

Students Entering 8th Grade Summer Reading 2021

Students entering grade eight are **required** to read **two** books over the summer: the first book is a *required* text based on the class section, and the second book must be another title from the list below. Students also have the option of using one of the required texts from the other class as their second book.

Students will be assessed on the reading when they return to school in the fall and must take detailed notes on every chapter of both books. Notes might be collected by the teacher, so it is important to have the work prepared on the first day of class. Topics must include the following and notes should be augmented with details and examples:

- **Themes and author's message:** Remember, the theme is not one word and should express the human experience.
- **Conflicts:** Students must identify person vs. person, person vs. nature, person vs. society, and person vs. himself conflicts. Students must also describe if each conflict is internal or external.
- **Characters & Characterization:** Students must include descriptions of the main and minor characters. Information should include how the characters look, think, and what they feel as the story progresses.
- **Plot Pyramid-** In addition, students must write the plot diagram (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) for each book.

Students are expected to purchase these books or borrow these books from the public library. If this presents a problem, please see your current English teacher. Any questions regarding the summer assignment should be emailed to Mrs. Silagi, at psilagi@bhpsnj.org, no later than June 8th, 2021.

English 8 Accelerated Required Text:

The Alchemist by Brazilian author Paulo Coelho (Adventure, Fantasy) Santiago, a young Andalusian shepherd boy, travels from his homeland in Spain to Egypt in search of the most extravagant, precious treasure that anyone has ever found. What starts as a journey to find worldly objects, however, turns into a discovery of finding our own treasures within.

English 8 Required Text:

Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor (Historical Fiction, Coming of Age) Taylor's story follows Cassie Logan, a young African-American girl, living in Depression-era Mississippi. Based on Taylor's own family history of enslavement, she depicts an emotional story of a Black family's struggle to keep their land, independence, and pride while battling racial discrimination in the American South.

Choice Book List:

****Anthem***-by Ayn Rand (Dystopian Fiction) Equality 7-252 lives in a bleak, dystopian future where independent thought is a crime, where science and technology have regressed to primitive levels, and where all expressions of individualism have been suppressed. In pursuit of

his quest for knowledge, Equality 7-2521 struggles to answer the questions that burn within him — questions that ultimately lead him to uncover the mystery behind his society's downfall and to find the key to a future of freedom and progress.

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer (Memoir) This is a story about a boy in Malawi whose interest in science and technology drove him to turn everyday objects into a power source for his family. Readers will find his interest in learning, and his determination to succeed inspiring. In addition the novel offers a fascinating glimpse into life in Malawi.

Ender's Game by Orsen Scott Card (Science Fiction) An extraordinary young boy, Ender Wiggin, is recruited to Battle School - a secretive military training program for boys and girls located on a space station orbiting earth. Humankind faces extinction at the hands of a mysterious alien race and the world is searching for the next military genius to defend the attack. At Battle School, Ender must overcome rigorous training and his status as an outsider if he is to emerge as the leader that the world needs. Ender's journey culminates in a final confrontation for the future of Earth and will leave with unanswerable questions about right and wrong.

Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson (Historical Fiction) Fourteen year old Mattie Cook navigates life in the early days of our new country. Complicating life in Philadelphia is the threat of a deadly fever that threatens everyone's health. Based on an actual health crisis as well as issues that faced the young country, this novel provides an accurate picture of life in America at the end of the 18th century.

****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.

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 firsthand 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.

Red Scarf Girl by Ji-Li Jiang (Memoir) It is 1966, and twelve-year-old Ji-li Jiang has everything a girl could want: brains, popularity, and a bright future in Communist China. However, it's also the year that China's leader, Mao Ze-dong, launches the Cultural Revolution—and Ji-li's world begins to fall apart. Over the next few years, people who were once her friends and neighbors turn on her and her family, forcing them to live in constant terror of arrest, and when Ji-li's father is finally imprisoned, she faces the most difficult dilemma of her life.

****Denotes a more challenging text.***