

ELA Summer Reading Assignment

for

SST's Class of 2016

The summer slide: it sounds fun, but it can make the transition from seventh to eighth grade really difficult. Harmony students can start strong in the fall if their reading habits don't slide away during the summer. The more students read, the stronger their skills are in all subject areas. Students must read at least 4 books this summer to complete the assignment, but more books = extra credit!

Don't forget that summer should still be fun! Summer reading is the opportunity for students to relax and enjoy themselves. If you get to pick your books, you will be more likely to spend more time reading, not because you have to, but because you want to. You can read any books you want this summer, but if you want some suggestions, look at the Suggestions for Summer Reading list.

Readers should pick books that appeal to them, not books that frustrate them. If you have to check the dictionary every 5 minutes, how can you get lost in a book? Use the five-finger rule: find a book that looks good, open it to any random full page, and hold up a finger every time you find a word you don't know. At the end of the page, if you have 4 or 5 fingers up, you're in the wrong book.

Writing about a book can help you understand it better, and if we write about the books we read, we can share our experiences with other people. When you finish a book this summer, you can write about it in any of the following ways:

Option A: Write a book review. Do you recommend this book to other readers? Why or why not? (Check newspapers, in print or online, and magazines like *Time* for examples of book reviews.)

Option B: Do some creative writing. Your creative work can be anything that relates to the book: a song, a poem, a short story, a play, a film, or any combination of genres. You can re-write a scene from the perspective of another character. You could re-imagine the plot in a different setting. You could re-write the ending. You could write a poem that deals with a theme or a character in the book. Whatever kind of text you write, include an explanation that links your creative work back to the book you read. Explain how your work is related to the author's work.

Option C: Write a letter to the author about the book. The content of the letter is up to you. You can talk about your favorite parts of the book. You can ask the author how he came up with the idea for the book or why she chose to develop the plot or characters or theme in a certain way. You can explain ways you think the book relates to your own life, or you can make connections between the book and the real world.

Option D: Select an interesting issue raised in the book. Write a brief explanation of how the issue was raised and why you find it interesting. Research the topic further, and write about your research, citing sources as needed.

Option E: Create a multi-media presentation about the book. This can be a PowerPoint presentation, a digital story, a series of film clips, or any other multi-media form, and it can document any of the ways the text connects with you, with other texts, or with the world around you.

Some Suggestions for Eighth Grade Summer Reading

(see <http://www.haisln.org/recommendedreadinglists.html> for even more suggestions)

Series

The *Artemis Fowl* series by Eoin Colfer—fantasy, action, humor

The *His Subtle Materials* trilogy by Philip Pullman—fantasy, action

The *Alex Rider Adventure* series by Anthony Horowitz—action, spy thriller

The *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling—fantasy, magic, action

The *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series by Rick Riordan—fantasy, action

The *Books of Ember* series by Jeanne DuPrau—dystopia, politics

The *Inkheart* trilogy by Cornelia Funke—fantasy, action

The Wrinkle in Time quartet by Madeline L'Engle—parallel universe, action, drama

The *Heist Society* series by Ally Carter—action, intrigue, spies

The *Incarceron* series by Catherine Fisher—fantasy, action

The *Leviathan* series by Scott Westerfeld—steam punk, fantasy, action

Independence Hall by Roland Smith—action, spies, politics

The Georges and the Jewels by Jane Smiley—drama, horses

The *Gone* series by Michael Grant—supernatural, action

Realistic Fiction

Chains by Laurie R. King

Fat Cat by Robin Brand

Diamonds in the Shadow by Caroline Cooney

Total Tragedy of a Girl Named Hamlet by Erin Dionne

Graphic Novels and Manga

Mouse Guard by David Peterson

Redwall by Brian Jacques

Coraline by Neil Gaiman and P. Craig Russell

Smile by Raina Telgemeier

Nonfiction

The Real Benedict Arnold by Jim Murphy

The War to End All Wars: World War I by Russell Freedman

Sir Charlie Chaplin: The Funniest Man in the World by Sid Fleischman

The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom by Margarita Engle

Fantasy

The Stars Like Dust by Isaac Asimov

The Keeper's Tattoo by Gill Arbuthnott

The Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp by Richard Yancey

Ship Breaker by Paolo Bacigalpi

Action and Sports

Tangerine by Edward Bloor

Holes by Louis Sachar

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen

Change-Up: Mystery at the World Series by John Feinstein