



June 2017

Dear Rising 8th 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 AT LEAST TWO BOOKS

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

[A Tree Grows in Brooklyn](#) by Betty Smith

The beloved American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century, Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* is a poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache, crowded with life and people and incident. This is a story about young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg. By turns overwhelming, sublime, heartbreaking, and uplifting, the daily experiences of the unforgettable Nolans are raw with honesty and tenderly threaded with family connectedness.

[Fahrenheit 451](#) by Ray Bradbury

Guy Montag is a fireman. In his world, where television rules and literature is on the brink of extinction, firemen start fires rather than put them out. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden.

[I Kill the Mockingbird](#) by Paul Acampora

When Lucy, Elena, and Michael receive their summer reading list, they are excited to see *To Kill A Mockingbird* included. But not everyone in their class shares the same enthusiasm. So they hatch a plot to get the entire town talking about the well-known Harper Lee classic. They plan controversial ways to get people to read the book, including re-shelving copies of the book in bookstores so that people think they are missing and starting a website committed to "destroying the mockingbird." Their efforts are successful when all of the hullabaloo starts to direct more people to the book. But soon, their exploits start to spin out of control and they unwittingly start a mini revolution in the name of books.

[The Thing About Jellyfish](#) by Ali Benjamin

After her best friend dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the true cause of the tragedy must have been a rare jellyfish sting--things don't just happen for no reason. Retreating into a silent world of imagination, she crafts a plan to prove her theory--even if it means traveling the globe, alone. Suzy's achingly heartfelt journey explores life, death, the astonishing wonder of the universe...and the potential for love and hope right next door.

[The Girl Who Drank the Moon](#) by Kelly Barnhill

Many books we read when we're young want to teach us lessons about life. True, the things we learn in them can stay with us forever. But lessons can be so dull. Luckily, Kelly Barnhill's wonderful fourth novel...educates about oppression, blind allegiance and challenging the status quo while immersing the reader in an exhilarating story full of magical creatures and derring-do...A chase, a quest, an arranged murder: The story is so well plotted the pages fly by. Barnhill's language is lyrical and reminiscent of traditional fairy tales, but never childish or stereotypical.



Language Arts Summer Reading Assignment Options 8th grade Language Arts

Choose either: ***A Tree Grows In Brooklyn, Fahrenheit 451, I Kill the Mockingbird, The Thing About Jellyfish or The Girl Who Drank the Moon.*** 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.
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 “8th 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.)

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson (sequel: Forge)

As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom.

Dracula by Bram Stoker

Dracula is the ultimate horror story, producing one of literature’s most lasting villains: Count Dracula. A harrowing, memorable, and enduring story about the world’s most famous vampire.

Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis

Eleven-year-old Elijah lives in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves near the American border. He's the first child in town to be born free, and he ought to be famous just for that. Unfortunately, all that most people see is a "fra-gile" boy who's scared of snakes and talks too much. But everything changes when a former slave steals money from Elijah's friend, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the South. Now it's up to Elijah to track down the thief--and his dangerous journey just might make a hero out of him, if only he can find the courage to get back home.

Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers

A coming-of-age tale for young adults set in the trenches of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, this is the story of Perry, a Harlem teenager who volunteers for the service when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry and his platoon come face-to-face with the Vietcong and the real horror of warfare. But violence and death aren't the only hardships. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments, and why the U.S. is even there at all.

Fly Girl by Sherri L Smith

All Ida Mae Jones wants to do is fly. Her daddy was a pilot, and years after his death she feels closest to him when she's in the air. But as a young black woman in 1940s Louisiana, she knows the sky is off limits to her, until America enters World War II, and the Army forms the WASPÑWomen Airforce Service Pilots. Ida has a chance to fulfill her dream if she's willing to use her light skin to pass as a white girl. She wants to fly more than anything, but Ida soon learns that denying one's self and family is a heavy burden, and ultimately it's not what you do but who you are that's most important.

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is a classic tale of a man-made monster seeking acceptance from society in light of his ghastly appearance and strange upbringing. With Europe as its back in the 1790’s, the story begins with a series of letters exchanged between Captain Robert Walton and his sister that chronicled the story of a man, Victor Frankenstein, whom he meets on the North Pole.



Hana's Suitcase by Karen Levine

In March 2000, a suitcase arrived at a children's Holocaust education center in Tokyo, Japan. Hana Brady was written on the outside. Children who saw the suitcase on display were full of questions and the director decided to find the answers.

Hoops by Walter Dean Meyers

All eyes are on seventeen-year-old Lonnie Jackson while he practices with his team for a city-wide basketball Tournament of Champions. His coach, Cal, knows Lonnie has what it takes to be a pro-basketball player, but warns him about giving in to the pressure. Cal knows because he, too, once had the chance--but sold out.

