

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING GUIDE 2017

May 2017

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the **Middle School Summer Reading Guide 2017**. Here, you will find a **list of the book choices for English and Social Studies**, with Amazon links. You will also find instructions and expectations for the activities/projects we would like you to complete for the beginning of next school year.

As we've asked you to do in the past, **please acquire your summer reading choices on your own**, from wherever you like, at whatever price point you like (new or used, purchased or borrowed from a friend or the public library), in whatever medium you like (traditional paperback, online, iBook, Kindle, or audiobook). Unless a particular edition or translation is indicated, any copy will suffice.

As with last year, you will find that there is a **wide variety of choices**, both in fiction and nonfiction, reading level and subject matter. We hope you are all able to find something on your list that attracts you in some way.

Initiated by the English Department in 1975, required summer reading has long been **a tradition at The Prairie School**. The Department believes that reading and learning should end neither in June nor with the curriculum, and strongly encourages students to take advantage of the time to read literature of their choosing--even above and beyond what we ask them to read for school. No matter the grade, required and independent reading helps students practice and improve their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. It provides, too, a common reading experience among students in the same class and enhances future classroom activities.

Your teachers are thankful to have the opportunity to share in reading experiences with you even during the summer, and we hope that you are thankful, as well, for **the right and opportunity that you have to read, to write, and to think**. Have a wonderful summer of reading!

Sincerely,

Susan Holum, Chair, Grades K-6
sholum@prairieschool.com

Erin Housiaux, Chair, Grades 7-12
ehousiaux@prairieschool.com

Grade 5: Reading

"Reading... a vacation for the mind...."

-- Dave Barry

Choose any TWO * of the following books to read:

- [*Number the Stars*](#) (Lois Lowry) *
- [*Cardboard*](#) (Doug TenNapel)
- [*The Breadwinner*](#) (Deborah Ellis)
- [*A Wrinkle in Time*](#) (Madeleine L'Engle)
- [*Holes*](#) (Louis Sachar)
- [*Hatchet*](#) (Gary Paulsen)
- [*There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom*](#) (Louis Sachar)
- [*Save Me a Seat*](#) (Sarah Weeks)

* **Note:** If you are taking the summer course "Getting Started on Summer Reading," you must read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry.

General Directions:

- DUE: 2nd day of school in the fall
- Choose one of the projects below to do for ONE of the books you read.
 - The written work for the project may be done on a computer or neatly handwritten.
 - Carefully edit your work for display at school.
- You will report on the SECOND book you read when you return to school in the fall.

Project Options:

Ms. Barbian will have explained these options in class before the summer; she will also have shared examples of past projects.

- Informative Letter
 - Write a letter addressed to Ms. Barbian.
 - Include the following information in the letter:
 - 1st paragraph should include the book title, author, and setting.
 - 2nd paragraph should be a detailed description of the main character.
 - 3rd paragraph should be about major problems and solutions.
 - 4th paragraph should be a rating of the book from 1-10 (10 is best) and a recommendation of the book to someone, with reasons for both.

- Pictures with Captions

- Fold a large piece of drawing paper (suggestion: 12"x18") into six even sections.
- Each section will include a picture and a caption. The caption should be detailed and not take up more than half the section.
- Include one of the following pieces of information in each of the six sections:
 - Title, author, and your name
 - Setting (where and when)
 - Main character--describe the character in at least four sentences.
 - One major problem the character had and the solution
 - Two events that helped solve this problem.
 - What did the character learn?

Grade 6: English

I think of life as a good book. The further you get into it, the more it begins to make sense.

-- Harold Kushner

Choose any TWO * of the following books to read:

- [*Maniac Magee*](#) (Jerry Spinelli) *
- [*The Raft*](#) (S.A. Bodeen)
- [*Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief*](#) (Wendelin Van Draanen)
- [*Because of Mr. Terupt*](#) (Rob Buyea)
- [*The Crossover*](#) (Kwame Alexander)
- [*Pax*](#) (Sara Pennypacker)
- [*Rain Reign*](#) (Ann M. Martin)
- [*The War that Saved My Life*](#) (Kimberly Brubaker Bradley)

* **Note:** If you are taking the summer course “Getting Started on Summer Reading,” you must read *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli.

General Directions

- DUE: 2nd day of school in the fall
- Choose one of the projects below to do for ONE of the books you read.
 - The written work for the project may be done on a computer or neatly handwritten.
 - Carefully edit your work for display at school.
- You will report on the SECOND book you read when you return to school in the fall.

