out, India, a young Southern girl, summons her sharp intelligence and the courage she didn't know she had to survive the war that threatens to destroy her family, her Virginia home, and the only life she has ever known.)
- *True North: A Novel of the Underground Railroad* by Kathryn Lasky (Because of the strong influence which her grandfather, an abolitionist, has in her life, fourteen-year-old Lucy assists a fugitive slave girl in her escape.)
- *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt (The unforgettable story of young Jethro Creighton who comes of age during the turbulent years of the Civil War.)
- *The Cold War Pigeon Patrols and Other Animal Spies* by Danielle Denega (How animals are used for espionage in a setting that deals with war.)
- *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli (Seventh-grader John "Crash" Coogan has always been comfortable with his tough, aggressive behavior, until his relationship with an unusual Quaker boy and his grandfather's stroke make him consider the meaning of friendship and the importance of family.)
- *The Girls* by Amy Goldman Koss (Each of the girls in a middle-school clique reveals the strong, manipulative hold one of the group exerts on the others, causing hurt and self-doubt among the girls.)
- *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali* by Walter Dean Myers (An illustrated biography of boxing great Muhammad Ali that addresses his politics, his fight against Parkinson's disease, and boxing's dangers.)
- *Guts* by Gary Paulsen (The author relates incidents in his life and how they inspired parts of his books about the character, Brian Robeson.)
- *Hattie Big Sky* by Kirby Larson (Sixteen-year-old Hattie Brooks inherits her uncle's homesteading claim in Montana in 1917 and encounters some unexpected problems related to the war in Europe.)