



**Assemblywoman**  
Latoya Joyner

Dear Friend,

When school lets out for the summer, we can encourage our kids to continue learning by picking up a book. Reading is fun! Books can immerse children in far-off worlds, new characters and thrilling narratives. To that end, I'm sponsoring a Summer Reading Challenge, in coordination with the New York State Library, to inspire kids to read on a regular basis throughout summer break.

This year, we celebrate and explore the actions of heroes with "Every hero has a story" selected as the theme. These books run the gamut from superheroes teaching the alphabet, memorable moments in sports, civil war heroes and courageous men and women who have overcome personal obstacles and achieved great things. I've listed some book suggestions to get started, and you can head to your local library for more.

Here's how the challenge works: Mark the enclosed calendar for each day in July and August that your child reads with you, someone else or alone. Once you have marked off 40 days or more, please return the completed form to my office, and I will award your child with a New York State Excellence in Reading certificate.

Thank you, and happy reading!

*Assemblywoman*  
*Latoya Joyner*

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# Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner's Summer Reading Challenge

"I pledge to read for at least 15 minutes each day on at least 40 days during the months of July and August. I will mark the calendar below with a check mark (✓) each day that I read by myself or with my reading buddy."

*When you have marked at least 40 days on this calendar, you will earn an Excellence in Reading certificate. Just send the marked-off calendar and the completed form to my office, and your certificate will arrive in the mail.*

## July 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
|        |        |         | 1         | 2        | 3      | 4        |
| 5      | 6      | 7       | 8         | 9        | 10     | 11       |
| 12     | 13     | 14      | 15        | 16       | 17     | 18       |
| 19     | 20     | 21      | 22        | 23       | 24     | 25       |
| 26     | 27     | 28      | 29        | 30       | 31     |          |

## August 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
|        |        |         |           |          |        | 1        |
| 2      | 3      | 4       | 5         | 6        | 7      | 8        |
| 9      | 10     | 11      | 12        | 13       | 14     | 15       |
| 16     | 17     | 18      | 19        | 20       | 21     | 22       |
| 23     | 24     | 25      | 26        | 27       | 28     | 29       |
| 30     | 31     |         |           |          |        |          |

*Special thanks goes to the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development and librarians across the state for their help.*

Updated 4/15

New York State Assembly  
Excellence in Reading Certificate



### Information form

Child's name ↓

School ↓

Parent/Guardian name ↓

Address 1 ↓

Address 2 ↓

Phone ↓ Email ↓

Number of days completed ↓

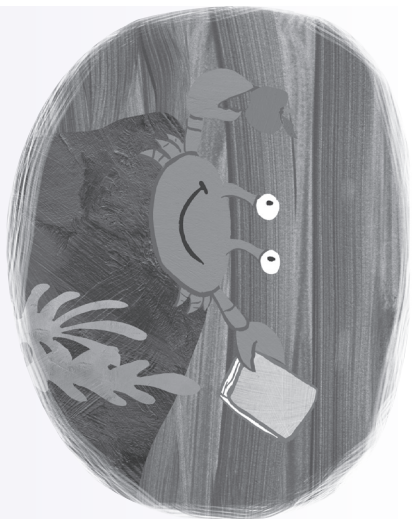
Favorite book read this summer ↓

Number of years participated in the Summer Reading Challenge ↓

To receive your certificate, please complete the above form and send it with the attached calendar to:

*Assemblywoman*  
*Latoya Joyner*

910 Grand Concourse, Suite 1JK  
Bronx, NY 10451



# New York State Assembly's Summer Reading Challenge

Sponsored by  
**Assemblywoman**  
**Latoya Joyner**

*in cooperation with*



www.summerreadingnys.org

# The Summer Reading Challenge

“Nothing can dim the light which shines from within.”  
– Maya Angelou, author and poet

## Suggested Reading List

For more titles, visit: [www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/explore.htm](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/explore.htm)

### Poetry

**Emma’s Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty** by Linda Glaser and illustrated by Claire A. Nivola. Free verse and illustrations tell the story of a woman and how her poem was chosen to be inscribed on the Statue of Liberty’s base. Non-fiction. Grades preschool-3.

**Where the Sidewalk Ends: Poems and Drawings** by Shel Silverstein. This collection of drawings and poems is both funny and profound. In this world, shoes fly, you wash your shadow, and a boy turns into a TV set! Fiction. Grades 1-3.