Hunger Games (Catching Fire, Mockingjay) by Suzanne Collins

Against all odds, Katniss Everdeen has won the annual Hunger Games with fellow district tribute Peeta Mellark. But it was a victory won by defiance of the Capitol and their harsh rules. Katniss and Peeta should be happy. After all, they have just won for themselves and their families a life of safety and plenty. But there are rumors of rebellion among the subjects, and Katniss and Peeta, to their horror, are the faces of that rebellion. The Capitol is angry. The Capitol wants revenge.

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai

Inside Out and Back Again is a New York Times bestseller, a Newbery Honor Book, and a winner of the National Book Award! Inspired by the author's childhood experience of fleeing Vietnam after the Fall of Saigon and immigrating to Alabama, this coming-of-age debut novel told in verse has been celebrated for its touching child's-eye view of family and immigration.

Journey Home by Yoshiko Uchida

After their release from a "concentration" camp, Yuki and her family try to reconstruct their lives. Even though the road to rebuilding their lives seems endless, in the end, it is their unyielding faith and courage that guide them home, reunited and hopeful.

Schooled by Gordon Korman

Capricorn Cap Anderson has been homeschooled by his hippie grandmother, Rain. When Rain is injured in a fall, Cap is forced to attend the local middle school. Although he knows a lot about Zen Buddhism, nothing has prepared him for the politics of public school.

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

"Speak up for yourself--we want to know what you have to say." From the first moment of her freshman year at Merryweather High, Melinda knows this is a big fat lie, part of the nonsense of high school. She is friendless, outcast, because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so now nobody will talk to her, let alone listen to her. As time passes, she becomes increasingly isolated and practically stops talking altogether. Only her art class offers any solace, and it is through her work on an art project that she is finally able to face what really happened at that terrible party: she was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. Her healing process has just begun when she has another violent encounter with him. But this time Melinda fights back, refuses to be silent, and thereby achieves a measure of vindication.

Terrible Typhoid Mary by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Mary Mallon cooked for wealthy families in turn-of-the-20th-century New York City until she became the first documented "healthy carrier" of typhoid in the U.S. and was imprisoned in hospitals for most of her remaining life. Little is known about Mallon outside of one six-page letter she wrote, official documents, newspaper reports, journal articles, and other firsthand accounts of her.



That Was Then This is Now by S.E. Hinton

Companion to *The Outsiders*, *That Was Then, This is Now* is S. E. Hinton's moving portrait of the bond between best friends Bryon and Mark and the tensions that develop between them as they begin to grow up and grow apart. Now, it too is available in this great new package featuring the larger trim size, eye-catching new cover art, and all-new bonus material. And, like *The Outsiders*, the new edition will also maintain the same pagination as the previous edition, making it ideal for continued classroom use.

Ungifted by Gordon Korman

From #1 New York Times bestselling author Gordon Korman comes a hilarious and heartfelt novel in which one middle-school troublemaker accidentally moves into the gifted and talented program—and changes everything. For fans of Louis Sachar and Jack Gantos, this funny and touching underdog story is a lovable and goofy adventure with robot fights, middle-school dances, live experiments, and statue-toppling pranks!

Waiting for Normal by Leslie Connor

Addie is waiting for normal. But Addie's mother has an all-or-nothing approach to life: a food fiesta or an empty pantry, her way or no way. All-or-nothing never adds up to normal, and it can't bring Addie all the way home, where she wants to be with her half sisters. But Addie never stops hoping that one day, maybe, she'll find normal.

Woods Runner by Gary Paulsen

Samuel, 13, spends his days in the forest, hunting for food for his family. He has grown up on the frontier of a British colony, America. Far from any town, or news of the war against the King that American patriots have begun near Boston.

Here are a few links for finding age appropriate novels:

www.gp.lib.mi.us/ - Our own public library has suggested reading lists under Youth Services. Check under both Middle School and High School.

www.readkiddoread.com - Author James Patterson developed this site to encourage children to read.

www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/middle-school -An extensive list of books with reader's ratings and brief summaries.

<http://imaginationsoup.net/2015/05/03/8th-grade-summer-reading-list-ages-13/>

http://www.lisle202.org/pages/uploaded_files/8th%20Booklist.pdf





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).

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.

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.)

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)





Social Studies:

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

We hope that you will use your free time to read more than the required reading. Books may be found at a public library, or they may be purchased from a bookstore. Some selections may need to be ordered by the bookstore, so please allow ample time.

We hope you have a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,

8th Grade Team





WHAT KNOWLEDGE DID YOU GAIN FROM VISITING THIS LOCATION?

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

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

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