



## **Middle School Summer Reading Guide 2020**

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2020 Middle School Summer Reading Guide. Here you will find a list of the book choices for English and Social Studies. 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,

Erin Housiaux, English Department Chair  
[ehousiaux@prairieschool.com](mailto:ehousiaux@prairieschool.com)

## Grade 5: Reading

*“Reading... a vacation for the mind....”*

-- Dave Barry

Choose any one of the following books to read and complete the assignment for only one title. Then, choose a second book of your choice. If you would like to select a “good fit” book not from this list for your second summer reading book, please have your parents email Mrs. Cobb at [jcobb@prairieschool.com](mailto:jcobb@prairieschool.com) by Tues. June 30th with the title and their approval of your choice.

### Fiction

- ***Number the Stars*** (Lois Lowry, 1989)\*
  - In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

**\*Note: If you are taking the summer course “Getting Started on Summer Reading,” you must read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. The course will be offered July 20-23 this summer.**

- Any book from the ***Mr. Lemoncello’s Library series*** (Chris Grabenstein)
  - Twelve-year-old Kyle gets to stay overnight in the new town library, designed by his hero (the famous game-maker Luigi Lemoncello), with other students but finds that come morning he must work with friends to solve puzzles in order to escape.
- Any book from the ***The Wings of Fire series*** (Tui T. Sutherland)
  - The seven dragon tribes have been at war for generations, locked in an endless battle over an ancient, lost treasure.
- ***Save Me a Seat*** (Sarah Weeks, 2016)
  - Ravi has just moved to the United States from India and has always been at the top of his class; Joe has lived in the same town his whole life and has learning problems--but when their lives intersect in the first week of fifth grade they are brought together by a common enemy (the biggest bully in their class) and the need to take control of their lives.
- ***A Whole New Ballgame*** (Phil Bildner, 2015)
  - Rip and Red are best friends whose 5th grade year is nothing like what they expected. They have a crazy new tattooed teacher named Mr. Acevedo, who doesn’t believe in tests or homework and who likes off-the-wall projects, the more “off” the better. They also find themselves with a new basketball coach too. But together these two make a great duo who know how to help each other--and find ways to make a difference--in the classroom and on the court.

### Nonfiction

- ***Bugged: How Insects Changed History*** (Sarah Albee, 2014)
  - There are about ten quintillion insects in the world and some of them have affected human history in tremendous ways! For as long as humans have been on earth, we've co-existed with insects...for better or for worse. Once you begin to look at world history through fly-specked glasses, you begin to see the mark of these minute life forms at every turn. Beneficial bugs have built empires. Bad bugs have toppled them. Bugged is not your everyday history book.

## Graphic Novels

- ***The Cardboard Kingdom*** (Chad Sell, 2018)
  - Welcome to a neighborhood of kids who transform ordinary boxes into colorful costumes, and their ordinary block into cardboard kingdom. This is the summer when sixteen kids encounter knights and rogues, robots and monsters--and their own inner demons--on one last quest before school starts again.
- Any book from ***The Last Kids on Earth series*** (Max Brallier, 2019)
  - A funny bestselling graphic novel about a thirteen-year-old boy named Jack Sullivan, who lives in his foster brother's tree house after a zombie outbreak hits his hometown.

## 5th Grade Assignment:

### Pictures with Captions

#### (Due on the 2nd day of school)

- Divide an 8 1/2" X 11" piece of paper into six even sections (if you want more space, use a poster board or any larger size piece of paper).
- Work must be neat and edited for display at school.
- Each section should include a picture and a caption. The caption should be detailed, but not take up more than half the section.
- **Fiction:** 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?
- **Nonfiction:** Include one of the following pieces of information in each of the six sections:
  - Title, author, and your name
  - Describe the subject your researched in at least four sentences
  - The most interesting fact
  - The most helpful text feature
  - One example of something the author did that you liked
  - The part of the book that you will remember most

\*\*\*\*\*This list and assignment will be included with the student report cards.\*\*\*\*\*