Project Options:

Mrs. Gasser will have explained these options in class before the summer; she will also have shared examples of past projects as well as graphic organizers. If you need any help over the summer, please feel free to email her: agasser@prairieschool.com

Literature Letter

- Write a letter addressed to Mrs. Gasser.
- Include the following information in the letter:

First Paragraph (indented) should have:

- Title of Book (italics & spelled correctly)
- Author’s name (spelled correctly)
- BRIEFLY describe setting (time and place) and main characters

Next paragraphs:

- Choose four (4) from the list of “openers” and write about what you have read (see openers below)
- Paragraphs should be about 4-6 sentences long

- Be sure to give at least one example to back up your opener
- Share your opinions, feelings, connections, experience, etc.

Openers for paragraphs:

- “The part of the book that I will remember is...because...”
- “I rated this book a _____ because...”
- “I like the way the author...”
- “I wonder why the author”
- “The book reminded me of...” or “What I read makes me think about...”
- “The character I liked the most was_____, because...” OR “I think the character feels...because”
- “This story teaches a lesson about...”
- “I was surprised that...”
- “The problem in the story is...”
- “The ending was too _____ (predictable, sad, happy, open), and I would change...”

Pictures with Captions

- Fold a large piece of drawing paper (suggestion: 12”x18”) into six even sections.
- Each section will include a picture and a caption. The caption should be detailed (two or more sentences) and not take up more than half the section.
- Include one of the following pieces of information in each of the six sections:
 - Title, author, and your name
 - Setting (where and when)
 - Main character--describe the character in at least four sentences.
 - One major problem the character had and the solution
 - Two events that helped solve this problem.
 - What did the character learn?

Grade 7: English

Reading is the sole means by which we slip, involuntarily, often helplessly, into another's skin, another's voice, another's soul.

-- Joyce Carol Oates

For your English class, choose ONE of the following fiction books to read. Write a draft of your literature letter to be handed in during the first day back at school. See the directions below for the 7th grade literature letter. If you read a second book, you may receive extra credit by talking to me about the book. You do not have to write a second literature letter. You do need to make time to see me.

7th Grade Summer Reading Options 2017

Realistic Fiction

- Any Heist by [Ally Carter Heist Society Novels](#)
- Any books by [Mike Lupica](#), such as *Heat*

Nonfiction

- [The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion & the Fall of the Imperial Russia](#) (Candace Fleming, 2014)
- [Patient Zero](#), (Marilee Peters, 2014)

Fantasy/Dystopia

- [Entwined](#) (Healthier Dixon,)
- [The Night Gardener](#), (Jonathan Auxier, 2014)

Classic

- [The Outsiders](#) (S. E. Hinton, 1967)
- [Little Women](#) (Louisa May Alcott, 1868)

Graphic Novels

- [The Graveyard Book](#) (Neil Gaiman, 2008)
- [The Mystery Boxes](#) (Kazu Kibuishi (Editor), 2012)

Literature Letter Directions:

Dear Soon-To-Be 7th Grade Readers,

Your assignment is to write me a “literature letter” about your summer reading choice. In the letter, you will tell me what you noticed about the book. It should be written as a personal, critical response to one book. Think deeply about the book as you read it and after you have finished it. It is NOT a summary of the story. Your ideas are most important, and we will grade your letters using the checklist below. Come to see me in M-11 or email me at jcobb@prairieschool.com, if you are unclear about any aspect of this assignment.

Your literature letter should:

- ___ have the **date** on the upper right corner.
- ___ begin with a **greeting** (“Dear Mrs. Cobb,”).
- ___ include the **title of the book (underlined)**.
- ___ include the **author’s name (spelled correctly)**.
- ___ use at least **5 “openers”** from the list of “openers” (see below).
- ___ **interesting ideas** that occurred to you as you read
- ___ **examples** from the book to back up what you say in each paragraph
- ___ be at least **2 handwritten notebook pages (one side equals one page) or 1 ½ pages, typed in 12-14 pt font and single-spaced**
- ___ should **end with a salutation** (“Sincerely,” or “Happy Reading,”).
- ___ and **your signature**.

Please remember that this is a draft of the letter. Bring it with you on the first day of class in the fall. You will get a chance to grade it and make changes to improve it before I grade it. Most of all, enjoy reading,

OPENERS LIST

- “The part of the book that I will remember is... because ...”
- “I rated this book a _____ because...”
- “I liked the way the author...”
- “I wonder why the author...”
- “The book reminded me of ...” or “What I read makes me think about...”
- “The character I liked the most was _____, because...” or “I think the character feels...”
- “If I could hang out with a character, it would be....because....”
- “I noticed that the author uses...” (notice any literary devices such as simile or metaphor?)
- “ This story teaches a lesson about...”
- “I was surprised that...”
- “The ending was too predictable and I would change...”

