

St. Rose Middle School

Language Arts Summer Reading List – 2011-2012

“When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.”

~ Maya Angelou ~

Reading over the summer is an important part of preparing for the next school year, as well as becoming a life-long learner. Please choose at least **two** books that you **have not read before** from the list for your grade below to read over the summer. Of course, you can **always read more** books from any of the grades listed, but you are required to read at least two books. **See the instructions below** for the associated writing assignment. Enjoy reading and have a great summer!

Mrs. Stepankowsky

How will I remember what I read over the summer in September?

Tips for better summer reading:

1. Write down each major character’s name as he or she is introduced and describe each one.
2. Summarize what happens in the book. What are the important conflicts?
3. Write down a few statements or ideas from the books that are especially noteworthy or meaningful.
4. Analyze the ending of the book. What are the implications of the ending and its effect on the main characters? Was the main character successful in overcoming a difficulty? Why or why not?
5. Was the book worthwhile to you? Did it help you gain some insight or understand something better?
6. Remember to keep your Active Reading techniques learned in class in mind as you read.

Reading/Writing Assignment:

For each of the two required books you read (you may also wish to do this with additional books), write the following information on **no more than one sheet** of paper to be turned in on the first day of school:

1. Student name
2. Grade
3. Book title
4. Author
5. Setting – where and when the story takes place
6. Theme or major point the author makes
7. Summarize what the book is about in **no more than two** paragraphs.
8. Did you like the book? Would you encourage others to read it? Why or why not?

Summer reading list organized by grade:

Grade 6

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer – Mark Twain (Fiction): The classic story of young boy growing up in a town of the banks of the Mississippi River. Tom is a young boy full of curiosity and doesn’t hesitate to take a chance. He finds himself pulled into many adventures.

Island of the Blue Dolphins – Scott O’Dell (Fiction): This story is about a native girl, Karana, who was left alone on an island to survive for years on her own. She learns to build a shelter, find food, and to make weapons.

Summer of the Swans – Betsy Byars (Fiction): A confused 14-year old girl learns a valuable lesson when her younger brother disappears one night. While searching for her brother, she finds maturity.

Pope John Paul II: Young Man of the Church – George E. Stanley (Biography): This book focuses on the childhood of Karol Wojtyla. He was born in Poland in 1920. He was a star soccer player and liked to kayak. His real love at school was poetry and the theater.

My Side of the Mountain – Jean Craighead George (Fiction): A young boy runs away from home to live on his great-grandfather's land, where he learns to survive.

Because of Winn Dixie – Kate DiCamillo (Fiction): A young girl who has recently moved to Florida adopts a dog she finds in the grocery store.

Crash - Jerry Spinelli (Fiction): The activities of a school bully as told from the bully's perspective. Shallow, vain, and arrogant seventh-grader Crash Coogan has been bulldozing over people his entire life but his most consistent victim is Penn Webb – a Quaker who lives down the street from Crash.

Barack Obama Our 44th President – Beatrice Gromly (Biography): A biography of our current president, the first African-American president in U.S. history.

Chasing Vermeer – Blue Balliett (Fiction): This mystery involves two sixth-graders who are drawn into solving the theft of a Johannes Vermeer painting en route from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., to Chicago when it disappears.

The Boy Who Saved Baseball – John Ritter (Fiction): This story is about Tom Gallagher and his Wildcats baseball team. The team is woefully unprepared for a must-win game – until a mysterious recluse comes to town and gives Tom and the team advice.

The Black Stallion – Walter Farley (Fiction): While returning from a trip to India, Alec Ramsay's ship is wrecked and he and a black stallion are the only survivors on a deserted island. They form a bond and, after they are rescued, they go to New York and enter the world of horse racing.

The Yearling – Marjorie K. Rawlings (Fiction): This book is set in the Florida scrub country during the 1870s. A 12-year-old boy named Jody Baxter tames a fawn, which becomes his companion. What happens after that show how Jody moves from boyhood to manhood.

The Magician's Nephew – C. S. Lewis (Fiction): In this story we get our first look into Narnia. Two children Polly and Digory are transported to other worlds when they put on rings belonging to Digory's uncle. The children meet Aslan, the lion and a witch in Narnia.

Grade 7

Travel Team and/or **Summer Ball** – Mike Lupica (Fiction): These two books tell the story of Danny Walker, a small 13-year-old and his basketball buddies, who compete in a national championship in **Travel Team**, and then face new challenges in a summer camp in **Summer Ball**.

The Mozart Season – Virginia Euwer Wolff (Fiction): Allegra's school is out for the summer, but instead of lazing around, she finds out that she is a finalist in an Oregon state violin competition. As she practices Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4, she faces vexing questions about her Jewish/gentile identity, as well as the challenges of Mozart.

Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story – Dr. Ben Carson, M.D. (Autobiography): A frustrated young boy with problems in school overcomes the obstacles in his life to become a world-renowned neurosurgeon.

A Gathering of Days – A New England Girl's Journal 1830-1832 – Joan Blos (Fiction):

Although fiction, this book takes the form of personal writing. The “journal” depicts the hardships and rewards of nineteenth century rural life. Newberry Award.

Throwing Shadows – E. L. Loningsburg (Fiction): A collection of five short stories telling of young people who experience an encounter that makes them realize who they are or what is important.

My Story – Rosa Parks (Autobiography): This is the story of Rosa Park’s life, including her well-known seat choice on a city bus. This book chronicles the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.