**The Crossover** by Kwame Alexander. This is a story about a pair of twins, both junior high basketball stars, their friends and their family. The entire book is written in prose: a mashup of hip-hop and poetry. Fiction. Grades 6-10.

### Picture Books

**Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man** by David A. Adler. This is the story of Lou Gehrig, star Yankees ballplayer, and his perseverance and character despite a diagnosis of ALS at age 36. Non-fiction. Grades 1-3.

**Hiroimi’s Hands** by Lynne Barasch. The true story of father-daughter sushi chefs. The book celebrates Japanese-American roots and a girl’s success in a traditionally male career. Non-fiction. Grades 1 and up.

**Henry and the Cannons: An Extraordinary True Story of the American Revolution** by Don Brown. In 1775, a young man named Henry became a true hero by successfully moving cannons from Fort Ticonderoga, NY, to Boston in the dead of winter. Non-fiction. Grades K-4.

**Maiden of the Mist: A Legend of Niagara Falls** by Veronika Charles. This is the Seneca legend of a heroine who saved her tribe from sickness by sacrificing herself through a canoe ride over Niagara Falls. Folklore/legend. Grades preschool and up.

**Heart on Fire: Susan B. Anthony Votes for President** by Ann Malaspina. This is the story of a woman who became a heroine by casting her vote for president before it was legal for women to vote. Non-fiction. Grades 1-4.

**Tuesday Tucks Me In: The Loyal Bond Between a Soldier and His Service Dog** by Luis Carlos Montalvan and Bret Witter. This is the true story of how a soldier adjusted to life back home with the help of his service dog, Tuesday. Non-fiction. Grades K-3.

**Molly by Golly: the Legend of Molly Williams, America’s First Female Firefighter** by Dianne Ochiltree. Molly, an African-American cook for New York City’s Fire Company 11, jumped into action when many volunteers were sick from the 1818 flu outbreak. Non-fiction. Grades 2-4.

**Sugar Hill: Harlem’s Historic Neighborhood** by Carole Boston Weatherford. Harlem’s Sugar Hill neighborhood is celebrated here with stories about the famous inhabitants that made it legendary: Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Thurgood Marshall, to name a few. Non-fiction. Grades K-3.

**Sonia Sotomayor: A Judge Grows in the Bronx - La Juez que Crecio en el Bronx** by Jonah Winter. Written in English and Spanish, this book captures the determination of young Sonia, who became the first Latina Supreme Court Justice of the United States. Non-fiction. Grades preschool-3.

### Early Readers

**Zero the Hero** by Joan Holub. This rhyming, funny story introduces children to the mathematical principles of zero. Fiction. Grades 1-5.

**Hero Story Collection (DC Super Friends)** by various authors. This is a book for comic-book and superhero fans. Batman, Superman and all the DC Super Friends come together in this action-packed collection. Fiction. Grades preschool-1.

**The Bravest Dog Ever: The True Story of Balto** by Natalie Standiford. This book tells the story of an Alaskan sled dog that leads a team of dogs through subzero temperatures to deliver medicine. Non-fiction. Grades K-3.

**Nate the Great** by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat. This is the first in a series of detective stories in which the hero, Nate, eats pancakes, leaves a note for his mom and heads out to solve mysteries for his friends. Fiction. Grades 1-4.

### Elementary Books

**Sybil Ludington’s Midnight Ride** by Marsha Amstel. In 1777, 16-year-old Sybil volunteers to gather her father’s troops to prevent the British from marching into New York. Non-fiction. Grades 2-4.

**Mayor of Central Park** by Avi. In 1900, Central Park is a city populated by a menagerie of animals. When jewel thief rats plan to invade, they turn to Oscar, the mayor and manager of their baseball team. Can he save them and their park? Fiction. Grades 4-7.

**When Jessie Came Across the Sea** by Amy Hest. A 13-year-old orphan reluctantly leaves her grandmother, immigrates to New York City and works for three years earning money to bring her grandmother to the U.S. Fiction. Grades 1-4.

**If You Lived When Women Won Their Rights** by Anne Kamma and Pamela Johnson. This is a collection of short biographies about Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Alice Paul and Carrie Chapman Catt. Non-fiction. Grades 2-5.

