

TMS 8th Grade ELA Summer Reading

Required summer assignment. You can choose to do the following assignment at your leisure over the summer or all at once during the first week of school.

Pick one fiction and one non-fiction reading from your grade level list below. As you read, pay attention to the following items:

- Plot or events of the text
- Main characters of the text
 - how they are described
 - if they change in any way
- Theme or themes (life lessons) from the text
- Major similarities and differences (any connections) between the two texts you choose to read.

During the first weeks of school, you will have an assignment involving your texts and the focus information above.

Randa Abdel-Fattah, *Does My Head Look Big in This?* 16-year-old Ama, an Australian-born Muslim Palestinian, decides she is ready to wear the hijab, or head covering, as a sign of her deep faith. Ama copes with misconceptions and discrimination in a humorous way as she defends her decision to herself and others.

Marc Aronson, *Sugar Changed the World: A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science.* This book explores the history and impact of sugar on our world, from slavery to revolution to human rights.

Susan Campbell Bartoletti, *The Boy Who Dared.* Awaiting his execution in jail, a German teenager recalls Hitler's rise to power and the courage he found to stand up against the Nazi regime.

Nora Raleigh Baskin, *Anything But Typical.* Jason, an autistic teenager with a talent for creative writing, struggles to find acceptance in his middle school community.

Nora Raleigh Baskin, *Summer Before Boys.* Julia and Eliza are lifelong friends who have shared everything until one develops her first real crush. The girls find themselves drifting apart until Eliza does something drastic to win back her best friend.

Ann Bausum, *Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg On The Front Lines Of The Civil Rights Movement.* The 1960s saw courageous young people risking great personal danger as they participated in the freedom rides during the Civil Rights Movement.

Ruby Bridges, *Through My Eyes.* Ruby Bridges tells the moving story of her year in first grade at the all-white William Frantz Public School in New Orleans in 1960.

Loree Griffin Burns, *Tracking Trash: Flotsam, Jetsam, And the Science Of Ocean Motion.* This book describes the work of a man who tracks trash as it travels great distances by way of ocean currents.

Lynne Cherry, *How We Know What We Know About Our Changing Climate: Scientists and Kids Explore Global Warming.* Veteran science writer Cherry and award-winning photographer Braasch team up to make climate change less frightening by showing children how to empower themselves as "citizen scientists."

Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games Series*. America, now Panem, requires each of its twelve territories to select two children between the ages of 12 and 18 to participate in the Hunger Games. On television, these twenty-four kids will fight to the death, and only one will survive.

Laura Elliott, *Under A War-Torn Sky*. Take a look at Nazi-occupied Europe through the eyes and experiences of Henry Forester, a young flier shot down during World War II. Deborah Ellis, *The Breadwinner*. Parvana lives in Kabul, Afghanistan. When conditions grow desperate for her family, she poses as a boy so she can earn money to help them.

Margarita Engle, *The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba*. Fredrika Bremer is a Swedish suffragist visiting Cuba in 1851. Cecilia is a black slave serving as Fredrika's translator. Elena is the daughter of a wealthy landowner. Based on a true story and written in alternating narratives, this free verse novel tells the story of three different women, all dreaming of their own form of freedom.

Eric Heuvel, *A Family Secret*. Flashbacks are used to tell of a family living in Amsterdam during the Holocaust. The very serious subject matter is related through the family members; the father was a member of the Dutch Nazi Party, while the mother and son participated in the Dutch resistance. The graphic novel format reveals the family's secrets up to the present day. The companion is *The Search*.

Phillip M. Hoose, *Moonbird: A Year On the Wind with the Great Survivor B95*. Moonbird – or B95 as his ankle band states – is a red knot, a tiny shorebird that migrates from southern Argentina to northern Canada and back every year. The book follows Moonbird, so-named because he has flown enough miles to get to the moon and halfway back, and other migrating shore birds as they struggle to survive against predators, diminishing food sources, and loss of land on their arduous annual journeys.

Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton, *Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai on the African Savanna*. This memoir of a young Maasai boy tells the story of Lekuton who grows up as part of a nomadic tribe in Kenya. The story sheds light on the Massai culture and life on the savanna. Lekuton comes from a family of nomadic cow-herders, and Kenyan law required each family to send one child to school. Lekuton was the chosen child, and school opened up his world. He works to preserve his Maasai heritage while taking advantage of the opportunities that education brings his way.

Lensey Namioka, *Ties that Bind, Ties That Break*. In China in 1911, Ailin resists tradition and pressure from her family by refusing to have her feet bound to make her more attractive for her future husband. Her act of defiance alters her life forever.

Cynthia Levison, *We've Got A Job: 1963 Birmingham Children's March*. This is the little known story of 4,000 black elementary-, middle-, and high school students who voluntarily went to jail in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. These are the first-hand accounts of four Black children who boycotted school to participate in a march to protest segregation. Their efforts for desegregation during the Civil Rights Movement are well researched and told through original interview and photos.

