



8th Grade Summer Reading List

Book One: Read **one of the following** books:

- ***The Hiding Place*** by Corrie ten Boom. Biography/Memoir of the ten Boom family working with the Dutch Resistance. Read the true story of Corrie ten Boom’s courageous decisions to love like Jesus did in the midst of WWII.
- ***Number the Stars*** by Lois Lowry. Holocaust fiction piece about a girl named Annemarie and her best friend . . . who happens to be Jewish. Unfortunately, Denmark isn’t the safest place for Jews in 1943. A story of true friendship in the midst of WWII.
- ***God’s Smuggler*** by Brother Andrew. Biography of the life of Brother Andrew, a missionary who smuggled Bibles into countries that were “closed” to religion — a task both difficult and dangerous. His story is both exciting and encouraging to modern followers of Jesus.
- ***The Outsiders*** by S. E. Hinton. 1960's suburban Oklahoma. The conflict between two gangs of kids and what happens when each side tries to break down the walls of prejudice that divide them. (Contains sensitive material.)

Book Two: You pick it! Select your own piece of literature independently OR from the recommended reading list below. Be sure that it meets the following requirements:

- New—cannot be something previously read
- At least 150 pages of text
- Any genre (autobiography, novel, Christian living, etc.)
- On or above grade level (if in doubt, research reading levels online)
- Parent approved (signature required before reading)
- You **may** select another novel from the required list (above), if desired.

Recommended 8th grade books:

- ***A String in the Harp*** by Nancy Bond When Peter finds an ancient harp key, he enters a frightening world, moving between two historical periods and between the practical and the magical.
- ***After the War*** by Carol Matas. Teen-aged Ruth is freed from a Nazi concentration camp and fears she is the only surviving member of her family. On a dangerous journey she rediscovers her inner strength and finds hope.

- ***Banner in the Sky*** by James Ramsey Ullman. When Rudy's father dies in his attempt to scale a mountain in the Alps, Rudy decides that he must conquer the peak that killed his father.
- ***Let the Circle Be Unbroken*** by Mildred D. Taylor. This book is the sixth of a ten book series recounting the Logan family's story of life in the United States prior to the Civil Rights Movement. You read the fourth book in the series, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, in seventh grade!
- ***Light in the Forest*** by Conrad Richter. A tale of prejudice and heartache as experienced by a young white captive of Indians during pre-Revolutionary War times.
- ***Across Five Aprils*** by Irene Hunt. Civil War. The youngest boy in a family sees the war through the experiences of his two older brothers. Humanizes key battles and events of the war.
- ***The Hawk that Dare Not Hunt by Day*** by Scott O'Dell. The story of William Tyndale's brave decision to translate and smuggle Bible's against the English authorities . . .
- ***Eragon*** (#1) by Christopher Paolini. He's an average 15 year old boy . . . until he discovers his destiny as a dragon rider. His tale is one of magic and power . . .
- ***True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*** by Avi. Mid 19th century. A young girl sails from England to America under very unusual circumstances. A page-turner!
- ***The Bronze Bow*** by Elizabeth George Speare. What would it be like to live in the time period of Jesus? How would you feel if you were under Roman authority? Follow Daniel Bar Jamin as he discerns who he is and what he believes in that very world.
- ***Tangerine*** by Eugene Bloor. What happens when a younger sibling is on the short end of things? A tale of parental favoritism and the struggles two brothers face.
- ***Warriors Don't Cry*** by Melba Patillo Beals. True account of the author and eight other students attending a racially integrated school. It is a story of courage, sacrifice, and forgiveness.
- ***Tuck Everlasting*** by Natalie Babbitt. A story of now and then. A young girl meets a boy and his family who radically change her ideas about what it means to live.
- ***The Slave Dancer*** by Paula Fox. Historical Fiction. 13 year-old Jessie Bollier is forced to join a slave ship bound for Africa to pick up a cargo of slaves. Find out why. . .
- ***The Cay*** by Theodore Taylor. A boy stranded on a raft in the Caribbean learns survival skills as well as what marks a true friendship.
- ***The Mysterious Benedict Society (Series- pick one)*** by Trenton Lee Stewart. Follow the modern fictional tale of four unusual kids as they enter unexpected (and dangerous!) adventures on a school campus.