## 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)\***
  - After his parents die, Jeffrey Lionel Magee's life becomes legendary, as he accomplishes athletic and other feats which awe his contemporaries.
- ***The War that Saved My Life* (Kimberly Brubaker Bradley)**
  - A young disabled girl and her brother are evacuated from London to the English countryside during World War II, where they find life to be much sweeter away from their abusive mother.
- ***Ghost* (Jason Reynolds)**
  - "Ghost, a naturally talented runner and troublemaker, is recruited for an elite middle school track team. He must stay on track, literally and figuratively, to reach his full potential"--Provided by publisher.
- ***City of Ember* (Jeanne DuPrau)**
  - In the year 241, twelve-year-old Lina trades jobs on Assignment Day to be a Messenger to run to new places in her decaying but beloved city, perhaps even to glimpse Unknown Regions.
- ***Click* (Kayla Miller) (Please only choose one graphic novel to read for summer reading)**
  - Olive "clicks" with everyone in the fifth grade—until one day she doesn't. When a school variety show leaves Olive stranded without an act to join, she begins to panic, wondering why all her friends have already formed their own groups . . . without her. With the performance drawing closer by the minute, will Olive be able to find her own place in the show before the curtain comes up?
- ***New Kid* (Jerry Craft) (Please only choose one graphic novel to read for summer reading)**
  - Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?
- ***Wildfire* (Rodman Philbrick)**
  - Flames race toward Sam Castine's summer camp as evacuation buses are loading, but Sam runs back to get his phone. Suddenly, a flash of heat blasts him as pine trees explode. Now a wall of fire separates Sam from his bus, and there's only one thing to do: Run for his life. Run or die.
- ***Sammy Keyes and The Hotel Thief* (By Wendelin Van Draanen)**
  - Sammy Keyes must be a magnet for trouble...  
I mean it's bad enough that she has to live illegally in a seniors-only building with her grandmother while her mother tries to make it as a movie star. And worse that she witnessed a burglary in progress--and that the thief saw her. And worse still that nosy neighbor Mrs. Graybill is onto her, and that the thief is *after* her. But on top of all that, she also manages to make an enemy of the queen of mean at her new school and get suspended on the first day.

**\*Note: If you are taking the summer course "Getting Started on Summer Reading," you must read *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli. The course will be offered July 20-23 this summer.**

## Assignment:

Choose one of the projects below for one of the books you read

(Due on the 2nd day of school.)

- The written work for the project may be done on a computer or neatly handwritten. Carefully edit your work for display at school. Please use Google Classroom (Summer Reading) to help you with your project.
- You will report on the second book you read when you return to school in the fall.
- If you need any help over the summer, please feel free to email: [agasser@prairieschool.com](mailto:agasser@prairieschool.com).

### 1) 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 from the list of "openers" and write about what you have read:
      - "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..."
    - Be sure to give at least one example to support your opener
    - Paragraphs should be about 4-6 sentences long
    - Share your opinions, feelings, connections, experience, etc.

### 2) 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?

\*\*\*This list can be found in your student's Google Classroom under 6th Grade Summer Reading.\*\*\*

## 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 books to read. If you would like to select a “good fit” book not from this list, please have your parents email Mrs. Cobb at [jcobb@prairieschool.com](mailto:jcobb@prairieschool.com) by Tuesday, June 30th with the title and their approval of your choice. Contact Mrs. Cobb if you are unclear about any aspect of this assignment. You may receive extra credit for reading a second book.

