Join the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) this summer for "Infinite Possibilities," the 2024 NMAAHC Summer Reading Challenge!

Created for 3rd - 12th-grade students and educators, the challenge is designed to provide enjoyment and enrichment about African American history and culture.

The 2024 NMAAHC Summer Reading Challenge runs from Saturday, June 1, through Saturday, August 31.

INFINITE POSSIBILITIES

2024 NMAAHC SUMMER READING CHALLENGE
Greetings, Traveler. In celebrating the conclusion of our exhibition on Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures, we encourage you to explore the infinite possibilities of literature by reading the new and unfamiliar.

Your challenge is to read at least seven new selections from across eleven genres.

A genre is a category that groups things, like books, by similar characteristics. The genres we are asking you to read may or may not be new to you, but we hope you choose selections for each genre that are new to you.

We encourage you to choose selections by African American or Black diaspora authors or selections that focus on Black voices, stories, or experiences. Whatever you decide to read, try something new and explore the infinite possibilities of literature and imagination in the spirit of Afrofuturism.

DO YOU ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE?
The NMAAHC Summer Reading Challenge is back! This self-guided program encourages 3rd—12th-grade students and their educators to read seven selections across literary genres. We encourage readers to make selections within genres created by African American and African diasporic authors or that center Black voices and experiences.

For summer 2024, the reading challenge theme is "Infinite Possibilities," inspired by the third zone in our special exhibition, *Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures*, which is open until August 18, 2024.

**HOW TO PARTICIPATE**

To complete the NMAAHC Summer Reading Challenge, you must read at least seven selections by Saturday, August 31. Play the reading bingo board and win a straight line of seven (up-down, across, or diagonal). For an extra challenge, win seven across and four corners. This can add two or four additional selections to your challenge.

We encourage readers to choose selections by African American and African diasporic authors or center Black voices and experiences. Choose and read selections appropriate for your and/or your students’ age level.

Parents, guardians, and educators, we highly encourage you to review the selections that your students choose to make sure the content is appropriate you and your student(s).

Reading resources (including a reading log and literacy activities) are included to help deepen your reading experience.
### How to Find Reading Selections

#### Library

- **Local Library**
- **Digital Alternatives** (like audiobooks)
- **Purchase**

#### Digital Options

Here are various types of platforms or apps available to you, including:

- **Overdrive** ([overdrive.com](http://overdrive.com))
- **Libby App** ([libbyapp.com](http://libbyapp.com))
- **Hoopla** ([hoopladigital.com](http://hoopladigital.com))
- **Openlibrary** ([openlibrary.org](http://openlibrary.org))
- **Internet Archives** ([archive.org](http://archive.org))

#### Purchase Options

Here are links to independent bookstores and the Smithsonian Store, which you can use to support local businesses in your community. This list is not comprehensive.

- **Indiebound** ([indiebound.org](http://indiebound.org))
- **Bookshop** ([bookshop.org](http://bookshop.org))
- **Smithsonian Store - Books** ([smithsonianstore.com](http://smithsonianstore.com))

### How to Find Black Authors or Books?

#### Libraries:

Go to your library's search page. Search by subject. Type “African Americans” or any group within the “African Diaspora” in the search bar. You will get a list of subject titles related to Black authors.

#### Online Bookstores:

Go to the search page on an online bookstore and type in “African American books.” Or go to the book section and type in more specific terms such as “African American” + “the genre you are looking for.” Remember to use the “ and + to get a more effective search. Sometimes, online bookstores have menu options that further categorize books into sub-sections.

#### Organizations and Book List Websites:

There are organizations and websites that feature reading lists of Black authors and Black stories.

- **Black Caucus of the American Library Association** ([bcala.org](http://bcala.org))
- **Social Justice Books: A Teaching For Change Project** ([socialjusticebooks.org](http://socialjusticebooks.org))
- **Goodreads** ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com))
- **Your local library often has put together reading lists featuring Black authors and stories on their webpages.**

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*Gallery Image Credits: NMAAHC*
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<th>Western</th>
<th>Contemporary</th>
<th>Fantasy</th>
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WHAT ARE THE GENRES?

**HISTORICAL NONFICTION**
Selections that use research to explore real-life individuals, groups, events, places, or ideas in history.

**HISTORICAL FICTION**
Selections are inspired by historical persons, events, or places. Or are set in historical times or locations.

**FANTASY**
Selections that center on the imaginative worlds or include elements in the real world that center around magic and the supernatural.

**SCIENCE FICTION/SPECULATIVE FICTION**
Selections that center on the imaginative worlds and often focus on technology, space, time travel, and science.

**CONTEMPORARY**
Selections are set in the present day. For this challenge, any work with a setting from 1995 CE to the current day.

**GRAPHIC NOVEL**
Selections that blend imagery and text, often appearing like a comic book.

**AFRICAN AMERICAN CLASSICS**
For this challenge, this category is any nonfiction or fiction work written by an African American author in or before 1994 CE.

**BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR**
A biography is a nonfiction work that focuses on a specific individual's life written by someone else or themselves. A memoir is someone who writes about a specific time or experience in their life.

**WESTERN**
Selections are set in what is understood as the western part of the United States, typically in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

**HORROR**
Selections are written to frighten, scare, disturb, or disgust the reader with their subject matter.

**POETRY**
Selections are collections of poetry or narratives written in verse form (or in the structure of a poem).
Use this page to record the books that you read. Print as many reading log pages as you need to record all your reading selections.

#____ Title:  
Author:  
Genre:  
Fiction or Non-Fiction:  
Rating (1 to 5):  
Recommend to Others: Yes or No

#____ Title:  
Author:  
Genre:  
Fiction or Non-Fiction:  
Rating (1 to 5):  
Recommend to Others: Yes or No

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Recommend to Others: Yes or No
INDIVIDUAL LITERACY ACTIVITIES

Use these activities to help you dive deeper into your reading selections. You can complete these activities on your own.

Billboard
Create a set of billboard ads for some or all of the selections you read throughout the summer. (Perez, 112)

Collage Creations
Create a collage of words, pictures, and images that capture the main idea or chapter of a text you have read. (Perez, 114)

Create a Comic Strip
Create a comic strip that summarizes key events in the selection you have read. On a blank piece of paper, draw three to five squares. These squares are the comic frames. Add details such as backgrounds, props, and at least two characters with dialogue bubbles. (Perez, 114-115)

Dear Author or Digital Review
After finishing a selection, write a letter to the author on how you felt about the book. You can keep this letter to yourself or research how to contact the author. Have your parent, guardian, or educator help you to find the contact information for the author. Or, write a digital review for the selection like ones that you see online. Typically, online reviews rate books between one to five stars, one being the lowest and five being the highest. Choose and explain your rating. Have your parent, guardian, or educator help you if you want to post this review online. (Perez, 116)

Dramatic Monologue
Create a monologue for a character in a scene from a selection. Consider what the character was thinking at that moment and act it out. (Perez, 117)

Double Entry Journal
Reflect on passages within your reading. You will choose quotes from your selection to reflect and write responses. Divide a blank piece of paper in half. Label the left side "Quotes" and the right side "Reflections." Choose a passage or quote that you found informative or interesting. Write it on the left side. On the right side, reflect on and write down your thoughts about the quote or passage. Try to record a reflection once per section or chapter. (Tompkins)

Picture This!
While you are reading, note or highlight eight new vocabulary words. Fold a blank sheet of paper into eight sections. On one side, write the word and its dictionary definition. On the other side, in each corresponding section, make a quick sketch or symbol representing each the vocabulary word. (Perez, 124)

Questioning the Author
Engage the selection by questioning the choices of the author and their work. Use the four questions below to help you reflect. Decide whether you will answer the questions after reading a section, chapter, or the entire work. Review the questions before you begin. After you complete reading your chosen section, chapter, or the entire work, answer the four questions. 1) What is the author trying to tell us? 2) What is the author talking about here? 3) How does this fit with what the author told us before? 4) Why is the author telling us this? (Tompkins)
GROUP LITERACY ACTIVITIES

Use these activities to help you dive deeper into your reading selections. You can complete these activities with your classmates, family, friends or community members.

30-Second Speech
Have a parent, guardian, or educator ask a question about the student's selection. Have the student reflect on that question by writing and preparing a 30-second speech. The student can present this speech to their family and friends. (Perez, 111)

Board Game
Choose a selection to read with a group. Afterward, create a board game based upon the selection. (Perez, 112)

Choral Reading
Have a student or parent, guardian, or educator choose a passage to read within a selection. Have the student read one or two sentences aloud and then reread the sentences aloud as a group. This activity is designed to help fluency for struggling readers. (Perez, 113)

Concept Map
Have a parent, guardian, or educator get a sheet of paper or poster paper, and place a word or topic at the center relating to their student's current reading selection. Have the student(s) write qualities, characteristics, ideas, images, and feelings related to the word or topic in the center of the concept map. (Perez, 114)

Learned-Affirmed-Challenged
Have a parent, guardian, or educator lead a discussion where they ask the student(s) what they learned from their selection, what affirmed what they already knew, and lastly, something that challenged their thinking. (Perez, 120)

Pantomiming Parts
Have the student(s), parent, guardian, or educator choose a part of a selection. The group is responsible for acting out that part of the selection. One member of the group is the narrator, and the rest have to act out the text using pantomime as the narrator reads the text. (Perez, 124)

Literacy activities were adapted from the following resources:
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

THIS IS AWARDED TO

FOR COMPLETING THE 2024 NMAAHC SUMMER READING CHALLENGE.

DATE

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

Smithsonian