

FIFTH GRADE SUMMER READING, 2008-2009

All students entering the fifth grade are required to read *The Well* by Mildred Taylor. It is not necessary to write a report on this book. During the first weeks of school the class will do several activities based on this story.

In addition to *The Well*, 5th graders are to read at least one book from the following list and two more books of their own choosing. Students are to write a brief paragraph (4 to 5 sentences) summarizing each of the books they read. The three paragraphs are to be handed in on the first day of school.

It is hoped that students will not restrict their reading to only four books but rather enjoy reading all summer!

Weasel by Cynthia DeFelice

Alone in the frontier wilderness in the winter of 1839, 11-year-old Nathan runs afoul of a renegade killer known as Weasel.

The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis

This is the first part of the *Chronicles of Narnia*, in which four children enter a cold land through a wardrobe and try to free the country from the spell of an evil witch.

Woodsong by Gary Paulsen

For a rugged outdoor man and his family, life in northern Minnesota is an adventure involving wolves, deer, and sled dogs. Included is an account of the author's first Iditarod, a dogsled race across Alaska.

Small Steps: My Year with Polio by Peg Kehret

Peg Kehret, a well-known author, recounts her battle with polio as a child growing up in the early 1950's.

Midnight Magic by Avi

A mischievous princess and a servant boy team up with a magician who does not believe in magic to confront a mysterious ghost.

Switching Well by Peni Griffin

Two 12-year-old girls in San Antonio, Ada in 1891 and Amber in 1991, switch places through a magic well and try desperately to return to their own times.

White Mountains by John Christopher

Strong in action and suspense, this science fiction tale of the twenty-first century describes a world where human life and thought are controlled. To escape this fate, three boys go on a long, dangerous journey.

Boy by Roald Dahl

Roald Dahl recounts his days as a child growing up in England — from his years as a prankster at boarding school to his envious position as a chocolate tester for Cadbury's.

A Long Way from Chicago by Richard Peck

A boy recounts his annual summer trips to rural Illinois with his sister during the Great Depression to visit their spunky grandmother.

Honus and Me by Dan Gutman

Joey, who loves baseball but is not very good at it, finds a valuable 1909 Honus Wagner card and travels back in time to meet Honus.

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen

Roy, who is new to his small Florida community, becomes involved in another boy's attempt to save a colony of burrowing owls from a proposed construction site.

Under the Blood-Red Sun by Graham Salisbury

Tomi's biggest concerns are baseball, homework, and a local bully until life with his Japanese family in Hawaii changes drastically after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Everything on a Waffle by Polly Horvath

Eleven-year-old Primrose Squarps' parents disappear at sea when a typhoon hits their fishing village. The only thing that keeps her spirits up is the local restaurant that serves everything on a waffle including fish and steak!

The Tiger's Apprentice by Laurence Yep

Tom has always felt different from everyone else, but he has no idea how different he really is until he learns that he is the latest in a long line of magic-wielding beings called Guardians.

Borders Books at the southeast corner of Preston and Royal should have these books in stock.

Consider searching for hard-to-find books on the internet: try amazon.com or b&n.com.

SIXTH GRADERS, SCROLL DOWN TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR YOUR LIST.

SIXTH GRADE SUMMER READING, 2008-2009

Required reading for all: *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls

All students must read two other books from the list below and one more of his/her choice. The "book of your choice" may, of course, come from the list below or from your own selection. All students will be reading four books total.

Written Requirements: There is no summer written assignment for *Red Fern*. We will study that book (quick test for accountability when you return in the fall) during the first month of school.

For one of the three books, you will write a paragraph summary of the plot and characters. Your paragraph should be at least 10 sentences in length. The paragraph must be typewritten. Please create a simple illustration depicting a scene from the book or a detailed portrait of one of the characters (one that would take about 20 minutes to complete). In other words, you will be turning sheet of paper with a paragraph and an illustration. This is due the first day of school.

Book choices:

1. *Crispin: Cross of Lead* by Avi
2. *Chasing Redbird* by Sharon Creech
3. *The Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke
4. *Stepping on the Cracks* by Mary Downing Hahn
5. *Letters from Rifka* by Karen Hesse
6. *Snow Treasure* by Marie McSwigan
7. *Anne of Green Gables* by L.M. Montgomery
8. *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell
9. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor
10. *The Magician's Nephew* by C.S. Lewis
11. *Holes* by Louis Sachar
12. *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli

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SEVENTH GRADERS, SCROLL DOWN TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR YOUR LIST.

SEVENTH GRADE SUMMER READING, 2008-2009

All incoming seventh-grade students are expected to read *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji Li Jiang and *Goodnight, Mr. Tom* by Michelle Magorian. In addition, they must read one other book from the list below. This list is *roughly* in order of increasing difficulty. There is no sense in reading something over your head if you do not have to, but the greater effort might well pay off with greater satisfaction. You'll be expected to read only selections you have not read before. Taking a *few* notes should help, but no detailed writing is expected before the return to school. ENJOY!

All read *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji Li Jiang.

In 1966, at the start of the Cultural Revolution in China, our author was a twelve-year-old member of the Young Pioneers, the Communist youth organization. Her account of the harrowing events of the next two years is plainly written in colloquial American English and is all the more powerful for the simplicity of the prose.

All read *Goodnight, Mr. Tom* by Michelle Magorian.

War-torn Britain forces many to adapt. A dried-up country widower provides sanctuary for a young Londoner only to find his own needs being addressed. This story grips the reader emotionally without being sappy. The reader will care about the characters and empathize with the honesty and realism of their lives.

Now pick two of the following:

Harris and Me by Gary Paulsen

Many of you have read adventure stories from this popular author and felt they were a nice fit. Now try on a more humorous and entertaining story that will be sure to delight. Just don't try any of the tricks described in this book on your sweet English teacher next year.

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

Fourteen-year-old Pony Boy describes the feud between the "Greasers" and the "Socs" – a gang conflict that ends in tragedy. Does this book have anything to say about our lives? You decide.

The Call of the Wild by Jack London

A domestic dog is stolen and taken to the icy wilds of the Yukon Territory. Buck must learn to survive harsh environments, attacks by other dogs, and the greed and savage nature of man.

Interstellar Pig by William Sleator

If you're cool, this is the book for you. If you're not, it's even better. Mystery, science-fiction, and the attractions and absurdities of growing up converge in a delightful tribute to nonsense.

The Goats by Brock Cole

Targeted as outcasts, a boy and a girl are marooned on an island by their fellow campers. These scapegoats form an uneasy bond that grows into a deep friendship when they decide to run away and disappear without a trace.

Behind the Attic Wall by Sylvia Cassedy

A rebellious orphan discovers mysterious occurrences at a distant relative's house. These supernatural secrets change Maggie's life.

King Solomon's Mines by H. Rider Haggard

Follow the map to the greatest treasure in history, but beware of the power of ancient rituals and expect the unexpected when **you** become the strangest thing in a strange hidden land.

Pudd'nhead Wilson by Mark Twain

Get a taste of the author that will end the seventh-grade year in this tart tale of hope that breeds deceit.

The Glory Field by Walter Dean Meyers

Imported to plantation America from his tribal home in Africa, Mohammed Bilal begins what turns out to be a multi-generational epic quest of a family's coming to grips with the effects of slavery and other more subtle forms of ethnic insensitivity. The reader will find his own life's struggle for tolerance and self-expression in the lives of those who flee yet wish to be buried in the Glory Field.

The Three Musketeers by Alexander Dumas.

Block the sinister Cardinal Richelieu's attempts to destroy the monarchy and have a jolly time as well. This may be the original *Star Wars*: a humble rookie joining the most honorable and magnificent guardians of decency and becoming instrumental, perhaps vital, in their struggle against tyranny. Does D'Artagnan have THE FORCE? (The Puffin Classic abridged edition would be an acceptable choice as would any unabridged edition.)

Beau Geste by P. C. Wren

It's a dark mystery. It's a brilliant adventure. It's so much more. It's all about loyalty, bravery, and integrity. It will drag you from the comforts of an English manor house and thrust you into the savagery and intrigue of the French Foreign Legion, the final outpost for the discarded of the world. *Beau Geste* is back in print but might have to be ordered.

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EIGHTH GRADERS, SCROLL DOWN TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR YOUR LIST.

EIGHTH GRADE SUMMER READING, 2008-2009

Required reading by all: *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

In this Nobel Prize-winning novel, Santiago goes out "too far" and experiences conflicts that test his body and spirit. Does he win his struggle against the majestic fish? This novel is not just a fish story; it is a powerful allegory to the indomitable spirit of man.

Three other books from the list below must be read as well.

Watership Down by Richard Adams

A group of rabbits searching for a safe place to establish a new warren where they can live in peace encounter many adventures in their journey. This novel is not a literary cartoon; instead, it is an epic tale encompassing the entirety of the human experience.

Cold Sassy Tree by Olive Ann Burns

This novel has the flavor of the South! Read about the scandal to hit Cold Sassy, Georgia, and how the small, provincial town copes with an outsider who is a threat to age-old traditions.

My Antonia by Willa Cather

In this acclaimed novel set in the Midwest, meet a strong immigrant girl who grows into a remarkable woman as seen through the eyes of her childhood boyfriend.

The Power of One by Bryce Courtenay

This spellbinding adventure set in South Africa is loved by everyone who has tackled this hefty novel. Peekay, an English boy with boxing talent, learns to fight with his head and heart against prejudice, simultaneously growing up to be a remarkable young man.

"The best book I've ever read", eighth grade English student, 2003-2004.

The Diary of Anne Frank (play version) by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett

For those who have never read the original work, this Pulitzer Prize-winner is a fine vehicle for discovering why one teenage girl's diary lives forever. Her true account of life in hiding as a Jew during the Holocaust is haunting and inspiring.

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes

This touching story tells of a daring experiment with human intelligence, revealing that EQ is as important as IQ and inspiring the reader to question the role of science in human life.

A Separate Peace by John Knowles

A memorable story of growing up at an all-male school, this novel offers insight into both the daredevil and reflective natures of boys and highlights the agonizing nature of regret and lost friendship.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

This classic focuses on Francie Nolan, a young girl growing up amidst hardship in Brooklyn, New York, during the Great Depression. Despite many difficulties, her inner strength allows her to reach for more, proving that beauty can grow out of poverty and despair.

The Pearl by John Steinbeck

These early masterpieces by this Nobel Prize-winning author are enduring tales. One spotlights Lennie and George, an unlikely pair of friends, whose struggles emphasize the importance of dreams and the sometimes painful nature of friendship. The other concerns a fisherman who finds a pearl worth a lifetime, and he must discover its destructive forces.

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom

This is an inspiring true-life adventure of one Christian woman's courageous battle to rescue Jews during the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam.

(Read the true story of the woman who risked her life to save others and is now honored on the wall entitled "Righteous Among Nations" at the Dallas Holocaust Museum).

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