### Realistic Fiction

- **Long Shot** (Mike Lupica)
  - Pedro Morales has always been content helping others look great. The epitome of a point guard, he plays the game to set up his teammates; Ned, in particular, the star forward on the receiving end of Pedro's pinpoint passes. Pedro wants to make his father proud, and so he runs for class president. Yet doing so means going one-on-one against Ned, easily the most popular boy in school. And Pedro learns the hard way that being a good teammate doesn't mean that others will return the favor. Now Pedro wants to win more than ever; but this time, it's for himself.
  - Other titles by Mike Lupica that would be acceptable alternatives: *Heat*, *Walk On*, or *Summer Ball*
- **Epic Fail of Autura Zamora** (Pablo Cartaya)
  - When his family's restaurant and Cuban American neighborhood in Miami are threatened by a greedy land developer, thirteen-year-old Arturo, joined by Carmen, a cute poetry enthusiast, fight back, discovering the power of poetry and protest through untold family stories and the work of Jose Martí.
- **The Guggenheim Mystery** (Robin Steven)
  - The adventure that began in Siobhan Dowd's popular and acclaimed novel *The London Eye Mystery* at long last continues with Ted, Kat, and their cousin Salim investigating a theft at the Guggenheim Museum that's been pinned on Salim's mother!

### Nonfiction

- **The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion & the Fall of the Imperial Russia** (Candace Fleming)
  - The story of the Russian Revolution as it unfolded. Describes both the luxurious lives of the Romanovs and the plight of Russia's peasants and their eventual uprising.

### Fantasy

- **Mark of the Thief (Mark of the Thief #1)** (Jennifer A. Nielsen)
  - When Nic, a slave in the mines outside of Rome, is forced to enter a sealed cavern containing lost treasures of Julius Caesar, he finds himself in possession of an ancient amulet filled with magic once reserved for the Gods, and becomes the center of a conspiracy to overthrow the emperor and destroy Rome.
  - Other titles by Jennifer Nielsen that would be acceptable alternatives: *False Prince* or *Traitor's Game*

### Graphic Novels - must read 2 of these to equal 1 chapter book

- **All's Faire in Middle School** (Victoria Jamieson)
  - Homeschooled by Renaissance Fair enthusiasts, eleven-year-old Imogene has a hard time fitting in when her wish to enroll in public school is granted.
- **Awkward** (Svetlana Chmakova)

- After shunning Jaime, the school nerd, on her first day at a new middle school, Penelope Torres tries to blend in with her new friends in the art club, until the art club goes to war with the science club, of which Jaime is a member.
- Any other titles by Svetlana Chmakova would also be acceptable
- **Smile** (Raina Telgemeir)
  - Raina just wants to be a normal sixth grader. But one night after Girl Scouts she trips and falls, severely injuring her two front teeth. What follows is a long and frustrating journey with on-again, off-again braces, surgery, embarrassing headgear, and even a retainer with fake teeth attached.
  - Any other titles by this Raina Telegemeir would also be acceptable.

**Assignment: Use the LL Graphic Organizer to take notes as you read. Remember that you are expected to think deeply about the book and tell what you notice as you read. Bring these notes to school on the 2nd day of classes.**

**\*\*\*This list can be found in your student's Google Classroom under 7th Grade Summer Reading.\*\*\***

## Grade 7: Social Studies

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

- *Night Journeys* (Avi)
  - Two young indentured servants escape into Pennsylvania in the late 1700's and receive help from an unexpected source.
- *Chains* (Laurie Halse Anderson)
  - After being sold to a cruel couple in New York City, a slave named Isabel spies for the rebels during the Revolutionary War.

Feel free to look online to learn more about each book before making your choice. 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. If you have any questions, email Mr. Mills at [amills@prairieschool.com](mailto:amills@prairieschool.com).

### Assignment:

#### Character Sketch Notes

(Due on the 2nd day of classes.)

- 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:
  - Proof of three character traits, including page numbers where the trait is seen for reference later (quiet, selfish, outgoing)
  - The goal of that character (what he/she wants to do)
  - A problem faced by that character in the book
  - 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!
- All work should be word processed or neatly on paper. Spelling counts at all times!

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.

\*\*\*This list can be found in your student's Google Classroom under 7th Grade Summer Reading.\*\*\*



## 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 books to read. If you would like to select a “good fit” book not from this list, please have your parents email Mrs. Cobb at [jcobb@prairieschool.com](mailto:jcobb@prairieschool.com) by Tuesday, June 30th with the title and their approval of your choice. Contact Mrs. Cobb if you are unclear about any aspect of this assignment. You may receive extra credit for reading a second book.