Grade 7: Social Studies

For your Social Studies class, read one of the following books:

- [Night Journeys](#) (Avi)
 - **Note:** Mr. Mills may have a limited number of paperback copies of *Night Journeys* available for purchase.
- [Chains](#) (Laurie Halse Anderson)

Directions:

Choose a book: you have a choice of two books: *Night Journeys* by Avi, or *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson. You will need to purchase a copy of the book you choose, or try to find it at the library. *Night Journeys* is not available as an eBook, but can be purchased online. *Chains* is available as an eBook or in paperback. *Night Journeys* is the story of two indentured servants who have escaped in Colonial America. *Chains* is the story of a young slave at the outset of the American Revolution. Feel free to look online to learn more about each book before making your choice.

I. Vocabulary: depending which book you choose, you will need to complete a vocabulary list as you read. The lists are found below. Be sure to provide the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective) for each word, as well as the definition!

Night Journeys vocabulary list

Fathom p. 5	Retorted p. 12	Accoutrements p. 14	Commingle p. 19
Suffused p. 24	Aghast p. 33	Belied p. 47	Askance p. 57
Rejoinder p. 86	Seething p. 100	Pious p. 100	Alacrity p. 108
Pertly p. 118	Hasp p. 116	Floundering p. 129	Capricious p. 130
Reconnoiter p. 133	Brusquely p. 137	Semislumber p. 140	

Chains vocabulary list (sorry, no page numbers, but they are in order from the book)

proprietor	sovereign	insolence	etiquette
surly	ruckus	avert	smolder
sedition	propriety	vermin	compote
disembark	destitute	victuals	whittle
treatise	sundry	stupor	vagabond

II. Character Sketch Notes: As you read, take notes to use in writing a character sketch for one of the main characters from the novel (not Robert from *Night Journeys*!). These notes should include:

1. Proof of three character traits, including page numbers where the trait is seen for reference later (quiet, selfish, outgoing)
2. The goal of that character (what he/she wants to do)
3. A problem faced by that character in the book
4. A solution or possible solution to that problem

At the start of the school year each student will complete a written character sketch for their chosen character. This character sketch will be **completed in school**, not over the summer! The only materials you may use in writing the sketch will be the notes you prepare over the summer!

Here is an example of notes for Robert, another character in the novel *Night Journeys*:

1. character traits: *rigid* (p. 88 – Robert seemed indifferent, not affected at all by the fact that he was being held prisoner. He also did not respond in any way to Mr. Shinn’s nonchalant attitude toward him or to Peter’s stares.); *gracious* (p. 97 – Elizabeth talks about how Robert helped her when she stole from his apprentice master. Robert even got sent to prison for helping Elizabeth but still he did not abandon her. This shows how gracious Robert is.); *disheveled* (p. 88 – Peter describes Robert as having dirty clothes, no shoes, and messy hair. He describes Robert’s appearance as being evidence of the journey he and Elizabeth had taken; because he was so disheveled.)
2. Robert’s goal was to escape with his friend Elizabeth to Easton and find a paying job there.
3. Robert is being held prisoner in Mr. Shinn’s barn and a man is soon coming from Trenton to return him to his owner, John Tolivar.
4. Peter can help Robert and Elizabeth escape to freedom.

***All work should be word processed or neatly on paper! Spelling counts at all times!**

Grade 8: English

"A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies... The man who never reads lives only one."

--George R. R. Martin

For your English class, choose ONE of the following fiction books to read. Write a draft of your literature letter to be handed in during the first day back at school. See the directions below for the 8th grade literature letter. If you read a second book, you may receive extra credit by talking to me about the book. You do not have to write a second literature letter. You do need to make time to see me.

8th Grade Summer Reading Options 2016

Dystopian

- [The Giver](#) (Lowis Lowry, 1993)
- [Monument 14](#) (Emmy Laybourne, 2013)

Fantasy

- [Jackaby](#) (William Ritter, 2014)
- [Cinder](#) (Marissa Meyer, 2013)

Classics

- [Sherlock Holmes](#) (Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1887-1893) Pick 2-3 of the books. You do not have to read all of the 1000 pages of the collection.
- [Pride and Prejudice](#) (Jane Austen, 1813)

Realistic Fiction

- [Eleanor and Park](#) (Rainbow Rowell, 2013)
- [Five Flavors of Dumb](#) (Antony John, 2011)
- Any [John Feinstein](#) book, such as *Walk On* (2014)

