

Hi rising 7th grade parents,

This summer we are excited to again offer summer reading with some freedom attached to it when it comes to selecting the books they will read. Having done our homework, we are confident in the power and value of choice reading, especially at the middle school level. Students will spend the school year reading required texts, so while we hope that they will enjoy those, we find that giving them this opportunity through summer reading is a way to carry a passion for reading over into the school year during daily independent reading time at school and hopefully at home.

Our objective is to help students build a lifelong love for reading. We hope to be models of that in the classroom through our own engagement with one another in front of the students as well as in our emphasis on independent reading, having it be a constant in their ever-changing day. Summer reading, to us, is meant to keep the students engaged and give them the opportunity to be in the driver's seat (with parameters) of their reading as they enter new worlds or explore new genres. In 6th grade they certainly showed a developing passion for reading and began to develop a taste for certain topics, authors, and genres; we hope summer reading is an opportunity to continue and evolve this.

Having surveyed the students back in the fall and surveying them about what they would like to see as their summer reading, Mrs. Wagner and I have decided that students may choose 3 books to read. While this can be as daunting as saying you can write anything you'd like, we want to offer suggestions as well as some parameters:

- Students **MUST** read one fiction and one nonfiction title (the third can be their choice)
- Books must be considered grade level
- Suggestions of books, series, and authors are listed below

**Here are some of our favorite titles featured on the 2020-2021 Reading Olympics List:**

*Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick (fiction)

*The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba (nonfiction)

*Boys in the Boat, The (Young Readers Adaptation): The True Story of an American Team's Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics:* by Daniel James Brown (nonfiction)

*Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen (fiction)

*Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper (fiction)

**Some 7th grade favorites over the years:**

*I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives* by Caitlin Alifirenka & Martin Ganda (nonfiction)

*The War that Saved My Life* by Kimberly Bradley (fiction)

*Refugee* by Alan Gratz (fiction)

*Prisoner B-3087* by Alan Gratz (fiction)

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne (fiction)

**Favorite Series:**

*Ghost* Series by Jason Reynolds (fiction)

*The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins (fiction)

*The Maze Runner* by James Dasher (fiction)

**Our recommendations:**

*Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina* Young Readers edition by Misty Copeland (nonfiction)

*One Crazy Summer* by Rita Williams-Garcia (fiction)

*Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen (fiction)

*Restart* by Gordon Korman (fiction)

*Holes* by Louis Sachar (fiction)

**Our recommendations (continued):**

*Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan (fiction)

*Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly (nonfiction)

*Orbiting Jupiter* by Gary G. Schmidt (fiction)

**Novels in verse recommendations:**

*A Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds (fiction)

*House Arrest* by K.A. Holt (fiction)

*The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander (fiction)

*Booked* by Kwame Alexander (fiction)

*Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson (nonfiction)

**Mrs. Wagner and Mrs. Sepich's favorite YA authors:**

Jayson Reynolds

Kwame Alexander

Sharon Draper

Jacqueline Woodson

Alan Gratz

Jerry Spinelli

Judy Blume

We hope that these titles can provide some guidance and that this summer students will enjoy their summer reading selections. In September we look forward to listening to students' opinions and recommendations as to cultivate a master list of student-approved books for them to use throughout the year for independent reading and inspire us as we are always building our classroom libraries. We always hope to be able to witness another September of swapping books with one another based on reviews!

We hope you have a great summer and are able to dive into some good reads yourselves!

Kerri Sepich and Becky Wagner