

Grades Seven and Eight  
Summer Reading 2008  
Recommended Reading List

**\*Along with the required reading each student is expected to read two selections from the recommended reading list.**

*Al Capone Does My Shirts* by Gennifer Choldenko (Diversity Fiction)

A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935 when guards' families were housed there, and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister.

*Alas, Babylon* by Pat Frank (Survival Fiction)

The story of a group of people who rely on their own courage and ingenuity to survive in a small Florida town that escaped nuclear bombing.

*The American Muslim Teenager's Handbook* by Dilara Hafiz, Imran Hafiz and Yasmine Hafiz (Non-Fiction)

Offers teens an overview of what it means to be Muslim in America in the twenty-first century, as well as exploring the religion's history and practices.

*Animal Farm* by George Orwell (Classic)

A political satire in which the animals take over running the farm but find their utopian state turning into a dictatorship.

*Meet the Austins (Austin Family Saga)* by Madeline L'Engle (Realistic Fiction)

The life of the Austin family is changed by the arrival of self-centered young Maggy Hamilton, orphaned by the sudden death of her pilot father. The saga of the Austin family continues in *The Moon by Night*, *The Young Unicorns*, *A Ring of Endless Light*, and *Troubling a Star*.

*The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak (Historical Fiction)

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

*City of the Beasts* by Isabel Allende (Adventure Fiction)

When fifteen-year-old Alexander Cold accompanies his individualistic grandmother on an expedition to find a humanoid Beast in the Amazon, he experiences ancient wonders and a supernatural world as he tries to avert disaster for the Indians. This series continues with *Kingdom of the Golden Dragon* and *Forest of the Pygmies*.

*Cracker!: The Best Dog in Vietnam* by Cynthia Kadohata (Historical Fiction/Animal story)

A young soldier in Vietnam bonds with his bomb-sniffing dog.

*Criss Cross* by Lynne Rae Perkins (Realistic Fiction / 1960s)

Teenagers in a small town in the 1960s experience new thoughts and feelings, question their identities, connect, and disconnect as they search for the meaning of life and love.

*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (Historical Drama)

A vengeful teenager in 1692 Salem accuses her former lover and his wife of witchcraft.

*The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier (Realistic Fiction)

A high school freshman discovers the devastating consequences of refusing to join in the school's annual fund raising drive and arousing the wrath of the school bullies.

*Dairy Queen* by Catherine Gilbert Murdock (Realistic Fiction)

After spending her summer running the family farm and training the quarterback for her school's rival football team, sixteen-year-old D.J. decides to go out for the sport herself, not anticipating the reactions of those around her.

*Downriver* by Will Hobbs (Adventure Fiction)

Jessie and the other rebellious teenage members of a wilderness survival school team abandon their adult leader and try to run the dangerous white water of the Grand Canyon. The sequel to this is *River Thunder*.

*The Elephant Man* by Christine Sparks (Fiction)

A novel based on the life of a nineteenth-century Englishman called the elephant man who suffered from Neurofibromatosis, a rare disease. He was condemned to a miserable life in a workhouse until a kind doctor gave him his first real home.

*Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card (Science Fiction)

Ender, who is the result of genetic experimentation, may be the military genius Earth needs in its war against an alien enemy. Ender's adventures continues in *Ender's Shadow*, *Shadow of the Hegemon* and *Children of the Mind*.

*Eragon* by Christopher Paolini (Fantasy)

In Aagaesia, a fifteen-year-old boy of unknown lineage called Eragon finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power, peopled with dragons, elves, and monsters. If you enjoyed this book, read the sequel *Eldest*.

*The Face on the Milk Carton* by Caroline Cooney (Mystery/Suspense Fiction) \*\*\* any title by this author \*\*\*

A photograph of a missing girl on a milk carton leads Janie on a search for her real identity.

*Fifth Chinese Daughter* by Jade Snow Wong (Autobiography)

The story of a Chinese American girl's coming of age in America.

*Gidget* by Frederick Kohner (Coming of Age Fiction)

Franzie, nicknamed Gidget--short for girl midget--comes of age in 1957, falling for the dreamy Moondoggie in the midst of a Malibu summer of beaches, girlfriends, music, and surfing.

*The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck (Classic)

Wang Lung, a peasant in China in the 1920s, becomes a prosperous landowner with the help of his humble wife, O'Lan, with whom he shares a devotion to duty, land, and survival.

*High Heat* by Carl Deuker (Realistic Fiction)

When sophomore Shane Hunter's father is arrested for money laundering at his Lexus dealership, the star pitcher's life of affluence and private school begins to fall apart.

*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams (Science Fiction)

The story of a young man who is rescued by an alien friend seconds before Earth is demolished to make room for a galactic freeway.

*Home of the Braves* by David Klass (Realistic Fiction/Sports)

Eighteen-year-old Joe, captain of the soccer team, is dismayed when a hotshot player shows up from Brazil and threatens to take over both the team and the girl whom Joe hopes to date.

*Homecoming* by Cynthia Voigt (Realistic Fiction)

Abandoned by their mother, four children begin a search for a home and an identity.

