

Rising Eighth Grade Language Arts

Recommended Summer Reading 2023

Honors Students: Choose TWO of the titles below to read over the summer.

On-Level Students: Choose ONE of the titles below to read over the summer.

***Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson**

Description: During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lived above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. But then the fever breaks out. At her feverish mother's insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather. She soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere, and Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease.

***The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare**

Description: Sixteen-year-old Kit Tyler is marked by suspicion and disapproval from the moment she arrives on the unfamiliar shores of colonial Connecticut in 1687. Torn between her quest for belonging and her desire to be true to herself, Kit struggles to survive in a hostile place. Just when it seems she must give up, she finds a kindred spirit. But Kit's friendship with Hannah Tupper, believed by the colonists to be a witch, proves more taboo than she could have imagined and ultimately forces Kit to choose between her heart and her duty.

***Woods Runner* by Gary Paulsen**

Description: Samuel, 13, spends his days in the forest, hunting for food for his family. He has grown up on the frontier of a British colony, America. Far from any town, or news of the war against the King that American patriots have begun near Boston. But the war comes to them. British soldiers and Iroquois attack. Samuel's parents are taken away, as prisoners. Samuel follows, hiding, moving silently, determined to find a way to rescue them. Each day he confronts the enemy and the tragedy and horror of this war. But he also discovers allies, men and women working secretly for the patriot cause.

***Resistance* by Jennifer Nielsen**

Description: Chaya Linder is a Jewish teenager living in Nazi-occupied Poland. After her little sister is taken away, her younger brother disappears, and her parents all but give up hope, Chaya is determined to make a difference. Using forged papers, Chaya becomes a courier and travels between the Jewish ghettos of Poland, smuggling food, papers, and even people. After a mission goes terribly wrong, Chaya's network shatters, until Esther, a member of her cell, finds her and delivers a message that sends Chaya on a journey toward an even larger uprising in the works--in the Warsaw Ghetto.

***Refugee* by Alan Gratz**

Description: Josef is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world...Isabel is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America...Mahmoud is a Syrian boy in 2015. Wishing his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe...

Although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end. This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

***A Night Divided* by Jennifer Nielsen**

Description: With the rise of the Berlin Wall, Gerta finds her family suddenly divided. She, her mother, and her brother Fritz live on the eastern side, controlled by the Soviets. Her father and middle brother, who had gone west in search of work, cannot return home. One day on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Gerta concludes that her father wants her and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. Will Gerta and her family find their way to freedom?

***Ghost* by Jason Reynolds**

Description: Castle (Ghost) Crenshaw. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. These four kids are chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other but to themselves.

Consider the questions below as you read.

- How did the setting impact the character's day-to-day life?
- What is the major conflict of this work?
- What unique challenges arise because of this time period?
- How has your character changed or grown from the beginning of the novel to the end?
- What theme or lesson did you learn from this novel?
- What is different about your life compared to that of the protagonist?
- If you were in the same position as the protagonist what would your day-to-day life look like?
- How does your book connect to something you've learned in History?

All novels have been read and reviewed by the Eighth Grade Language Arts teachers.