Expectations and format for book one (required reading): Write a **typed response** for your required reading selection that responds to the questions below. Use the following requirements:

- Font size - 12 point
- Times New Roman
- Show **clear understanding** of the assignment and the text.
- Show **thoroughness** and depth of analysis (details and examples but not plot summary).
- **Edit carefully** for effective use of punctuation, spelling, capitalization, sentence structure, and usage.
- **Revise** for clear and accurate ideas.
- Staple student and parent **signature document to front** of final printed project.
- Maximum length of written response: **two pages**








NOTE: Your typed response is **due the FIRST day** of English class.
Ten points will be deducted per day late.

Directions: For book one, answer the following questions. Please number each answer.

1. Give the **title** and **author** of the book and the **date** you finished reading. (5 points)
2. When and where does this story take place? (**Setting**) What other events were happening in the world during this time period? (**Context**) (10 points)
3. Who is/are the **main character(s)**? Who is the **opposing character** who makes challenges for the main character? (5 points)
4. What are some of the **hardships or challenges** the main character faces? Refer to at least **two specific events** in the story. (10 points each event; 20 points total)
5. What does the main **character learn about himself/herself** and life as he/she faces these challenges or hardships? (Ex: patience, determination, acceptance of others, etc.) Use at least **three specific examples** from the story to support your answer. (10 points each example; 30 points total)
6. Write a brief paragraph showing how this story **reminds you of something else** you have read or experienced (something from the Bible? real life? a movie? a play? another book?) Think in terms of setting, characters, conflicts, etc. Be sure you use specific details from **both** pieces. (15 points)

7. Give this **book a rating** (4* the highest and 1* the lowest) and tell in a **few sentences** why you rated it this way. (15 points)

Book two (student selection): **Be prepared to write an **in-class response** after reading your selected literary work. To be prepared for this in-class response, be sure you know the following information about your book. You may bring a page of notes to class on the day the in-class essay is written.

-  **Characters**
-  **Setting:** the time and place
-  **Context:** the important outside events occurring around the characters that influence the ideas in a literary work (i.e: a war, a government change, racial discrimination, a financial crisis, etc.)
-  **Plot:** the events in a literary work and their sequence
-  **Themes:** a major overarching or underlying idea in a literary work; an idea that an author repeats, revealing it as significant for readers to consider (ex: love, friendship, bitterness, hatred, despair, suffering, marriage, hope, death, faith, etc.)
-  **Motifs:** an image, sound, action, idea or figure that repeats. It has symbolic significance and contributes toward a theme. Though similar to theme, it is not a central idea in a story; instead, it develops or explains a theme
-  **Symbols:** An object representing another to give it a deeper and more significant meaning that is different from its literal sense. (Sometimes an idea, action, or event can have symbolic value) (ex: a dove could symbolize peace; a rose could symbolize hope or love; a chain could symbolize union or imprisonment, etc.)

Important Reminder: Accessing any information through outside sources, **including online material, is strictly prohibited** because it defeats the purpose of the assignment.

Doing so will result in a **zero** for a major project grade.

I read the books:

1) **Circle:** *The Hiding Place* **OR** *Number the Stars* **OR** *God's Smuggler* **OR** *The Outsiders*

2) _____

I read (**no films or re-read**) _____% of my two books and answered all of the questions requested before the first day of English class.

Student Signature: _____

I confirm that my child completed his/her summer reading and had my approval for both reading books before he/she began reading.

Parent Signature: _____

***Staple this ½ sheet to the front of the final copy**