True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle – Avi (Adventure Fiction): Set in the 1800’s a proper young girl, Charlotte, sets sail from Providence, Rhode Island. Little does she know what is about to happen aboard ship. She is forced to stand up for what is fair, and she realizes she is more than a proper lady.

Joan of Arc: Warrior Saint – Jay Williams (Biography): This is the story of the courageous 16-year-old girl who fought for France guided by what she firmly believed were visions of saints. She ultimately becomes a martyr when some of her own countrymen betray her to the English.

The Pearl – John Steinbeck (Fiction): The story of how the discovery of a large pearl affects the lives of a fisherman and his wife.

Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH – Robert C. O’Brien (Science Fiction): when the lab rats at the National Institute of Mental Health are able to increase their learning ability, they use their intelligence to escape and set up their own society. Newberry Award.

Hatchett – Gary Paulsen (Fiction): On a trip to the Canadian oilfields to spend the summer with his dad, Brian learns to confront living in the wild after the pilot of his plane suffers a heart attack and he lands the plane in the wilderness.

Stranger at Green Knowe – Lucy M. Boston (Fiction): Set in an English country house, this highly original story describes the understanding and affection that develops between a young refugee and a gorilla that has escaped from a zoo.

Treasure Island – Robert Louis Stevenson (Fiction): The young hero, Jim Hawkins, sets sail with two dangerous pirates, Long John Silver and Blind Pew, on a hair-raising search for buried treasure.

Never Cry Wolf – Farley Mowat (Non-Fiction): This is the story of a Canadian environmentalist and his adventures in the Canadian wilderness including his introduction to the wolves.

Grade 8

The Sherwood Ring – Elizabeth Marie Pope (Fiction/Fantasy): After the death of her father, Peggy Grahame must live with her eccentric uncle at a rambling Revolutionary War-era estate in upstate New York. She discovers the house is haunted by the ghosts of her 18th-century ancestors. In order to make peace, she must unravel a centuries-old mystery with the help of a young Englishman doing research in the area.

Esperanza Rising – Pam Munoz Ryan (Fiction): Esperanza Orgeta possesses all the treasures a young girl could want until a sudden tragedy forces her and her mother to leave their ranch in Mexico and go to a farm labor camp in California during the Depression. Esperanza learns to relinquish her past and embrace the future.

Johnny Tremain – Esther Forbes (Fiction): The hero works in a silver shop in Boston before and during the outbreak of the American Revolution. The novel’s themes include apprenticeship, courtship, sacrifice human rights and the growing tension between the Colonists and British sympathizers.

Pride and Prejudice – Jane Austen (Fiction): One of the best novels in English, this book - on the face of

it - tells the story of the five Bennet sisters and the efforts of their mother to find them husbands. It is really a social satire that pokes fun at people of all classes as heroine Elizabeth Bennet spars with the proud Mr. Darcy.

Bud, Not Buddy – Christopher Curtis (Fiction): “HERE WE GO AGAIN. We were all standing in line waiting for breakfast when one of the caseworkers came in and tap-tap-tapped down the line. Uh-oh, this meant bad news, wither they’d found a foster home for somebody or somebody was about to get paddled.”

Little Women – Louise May Alcott (Fiction): This is the story of the March girls and how they came of age during the Civil War. This is a fiction book, but it has strong biographical connections with Alcott’s own life.

The Call of the Wild – Jack London (Fiction): Classic story of life in the Alaskan frontier at the turn of the 20th Century.

Dunk – David Lubar (Fiction): While hoping to work as the clown in an amusement park dunk tank on the New Jersey shore the summer before his junior year in high school, Chad faces his best friend’s serious illness, hassles with police, and the girl that got away.

Jane Eyre – Charlotte Bronte (Fiction): Bronte’s classic Victorian tale of an orphan who grows up to work as a governess for the ward of a mysterious man named Mr. Rochester.

Something for Joey – Richard E. Peck (Non-Fiction): This story is based on actual events in the life of John Cappelletti, the football player, and his younger brother, Joey, a victim of leukemia.

Cape Refuge/Summer Storm – Terry Blackstock (Fiction): A student-recommended addition to the list, this series is by Christian writer Terry Blackstock, who writes mysteries in which the main characters have an important relationship with God.

Charles A. Lindbergh: A Human Hero - James Cross Giblin (Biography): This is a balanced portrayal of the first man to fly non-stop across the Atlantic Ocean.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry – Mildred D. Taylor (Fiction): The time is 1933. The place is Spokane, Mississippi, where the Logans, the only Black family who owns their own land, wages a courageous struggle to remain independent, displeasing a white plantation owner bent on taking away their land.

Rules of the Road – Joan Bauer (Fiction): Jenna has a holiday job in a shoe shop and finds that she can sell anybody anything. Unfortunately, her personal problems are not so easy to sort out. When the company president, Madeline Gladstone, asks Jenna to drive her across the USA to a vital meeting, Jenna jumps at the chance to get away from her family and hit the road. Together the wise old woman and the sensible young woman teach each other a lot about the rules of the road – and the rules of life.

The Wednesday Wars – Gary D. Schmidt (Fiction): Holling Hoodhood, the only Presbyterian in a class otherwise split between Catholic and Jewish children, must find something else to do on Wednesday afternoons when his classmates go to their respective religious studies. His teacher, Mrs. Baker, makes him read Shakespeare and . . . Read it to find out what happens!

Other books you read this summer: