



June 2017

Dear Rising 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students:

Each of you is expected to read two books over the summer and visit one historical site which will serve as a catalyst to our fall curriculum.

### **LANGUAGE ARTS – READ TWO BOOKS**

**Book One: Choose one of the following novels and complete one of the “Language Arts Summer Reading Options” provided.**

**Masterminds** by Gordon Korman

Eli has never left Serenity . . . why would he ever want to? Then one day, he bikes to the edge of the city limits and something so crazy and unexpected happens, it changes everything. Eli convinces his friends to help him investigate further, and soon it becomes clear that nothing is as it seems in Serenity. The clues mount to reveal a shocking discovery, connecting their ideal crime-free community to some of the greatest criminal masterminds ever known. The kids realize they can trust no one—least of all their own parents.

**Ms. Bixby’s Last Day** by David Anderson

Everyone knows there are different kinds of teachers. The boring ones, the mean ones, the ones who try too hard, the ones who stopped trying long ago. The ones you’ll never remember, and the ones you want to forget. Ms. Bixby is none of these. She’s the sort of teacher who makes you feel like school is somehow worthwhile. Who recognizes something in you that sometimes you don’t even see in yourself. Who you never want to disappoint. What Ms. Bixby is, is one-of-a-kind.

**Okay for Now** by Gary D. Schmidt

As a fourteen-year-old who just moved to a new town, with no friends and a louse for an older brother, Doug Swietek has all the stats stacked against him. So begins a coming-of-age masterwork full of equal parts comedy and tragedy from Newbery Honor winner Gary D. Schmidt. As Doug struggles to be more than the “skinny thug” that his teachers and the police think him to be, he finds an unlikely ally in Lil Spicer—a fiery young lady who “smelled like daisies would smell if they were growing in a big field under a clearing sky after a rain.”

**Stella by Starlight** by Sharon Draper

Stella lives in the segregated South—in Bumblebee, North Carolina, to be exact about it. Some stores she can go into. Some stores she can’t. Some folks are right pleasant. Others are a lot less so. To Stella, it sort of evens out, and heck, the Klan hasn’t bothered them for years. But one late night, later than she should ever be up, much less wandering around outside, Stella and her little brother see something they’re never supposed to see, something that is the first flicker of change to come, unwelcome change by any stretch of the imagination. As Stella’s community—her world—is upended, she decides to fight fire with fire.

**The Inquisitor’s Tale: Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog** by Adam Gidwitz

On a dark night, travelers from across France cross paths at an inn and begin to tell stories of three children. Their adventures take them on a chase through France: they are taken captive by knights, sit alongside a king, and save the land from a farting dragon. On the run to escape prejudice and persecution and save precious and holy texts from being burned, their quest drives them forward to a final showdown at Mont Saint-Michel, where all will come to question if these children can perform the miracles of saints.



## Language Arts Summer Reading Assignment Options 7th grade Language Arts

Choose either: *Masterminds*, *Ms. Bixby's Last Day*, *Okay for Now*, *Stella by Starlight*, or *The Inquisitor's Tale*. While reading, make any notes you feel will help you with your summer project. Next, choose one of the projects below to complete which will show your understanding of the novel. This project will be one of your first important grades for the next year, so make sure that it showcases your talent and abilities. Regardless of the project you choose, you should include information relating and showing your understanding of: the *plot* of the story, the *characters* involved, the *themes or big ideas* in the story, and your *opinion* of the book. If you and a friend decide to read the same book, you are allowed to complete one of the following projects together.

1. Design a multimedia presentation (about 1 and a half minutes long) for your novel. Do not use Power-Point, but be creative using technology. The options are endless! Some resources could be iMovie or Windows Movie Maker, or web based programs like Animoto (<https://animoto.com>). Remember, your project must include plot events, character analysis and themes from your book.

2. Make an illustrated timeline of the novel. You must illustrate 10 different events/scenes from the story you selected. Your illustrations must be put in proper order for your book, and should show the characters and events of importance throughout your story. Be sure to include a written explanation of why you chose each scene and how it relates to the theme of the novel. Illustrations will be graded on quality and must be in color; no stick figures will be accepted. Remember, your project must include plot events, character analysis and themes from your book.

3. Create a newspaper for the town/city your story takes place in. Have the stories and features of the newspaper be about the characters and events in your novel. Your newspaper should contain information about the characters, setting, plot, and theme(s) of the novel. The newspaper should be informative and must contain text and pictures. You could include editorials, weather reports, sports, reports, feature stories. Be creative! Here is a link for a newspaper template:

<http://www.extranewspapers.com/newspaper-template-pack-word-school/> Remember, your project must include plot events, character analysis and themes from your book.



## Language Arts Summer Reading Assignment Options 7th grade Language Arts

4. Book Jacket: Must be your own design – do not duplicate original book jacket. Remember, your project must include plot events, character analysis and themes from your book. Create a colorful, engaging book jacket that includes the following:

- a. Cover: New cover for the book with illustration, title, author, and student name.
- b. Inner Flap: (left side): Summary – Sequential summary of key story events from the reading  
Characters – discuss the major characters in the story and their personalities
- c. Inner Flap: (right side): Text Connections ( 1 text to text, 1 text to self, and 1 text to world)
- d. Back Flap: Theme – Description of the theme in the novel make sure to support your answer with specific examples from the story.

<http://desktoppub.about.com/od/glossary/g/Book-Jacket.htm>

<http://www.readwritethink.net/files/resources/interactives/bookcover/>

<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/englishhomework/ss/How-To-Design-A-Book-Cover.htm>

**BOOK TWO: Choose one of the novels from the following “7th Grade Language Arts Suggested Summer Reading List” or one of the links provided and complete the “Language Arts Book Report Form” provided. (A book presentation will be assigned the 1st week of school.)**



## Grade 7 Language Arts Suggested Summer Reading List (Book Descriptions taken from Amazon.com)

### **[Beyond the Burning Time](#) by Kathryn Lasky**

They say something very strange is happening to some of the people of Salem. That some of the young girls have become ... troubled. And the fear is beginning to spread. Mary and her mother don't hear about the rumors right away. They don't know that many of the villagers believe that some of Mary's friends have had spells cast on them -- by witches. Or that one of the accused is Mary's mother. Now Mary and her brother, Caleb, have a decision to make: Are the villagers right? Or is their mother innocent? And if she is -- can they help her escape before it's too late?

### **[The Book Thief](#) by Markus Zusak**

One of the most enduring stories of our time, *The Book Thief* is just a small story really, about, among other things: a girl, some words, an accordionist, some fanatical Germans, a Jewish fist fighter, and quite a lot of thievery.

### **[Crazy Lady!](#) by Jane Leslie Conly**

Receiving less and less attention from his widowed father, Vernon joins with his friends as they ridicule the neighborhood outcasts -- Maxine, an alcoholic prone to public displays of outrageous behavior, and Ronald, her retarded son. Then social services tries to put Ronald into a special home, and Vernon finds himself fighting the agency.

### **[The Diary of a Young Girl](#) by Anne Frank, Eleanor Roosevelt (Introduction), B.M. Mooyart**

For almost fifty years, Anne Frank's diary has moved millions with its testament to the human spirit's indestructibility, but readers have never seen the full text of this beloved book—until now. This new translation, performed by Winona Ryder, restores nearly one third of Anne's entries, excised by her father in previous editions, revealing her burgeoning sexuality, her stormy relationship with her mother, and more.

### **[Door in the Wall](#) by Marguerite de Angeli, Marguerite Angeli**

Ever since he can remember, Robin, son of Sir John de Bureford, has been told what is expected of him as the son of a nobleman. He must learn the ways of knighthood. But Robin's destiny is changed in one stroke when he falls ill and loses the use of his legs. Fearing a plague, his servants abandon him and Robin is left alone.

### **[The Golden Goblet](#) by Eloise Jarvis McGraw**

Winner of a Newbery Honor, an exciting ancient Egyptian mystery! Ranofer wants only one thing in the world: to be a master goldsmith like his beloved father was. But how can he when he is all but imprisoned by his evil half brother, Gebu? Ranofer knows the only way he can escape Gebu's abuse is by changing his destiny. But can a poor boy with no skills survive on the cutthroat streets of ancient Thebes? Then Ranofer finds a priceless golden goblet in Gebu's room and he knows his luck—and his destiny—are about to change.



**[The Hobbit](#)** □ by J. R. R. Tolkien □

Whisked away from his comfortable, unambitious life in his hobbit-hole in Bag End by Gandalf the wizard and a company of dwarves, Bilbo Baggins finds himself caught up in a plot to raid the treasure hoard of Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. Although quite reluctant to take part in this quest, Bilbo surprises even himself by his resourcefulness and his skill as a burglar! Written for J.R.R. Tolkien's own children, *The Hobbit* met with instant success when published in 1937 and has remained a timeless classic.

**[Homecoming](#)** by Cynthia Voigt □

The Tillerman kids' mother just left them one day in a car in a mall parking lot. Their father had left them a long time ago. So, as usual, it was up to 13-year-old Dicey, the eldest of four, to take care of everything, make all the decisions, feed them, find places to sleep. But above all, Dicey would have to make sure to avoid the authorities who would split them up and place them in foster homes. Deep down, she hoped they could find an adult they could trust, someone who would take them in and love them. But she was afraid it was too much to hope for.

**[The Man Who Was Poe](#)** □ by Avi □

In Providence, Rhode Island, in 1848, Edgar Allan Poe reluctantly investigates the problems of 11-year-old Edmund, whose family has mysteriously disappeared and whose story suggests a new Poe tale with a ghastly final twist.

**[The Maze](#)** □ by Will Hobbs □

Stowing away in the back of a pickup, Rick, a 14-year-old foster child, escapes from a juvenile detention facility near Las Vegas and travels to Canyonlands National Park in Utah. There, he finds himself in a dead end in the surreal landscape of redrock spires and deep canyons called the Maze, and is taken in by an eccentric naturalist who is working on a project to reintroduce condors to the wild.

**[Myst, The Book of Atrus](#)** □ by Rand Miller, Robyn Miller, David Wingrove □

The ages of Myst are worlds of adventure and awe ... of mystery and beauty ... of intrigue and betrayal. You have seen only a glimpse of the picture. Now take a step further into the fictional legend of Myst. These pages are your link to the story of Atrus, son of Gehn, and the last of the race of D'Ni -- the masters of The Art, the craft of linking to other worlds through the descriptive art of writing. For most of his young life, Atrus thought the stories his grandmother told him were just strange legends. Then his time came to explore the magnificent underground realm.

**[Out of the Dust](#)** □ by Karen Hesse □

In a series of free verse poems, 15-year-old Billie Jo relates the hardships of living on her family's wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Great Depression. Powerful and moving, this Newbery Medal winner effectively depicts both a bleak historical era and one family's healing unleashes.



**Grade 7 Language Arts Suggested Summer Reading List**  
**(Book Descriptions taken from Amazon.com)**

**Redwall by Brian Jacques**

□When the peaceful life of ancient Redwall Abbey is shattered by the arrival of the evil rat Cluny and his villainous hordes, Matthias, a young mouse, determines to find the legendary sword of Martin the Warrior which, he is convinced, will help Redwall's inhabitants destroy the enemy.

**River Thunder □ by Will Hobbs □**

Jessie, Troy, and the rest of the crew from *Downriver* have returned to the Grand Canyon for adventure on the Colorado River. In the year since they last were together, each has changed; each feels more mature. But how will they interact now that they are facing new challenges -- challenges greater than anything they've had to deal with at home? For Troy, it is a chance to prove he can be a team player, someone worthy of friendship and love. For Jessie, the river is the ultimate test. Does she have what it takes to row down the mighty Colorado? The only way to find out is to get into the raft and set off to face the thundering rapids and the powerful emotions that the river

**Shabanu, Daughter of the Wind □ by Suzanne Fisher Staples**

□When 11-year-old Shabanu, the daughter of a nomad in the Cholistan Desert of present-day Pakistan, is pledged in marriage to an older man whose money will bring prestige to the family, she must either accept the decision, as is the custom, or risk the consequences of defying her father's wishes.

**Short by Erin Dionne**

All Hamlet Kennedy wants is to be a normal eighth grader. But with parents like hers - Shakespearean scholars who actually dress in Elizabethan regalia . . . in public! - it's not that easy. As if they weren't strange enough, her genius seven-year-old sister will be attending her middle school, and is named the new math tutor. Then, when the Shakespeare Project is announced, Hamlet reveals herself to be an amazing actress. Even though she wants to be average, Hamlet can no longer hide from the fact that she- like her family - is anything but ordinary.