**Carmelo Anthony** by Sloan MacRae. This book tells the story of Anthony’s life, from his childhood to his ascent to the NBA. The book includes action photos. Non-fiction. Grades 2-5.

**Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers’ Strike of 1909** by Michelle Markell. This is the true story of a young immigrant girl’s role in the 1909 women laborer’s strike protesting unfair working conditions in the garment district. Non-fiction. Grades preschool-3.

**On Enemy Soil: Journal of James Edmond Pease, a Civil War Union Soldier** by Jim Murphy. This is the journal of a 16-year-old as he enlists in the Union Army. Readers will learn about the fear, death and disillusionment in the lives of Civil War soldiers. Non-fiction. Grades 3-7.

**Astrophysicist and Space Advocate: Neil DeGrasse Tyson** by Marne Ventura. This book explores DeGrasse Tyson’s life, including his childhood in the Bronx, academic career and scientific expertise. Non-fiction. Grades 2-4.

**P.S. Be Eleven** by Rita Williams-Garcia. This is a story about sisters growing up in Brooklyn in the late 1960s amid Vietnam turbulence, poetry and Black Panther pride. Fiction. Grades 3-7.

**Susan Marcus Bends the Rules** by Jane Cutler. Raised in the Bronx, 10-year-old Susan moves to Missouri with her family in 1943 and discovers a world of prejudice, including Jim Crow laws. Cultural differences abound, and Susan pushes the limits of the laws. Fiction. Grades 4-6.

### Middle School Readers/Tweens

**Colonel Theodore Roosevelt** by David A. Adler. Rough rider, monopoly-buster, conservationist and President, Theodore Roosevelt left a large mark on both the country and his native New York. Non-fiction. Grades 5-9.

**Chains** by Laurie Halse Anderson. In 1776, sisters Isabel and Ruth are sold to loyalists in Manhattan. Isabel spies on her owners who know details of British plans for invasion. Isabel seeks freedom for herself, New York and her country. Fiction. Grades 5-10.

**One-Handed Catch** by Mary Jane Auch. Sixth-grader Norman loses his hand in an accident and learns to use hard work and humor to live with his disability and succeed at baseball, art and other activities. Fiction. Grades 5-9.

**Taking Flight: From War Orphan to Star Ballerina** by Michaela DePrince and Elaine DePrince. This memoir chronicles the author’s remarkable journey from orphan in war-torn Sierra Leone to principal dancer with the Dance Theatre of Harlem. Non-fiction. Grades 6 and up.

**Sophisticated Ladies: The Great Women of Jazz** by Leslie Gourse and illustrator Martin French. This collective biography of singers begins in the 1920s with Bessie Smith and Ethel Waters and ends with current performers Cassandra Wilson and Diana Krall. It contains a full-page portrait of each singer and references jazz clubs in Harlem. Non-fiction. Grades 7 and up.

**David Karp: The Mastermind Behind Tumblr** by Karen Latchana Kenney. This is the story of the creator of Tumblr. Non-fiction. Grades 4-8.

**Hero** by Mike Lupica. Zach is a 14-year-old who learns he has the same special abilities as his father, who was the President’s globe-trotting troubleshooter until “the Bads” killed him. Now Zach must decide whether to use his powers in the same way. Fiction. Grades 5-10.

**Gods of Manhattan** by Scott Mebus. Twelve-year-old Rory discovers a spirit world within New York City, filled with fantastical creatures and people from the city’s past who have become gods and goddesses and who have chosen Rory to perform a dangerous mission. Fiction. Grades 3-8.

**The Lightning Thief** by Rick Riordan. Percy Jackson, 12, learns he is a demigod, the son of a mortal woman and Poseidon, god of the sea. He attends a summer camp for demigods where he and his new friends begin a quest to prevent a war between the gods. Fiction. Grades 3-8.

**Music Was It: Young Leonard Bernstein** by Susan Goldman Rubin. Despite his father’s disapproval, Leonard Bernstein, premier composer and conductor of 20th century America, pursued his passion. Non-fiction. Grades 5-9.

**Extraordinary Women from U.S. History: Readers Theatre** by Chari R. Smith. Includes scripts about famous women in history, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Amelia Earhart, Susan B. Anthony, Nellie Bly and Harriet Tubman. This can be performed or read. Non-fiction/drama. Grades 4-8.

NOTE: This brochure is also available in Spanish.