### Dystopian/Fantasy

- ***Jackaby*** (William Ritter)
  - Newly arrived in 1892 New England, Abigail Rook becomes assistant to R. F. Jackaby, an investigator of the unexplained with the ability to see supernatural beings, and she helps him delve into a case of serial murder which, Jackaby is convinced, is due to a non-human creature.

### Realistic Fiction

- Any John Feinstein book, such as ***Walk On*** (2014)
  - Alex Myers is a triple-threat athlete — great at football, basketball, and baseball. But he'll have to fight for a spot on the varsity team. Alex is a quarterback, but from the first day of football practice, it's clear that that position is very much filled by the coach's son, Matt. Alex finally gets a chance to show what he can do when Matt is injured, and he helps win a key game to keep the Lions' bid for the state championship alive. But just when his star is rising, Alex gets blindsided - the state has started drug testing, and Alex's test comes back positive for steroids. Alex knows that's not right. But he doesn't know if it's a mistake - or if someone wants to make sure he can't play...
- ***Piecing Me Together*** (Renee Watson)
  - Tired of being singled out at her mostly-white private school as someone who needs support, high school junior Jade would rather participate in the school's amazing Study Abroad program than join Women to Women, a mentorship program for at-risk girls.

### Classic

- ***The Outsiders*** (S. E. Hinton)
  - Ponyboy can count on his brothers. And on his friends. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on “greasers” like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect until the night someone takes things too far.

### Non-fiction

- ***March, Book I, II, III*** (John Lewis) Read all 3 of these in the series.
  - This trilogy by Congressman John Lewis, a key figure of the civil rights movement, centers around his commitment to justice and nonviolence that has taken him from an Alabama sharecropper's farm to the halls of Congress, from a segregated schoolroom to the 1963 March on Washington, and from receiving beatings from state troopers to receiving the Medal of Freedom from the first African-American president.
- ***Bloody Times: The Funeral of Abraham Lincoln and The Manhunt for Jefferson Davis*** (James L Swanson)
  - This suspense-filled true-crime thriller — the young readers' adaptation of Swanson's *Bloody Crimes* — explores two epic events of the Civil War era: the manhunt to apprehend Confederate president Jefferson Davis in the wake of Abraham Lincoln's assassination and the momentous twentieth-day funeral pageant that brought President Lincoln's body from Washington, DC to his home in Springfield.

Use the LL Graphic Organizer to take notes as you read. Remember that you are expected to think deeply about the book and tell what you notice as you read. Bring these notes to school on the 2nd day of classes.

\*\*\*This list can be found in your student's Google Classroom under 8th Grade Summer Reading.\*\*\*

## Grade 8: Social Studies

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

- *Assassin* (Anna Myers)
  - In alternating passages, a young White House seamstress named Bella and the actor John Wilkes Booth describe the events that lead to the latter's assassination of Abraham Lincoln.
- *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* (Jacqueline Kelly)
  - In central Texas in 1899, eleven-year-old Callie Vee Tate is instructed to be a lady by her mother, learns about love from the older three of her six brothers, and studies the natural world with her grandfather, the latter of which leads to an important discovery.

You can find both books at local bookstores, or can purchase electronic versions through Amazon (for Kindle reader) or iBooks. If you have any questions, email Mr. Mills at [amills@prairieschool.com](mailto:amills@prairieschool.com).

### Assignment:

#### Character Sketch Notes

(Due on the 2nd day of classes.)

- 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:
  - Proof of three character traits (reserved, egocentric, gregarious) — please use interesting and different vocabulary to impress your teacher
  - The goal of that character (what he/she wants to do)
  - A problem faced by that character in the book
  - 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!
- All work should be word processed or neatly on paper. Spelling counts at all times!

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.

\*\*\*This list can be found in your student's Google Classroom under 8th Grade Summer Reading.\*\*\*