Non-fiction

- [Patient Zero](#), (Marilee Peters, 2014)

Literature Letter Directions:

Dear Soon-To-Be 8th Grade Readers,

You know the drill. Your assignment is to write us a “literature letter” about your summer reading choice. The big difference between the 8th letter and the 7th letter is that you have to choose a passage from the book that someone says or that the narrator says that attracts your attention. You also have to explain that passage. Why did it stick with you, and what does it mean? In the letter, you will tell me what you noticed about the book. It should be written as a personal, critical response to one book. Think deeply about the book as you read it and after you have finished it. It is NOT a summary of the story. Your ideas are most important, and we will grade your letters using the checklist below. Come to see me in M-11 or email me at jcobb@prairieschool.com, if you are unclear about any aspect of this assignment. Bring it with you on the first day of class in the fall. You will get a chance to grade it and make revisions before I grade it. Most of all, enjoy reading.

Your literature letter should:

- ___ have the **date** on the upper right corner.
- ___ begin with a **greeting** (“Dear Mrs. Cobb,”).
- ___ include the **title of the book (underlined)**.
- ___ include the **author’s name (spelled correctly)**.
- ___ use at least **5 “openers”** from the list of “openers” (see below).
- ___ **interesting ideas** that occurred to you as you read
- ___ **examples** from the book to back up what you say in each paragraph
- ___ include a 1-5 sentence **passage** from the book that you liked with an explanation of why you chose that passage.
- ___ be at least **3 handwritten notebook pages (one side equals one page) or 2 pages typed, in 12 -14 pt font, single-spaced.**
- ___ should **end with a salutation** (“Sincerely,” or “Happy Reading,”).
- ___ and **your signature**.

OPENERS LIST

- “The part of the book that I will remember is... because ...”
- “I rated this book a _____ because...”
- “If I could hang out with any character, it would be....because...”
- “I liked the way the author...”
- “I wonder why the author...”
- “The book reminded me of ...” or “What I read makes me think about...”
- “The character I liked the most was _____, because...” or “I think the character feels...”
- “I noticed that the author uses...” (notice any literary devices such as simile or metaphor?)
- “ This story teaches a lesson about...”
- “I was surprised that...”
- “The ending was too predictable and I would change...”

Grade 8: Social Studies

For your Social Studies class, read ONE of the following books:

- [Assassin](#) (Anna Myers)
 - **Note: Mr. Mills may have a limited number of paperback copies of *Assassin* available for purchase.**
- [The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate](#) (Jacqueline Kelly)

Directions:

Choose a Book: You have a choice of two books to read: *Assassin* by Anna Myers, or *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* by Jacqueline Kelly. *Assassin* centers around the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. *Calpurnia Tate* is the story of a young girl in Texas in 1899, learning about the world around her and becoming an avid naturalist. You can find both at local bookstores, or can purchase electronic versions through Amazon (for Kindle reader) or iBooks.

Character Sketch: As you read, take notes to use in writing a character sketch for one of the two main characters noted below. These notes should include:

1. Proof of three character traits (reserved, egocentric, gregarious), please use interesting and different vocabulary to impress your teacher
2. The goal of that character (what he/she wants to do)
3. A problem faced by that character in the book
4. A solution or possible solution to that problem

At the start of the school year each student will complete a written character sketch for one of the following characters: **Bella** or **Booth** from *Assassin*, or **Calpurnia** or **Grandfather** from *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*. This character sketch will be written in class. The only materials you may use in writing the sketch will be the notes you prepare over the summer!

Here is an example of notes for Robert, one of the main characters from the book you read last summer, *Night Journeys*, as an example of what your notes should look like:

1. character traits: *rigid* (p. 88 – Robert seemed indifferent, not affected at all by the fact that he was being held prisoner. He also did not respond in any way to Mr. Shinn’s nonchalant attitude toward him or to Peter’s stares.); *gracious* (p. 97 – Elizabeth talks about how Robert helped her when she stole from his apprentice master. Robert even got sent to prison for helping Elizabeth but still he did not abandon her. This shows how gracious Robert is.); *disheveled* (p. 88 – Peter describes Robert as having dirty clothes, no shoes, and messy hair. He describes Robert’s appearance as being evidence of the journey he and Elizabeth had taken; because he was so disheveled.)
2. Robert’s goal was to escape with his friend Elizabeth to Easton and find a paying job there.
3. Robert is being held prisoner in Mr. Shinn’s barn and a man is soon coming from Trenton to return him to his owner, John Tolivar.
4. Peter can help Robert and Elizabeth escape to freedom.

***All work should be word processed or done neatly on paper. Spelling counts!**