**Where the Lilies Bloom by Vera Cleaver by Bill Cleaver □**

Mary Call has true Appalachian grit. When her dying father makes her promise to keep her brother and sisters together forever on the mountain and take no help from strangers, she is determined to keep her word -- no matter what. At first Mary Call is sure she can run the family just fine on her own. Romey and Ima Dean help her gather herbs to sell in town, using the riches of the mountains to keep the family clothed and fed. But winter sets in all too quickly. As food runs low, and the tiny house begins to cave in under the weight of the snow, Mary Call learns that the land where the lilies bloom is also a cruel and unforgiving land that deems a price for her stubborn pride.

### **Z for Zachariah** □ by Robert C. O'Brien

□ Ann Burden is 16 and, as far as she knows, the only person left in the world. The nuclear radiation that destroyed the rest of the world has not touched the valley where she lives, and so she has remained, surviving as best she knows how, for the past year. Then, the smoke from a distant campfire shatters Ann's solitude. Someone else is still alive and making his way toward the valley: John Loomis, a scientist, protected from the radiation by a "safe-suit." He asserts his will almost immediately. And as his behavior becomes more and more extreme -- finally culminating in violent confrontation -- Ann must choose how she will live, in a world unlike any she has known.

### **The War That Saved My Life** by Bradley

Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him.

**Here are a couple of links for other book lists.**

[http://www.lisle202.org/pages/uploaded\\_files/7th%20Booklist.pdf](http://www.lisle202.org/pages/uploaded_files/7th%20Booklist.pdf)

<http://www.gp.lib.mi.us/> Go to the heading "Youth Services" and click on "Suggested Reading Lists." Then click on "Middle School."

<http://imaginationsoup.net/2015/05/03/7th-grade-summer-reading-list-age-12-13/>

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

- Choose an historical site to visit.
  - **Use the two-page Historical Site Visit Sheet.**
  - Your historical site sheet should be brought to school on the first day and turned in to your social studies teacher.

Sincerely,

The 7th Grade Team







### Language Arts Book Report Form

In language arts class, we discuss the evaluative characteristics of literature -- format, characterization, plot, setting, theme, conflict, & style. Please connect the following evaluative characteristics with the two language arts books you read this summer. This information will help you complete your language arts assignment during the first week of school.

**Characterization -- actions that define character:** Please identify a character and then offer an action that helps you understand that character (For example, Romeo is very loyal. He avenges Mercutio's death by killing Tybalt).

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**Plot -- the novel's sequence of events: Please offer five major plot points of the novel you read.**

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**Setting -- where and when the story takes place: Identify the setting of the story.**

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**Theme -- a lesson or moral about life that is taught through the plot: What lesson did you learn from this novel? (A note: a theme is not one word. For example, "work" is not a theme; something like "Through hard work one can achieve success" would work.)**

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**Conflict -- a struggle between the protagonist and another character against nature or some outside force: Please identify one conflict in the novel (For example, Romeo cannot be with Juliet because their parents are enemies)**

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **SUMMER HISTORICAL SITE VISIT**

Your challenge this summer is to visit a historical location of your choice. Take a picture of yourself at the location or bring back a brochure. After your visit respond to the questions below.

If your location is in Michigan look for a green historical marker (like the one located in front of GPA). This would be a great spot for your picture, and will contain helpful information that could be used in your responses. There are over 20 historical markers in Grosse Pointe alone!

If your travels this summer take you outside of Grosse Pointe, or Michigan, all the better! Make sure to take a picture and research your site.

I hope you have an adventure filled summer!

**DATE OF VISIT** \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPORTANT EVENT(S) THAT HAPPENED IN THIS**

**LOCATION(S)**

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**WHAT KNOWLEDGE DID YOU GAIN FROM VISITING THIS LOCATION?**

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**DESCRIBE ONE FACT ABOUT THIS LOCATION THAT CONNECTED TO YOUR PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE/LEARNING**

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**DESCRIBE ONE THING YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT IN REGARDS TO THIS LOCATION OR THE EVENT(S) THAT TOOK PLACE HERE**

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**WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THAT OTHERS VISIT THIS SITE? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

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