Mike Lupica, *QB 1*. Peyton and Eli Manning meet Wyatt and Jake Cullen. Jake is a freshman quarter back in Texas where high stakes football is not just a game. Jake must live up to his older brother Wyatt's championship legacy and the pressure of his father, a former NFL quarterback.

Adeline Yen Mah, *Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter*. Chinese Cinderella is the perfect title for Adeline Yen Mah's memoir of her childhood growing up in China during the 1940s as she endures life ruled by a cruel stepmother.

Sy and Temple Grandin Montgomery, *Temple Grandin: How the Girl Who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World*. This biography explores the life and mind of Temple Grandin, a brilliant autistic woman who revolutionized the livestock industry.

Wes Moore, *Discovering Wes Moore*. Two kids names Wes Moore were born blocks apart and within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both ran into trouble with the police. How did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? When Wes Moore wrote to his namesake in prison, they began a remarkable friendship. This story looks at the challenges of growing up and the power of the choices people make in their lives.

Michael Morpurgo, *War Horse*. In 1914, Joey, a beautiful stallion with a distinctive cross on his nose, is bought by the British army. He leaves his owners and his life on an English farm and becomes a calvary horse. He is shipped to France and witnesses horrific battle after battle with the German calvary, always hoping to be reunited with his beloved master, Albert.

Bill Nye, *Unstoppable: Harnessing Science to Change the World*.

Linda Sue Park, *A Long Walk to Water: Based on a True Story*. Told in alternating points of view, follow the stories of Salva, a Lost Boy in 1985 Sudan who spends six years seeking refuge, and Nya, a girl in 2008 Sudan who spends eight hours a day walking to and from a water source. These two stories merge and offer a message of hope.

James Patterson, *The Final Warning*. "Three cheers! Max is one of the smartest, strongest, funniest heroines around." In this breathtaking new story from the astonishing imagination of James Patterson, a girl has to save herself and maybe the planet. This story, a science fiction/adventure is for readers from ten to a hundred and ten.

Julie Anne Peters, *Define Normal*. The outstanding student, Antonia, is matched up with the unusual and mysterious punker, Jazz, for a peer-counseling program. As the counseling sessions progress, the two girls discover that they have many things in common.

Susan Beth Pfeffer, *Life As We Knew It*. When a meteor hits the moon and knocks it off its axis, life on earth is altered forever. High-school student Miranda keeps a diary about how her family copes without electricity, food and gas shortages, and extreme weather changes.

Terry Pratchett, *Nation*. A tsunami brings two young survivors together to rebuild an island nation. Although the native boy and British girl speak different languages, they're finding a way to overcome their differences as they struggle to survive.

Doreen Rappaport, *Beyond Courage: The Untold Story of Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust*. Through twenty-one meticulously researched accounts, the author illuminates the defiance of tens of thousands of Jews with the weapons of courage, ingenuity, the will to survive, and the resolve to save others or to die trying.

Jane Redd, *Solstice*. Science Fiction/Dystopian novel about a time when it rained non-stop for 37 years.

Trent Reedy, *Words in the Dust*. Zulaikha is an Afghan girl who was born with a cleft palate. She suffers merciless teasing from others in her village. She is noticed by a soldier when American forces are traveling through her village, and he offers to arrange the surgery that will repair her birth defect.

Zluaikha is caught between opportunity and tradition in her culture that young American readers will find shocking but hopeful.

Pam Munoz Ryan, *The Dreamer*. This fictional biography is the story of a shy Chilean boy who grows up feeling and seeing poetry all around him. The story illustrates how the poetry of Pablo Neruda was shaped by his domineering father as well as the beauty of nature.

Theodore Taylor, *The Bomb*. This is the story of Bikini Island, a nuclear test site during World War II, told from the point of view of Sorry, a sixteen-year-old islander.

Vendelin Van Draanen, *The Running Dream*. Track star Jessica loses a leg in a terrible car accident. Her road to recovery is a long one, but she can't give up her dream of running again.

Rita Williams-Garcia, *One Crazy Summer*. It is 1968, and Delphine and her two sisters have been put on a plane from Brooklyn to California to spend a month with their mother, a poet who abandoned the family years ago. During this crazy summer, the girls not only learn about their mother and the politics of this time period, but they each grow individually and come to better understand each other.

Eugene Yelchin, *Breaking Stalin's Nose*. Sasha dreams of his initiation into the Soviet Young Pioneers to show his loyalty to Stalin and the communist party. Sasha's disillusionment with the regime begins to grow when his father, an officer in the party, is arrested.

Paula Yoo, *Good Enough*. Patti tries to balance schoolwork, band, and boys while trying to please her Korean parents by getting into an Ivy League school.