

BOOK BAG

Summer reading suggestions for young adults, teenagers

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 Correspondent

Just because it's summer vacation doesn't mean kids and teens should stop reading. There are plenty of good books to choose from on the new release shelves at area libraries.

Popular young adult authors John Green and David Levithan have collaborated on a novel for high school students entitled "Will Grayson, Will Grayson" (Dutton, 2010, ages 12 and older). Will Grayson describes his best friend, Tiny Cooper, as "the world's largest person who is really, really gay." Tiny is looking for love. Will isn't. In fact, Will is getting a little tired of Tiny and his obsession with romance.

A chance meeting brings another teenager, also coincidentally named Will Grayson, into Will and Tiny's lives. Green writes from the perspective of one of the Wills and Levithan writes from the perspective of the other. The result is a story that is both humorous and serious and will likely appeal to adults, as well as to older teens.

"Restoring Harmony" (Putnam, 2010, ages 12 and older) is a debut novel by Joelle Anthony. Reminiscent of the Last Survivors series by Susan Beth Pfeffer, Anthony transports us to the year 2041, 10 years after the Great Collapse (of the

economy). The world's oil has almost run out and food is scarce. Cities are crime-ridden and extremely dangerous.

Sixteen-year-old Molly McClure lives a better life than most on a self-sufficient island in Canada. When the family decides it must bring Molly's estranged grandparents from Oregon to Canada, it's up to Molly to, first, get to Oregon by herself; second, persuade these strangers, who are her grandparents, to come with her; and third, bring them safely back to Canada. Anthony introduces a strong female character and delivers a fast-paced adventure that will leave readers wondering what the future holds for us.

Fans of Suzanne Collins' "Hunger Games" trilogy also might enjoy James Dashner's "The Maze Runner" (Delacorte, 2010, ages 12 and older). Thomas, 16-year-old boy, wakes up inside an elevator with no memory of anything other than his first name. When the doors open he finds himself inside a giant maze with 50 other boys who, like him, have no idea how they got there or why they're there. All they know is that every morning the doors open, every evening they close, supplies come every week, and a new boy arrives every 30 days.

But the day after Thomas arrives, the

doors open and a girl is standing there. She is the first girl to ever arrive in the "Glade," and she comes with a strange message. Suspenseful and thought-provoking, "The Maze Runner" is likely to appeal to reluctant readers and will keep them guessing until the very end. Like "The Hunger Games," this is also the first book in a planned trilogy.

Jandy Nelson's debut novel, "The Sky is Everywhere" (Dial, 2010, ages 12 and older) is a Junior Library Guild Selection and a Young Adult Library Services Association Best Fiction Nominee. It's a story of love and loss. Seventeen-year-old Lennie is a bookworm and a band geek. She's happy playing second chair clarinet and living in her older sister, Bailey's shadow. But Bailey suddenly dies and now Lennie has to figure out who she is without Bailey. She finds herself torn between a new boy and Bailey's boyfriend. The story is beautifully written, funny and heart-breaking and is sure to be a hit among fans of Sarah Dessen's.

Dori Hillestad Butler is the author of several books for children, including "Yes, I Know the Monkey Man," and a new series for beginning chapter readers, "The Buddy Files."



