

Summer reading for Students Entering Grade Eight

Students entering grade eight are required to read two books over the summer. One book must come from the approved books listed below. The other wisely chosen, challenging book may be selected by the student.

Students will be assessed on the reading when they return to school in the fall. For this reason they should take notes on both books, and they will be allowed to refer to the notes during the assessment. Since they will be writing about the theme and conflict(s) in their books, students should take detailed notes on the author's message (remember, the theme is not one word) and the conflict (person vs. person, person vs. nature, person vs. himself). Notes should be augmented with details, examples, and descriptions of the main characters, including how they look, think, and what they feel as the story progresses.

It will be helpful to write the plot diagram (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) for each book.

Students are expected to purchase or borrow these books from the public library. If this presents a problem, see your current English teacher.

Any questions regarding the summer assignment should be emailed to Mrs. Marcy at dmarcy@bhpsnj.org or Mrs. Corley at dcorley@bhpsnj.org no later than June 17, 2009.

Summer Reading 2008

Entering 8th Grade

Elsewhere by Gabrielle Zevin (Future life/death Fiction) After fifteen-year-old Liz Hall is hit by a taxi and killed, she finds herself in a place that is both like and unlike Earth, where she must adjust to her new status and figure out how to "live."

Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers (Historical Fiction, Coretta Scott King Medal) Seventeen-year-old Richie Perry, just out of his Harlem high school, enlists in the Army in the summer of 1967 and spends a devastating year on active duty in Vietnam. (*Adult Language*)

Life as We Knew It by Susan Pfeffer (Science Fiction) Through journal entries sixteen-year-old Miranda describes her family's struggle to survive after a meteor hits the moon causing worldwide tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel (Survival, Adventure) Pi Patel, having spent an idyllic childhood in Pondicherry, India, as the son of a zookeeper, sets off with his family at the age of sixteen to start anew in Canada, but his life takes a marvelous turn when their ship sinks in the Pacific, leaving him adrift on a raft with a 450-pound Bengal tiger for company.

Messenger by Lois Lowry (Science Fiction) In this novel that unites characters from *The Giver* and *Gathering Blue*, Matty, a young member of a utopian community that values honesty, conceals an emerging healing power that he cannot explain or understand.

Murder on the Orient Express by Agatha Christie (Mystery) The best-loved and best-known of all of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot mysteries--Detective Hercule Poirot has a wealth of suspects to choose from when a wealthy American is stabbed to death en route to Paris on the Orient Express.

***My Sister's Keeper** by Jodi Picoult (Family, Coping with Illness) Thirteen-year-old Anna, conceived specifically to provide blood and bone marrow for her sister Kate who was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia at the age of two, decides to sue her parents for control of her body when her mother wants her to donate a kidney to Kate.

No Excuses: The True Story of a Congenital Amputee Who Became a Champion in Wrestling and in Life by Kyle Maynard (Biography/Inspirational) Presents the author's first hand account of his experiences growing up as a congenital amputee, providing information on how he learned to eat, type, write, and live without hands, ultimately becoming a successful athlete and champion wrestler in Georgia.

***A Tree Grows in Brooklyn** by Betty Smith (Classic/Coming of Age) Young Francie Nolan experiences the problems of growing up in a Brooklyn, New York slum.

***True Grit** by Charles Portis (Historical Fiction) In 1870s Arkansas, fourteen-year-old Mattie Ross persuades U.S. Marshal "Rooster" Cogburn to ride into Indian Territory and help her capture the gang of outlaws who murdered her father.

* Denotes more challenging reading.