*The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer (Science Fiction)

In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patron, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

*The Iliad* by Homer (Poetry)

Homer's classical account of the war between the Greeks and the Trojans from Agamemnon's visit by the priest Chryses to the burial of Hektor.

*Inherit the Wind* by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee (Drama)

Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee's 1951 play based on the Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee, July 1925, which opened the debate over the teaching of creationism and evolution.

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte (Classic)

In early nineteenth-century England, an orphaned young woman accepts employment as a governess and soon finds herself in love with her employer who has a terrible secret.

*Jump Ball: A Basketball Season in Poems* by Mel Glenn (Poetry/Sports)

Tells the story of a high school basketball team's season through a series of poems reflecting the feelings of students, their families, teachers, and coaches.

*The Life of Pi* by Yann Martel (Adventure Fiction)

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.

*Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (Classic)

After a plane crash strands them on a tropical island while the rest of the world is ravaged by war, a group of British school boys attempts to form a civilized society but descends into brutal anarchy.

*The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson (Drama)

William Gibson's play about teacher Annie Sullivan's determined quest to give twelve-year-old Helen Keller, blind, deaf, and mute, the gift of language.

*The Misfits* by James Howe (Realistic Fiction)

Four students who do not fit in at their small-town middle school decide to create a third party for the student council elections to represent all students who have ever been called names.

*The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place* by E. L. Konigsburg (Realistic Fiction) \*\* any title by this author \*\*

Upon leaving an oppressive summer camp, twelve-year-old Margaret Rose Kane spearheads a campaign to preserve three unique towers her grand uncles have been building in their back yard for over forty years.

*Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier (Classic)

For months after her death, the memory of Rebecca de Winter continues to dominate everyone at her former home, Manderley, one of the most famous English country houses.

*The River Between Us* by Richard Peck (Historical Fiction) \*\*\* any title by this author \*\*\*

During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled New Orleans to come north to Illinois.

*Seventeenth Summer* by Maureen Daly (Coming of Age Fiction)

The summer after high school graduation, seventeen-year-old Angie finds herself in love for the first time.

*Silent to the Bone* by E. L. Konigsburg (Realistic Fiction) \*\* any title by this author \*\*

When he is wrongly accused of gravely injuring his baby half-sister, thirteen-year-old Branwell loses his power of speech and only his friend Connor is able to reach him and uncover the truth about what really happened.

*Squashed* by Joan Bauer (Realistic Fiction) \*\* any title by this author \*\*

As sixteen-year-old Ellie pursues her two goals--growing the biggest pumpkin in Iowa and losing twenty pounds herself--she strengthens her relationship with her father and meets a young man with interests similar to her own.

*Sticks* by Joan Bauer (Realistic Fiction) \*\* any title by this author \*\*

With the help of his grandmother, his dead father's best friend, and his own best friend, a math genius, ten-year-old Mickey prepares to compete in the most important pool championship of his life, despite his mother's reservations.

*Stuck in Neutral* by Terry Trueman (Diversity Fiction)

Fourteen-year-old Shawn McDaniel, who suffers from severe cerebral palsy and cannot function, relates his perceptions of his life, his family, and his condition, especially as he believes his father is planning to kill him.

*The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (Classic/Drama)

A darkly humorous play about Prospero, the deposed Duke of Milan, who is exiled to a magical island with his daughter, Miranda.

*Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin (Non-Fiction/Humanitarianism)

Greg Mortenson recounts the experiences he had while trying to help impoverished villages in Pakistan's Karakoram Himalaya build schools for their children.

*The Three Musketeers* by Alexander Dumas (Classic)

The heroic young d'Artagnan and his noble compatriots Athos, Porthos, and Aramis are pitted against the master of intrigue, Cardinal Richelieu, and the quintessential wicked woman, Lady de Winter.

*Ties That Bind, Ties That Break* by Lensey Namioka (Multi-Cultural Fiction)

Ailin's life takes a different turn when she defies the traditions of upper class Chinese society by refusing to have her feet bound.

*Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* by Jules Verne (Classic)

A French professor and his companions, trapped aboard a fantastic submarine with the mad Captain Nemo, come face to face with exotic ocean creatures and strange sights hidden from the world above.

*Under the Persimmon Tree* by Suzanne Fisher Staples (Multi-Cultural Fiction)

A young Afghan girl, Najmah, befriends an American woman, Nusrat in Peshawar, Pakistan, after Najmah flees her native Afghanistan during the 2001 war; and together they begin a long journey to locate their missing loved ones after the war ends.

*Watership Down* by Richard Adams (Fantasy/Adventure)

A group of hardy Berkshire rabbits share many adventures together as they search for a safe place to establish a new warren after the destruction of their community.

*Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls (Realistic Fiction)

A young boy living in the Ozarks achieves his heart's desire when he becomes the owner of two redbone hounds and teaches them to be champion hunters.

*Who Killed Mr. Chippendale?: A Mystery in Poems* by Mel Glenn (Poetry/Mystery)

A murder mystery told in free verse poems, describing the reactions of students, colleagues, and others when high school teacher Mr. Chippendale, loved by some, hated by others, is shot as the school day begins.

*The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame (Classic)

Follows the escapades of four animal friends--Toad, Mole, Rat, and Badger--who live along a river in the English countryside.