

Somers Middle School



Summer Reading List 2008

The English Department is excited to introduce the summer reading list for the 2007-2008 school year. Every student is expected to read two books: the required book for his/her grade level and one choice book. Incoming sixth graders will choose from a list of friendship themed books. The seventh graders will choose from a list of books that feature strong protagonists. For their choice book, 8th graders will select from a list of memoirs. Students are encouraged to consider several options and be thoughtful in choosing a book that is both interesting to them and at their reading level. Note taking will help prepare students for September assessments of their reading.

We wish your family a delightful summer, filled with relaxation, adventure and lots of reading!

For students entering grade 9:

Each student reads two books.

Regents students:

One required: Downriver by Will Hobbs

One choice from the following list:

Captain's Courageous by Rudyard Kipling

Harvey Cheyne, son of a millionaire, is saved from drowning by a New England fishing schooner and forced to prove his worth by mastering the skills on which common survival depends.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain

From playing pirates on a deserted island to attending his own "funeral," Tom Sawyer is a genius and getting himself into dangerous adventures.

Mutiny on the Bounty by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall

"The most stirring sea adventure ever told," this book, narrated by Roger Byam, describes the historic voyage that culminated in Fletcher Christian's mutiny against the notorious Captain Bligh.

Kidnapped by Robert Lewis Stevenson

A classic of high adventure, *Kidnapped* is the saga of how David Balfour, whose greedy uncle plots to have him sold into slavery, makes a thrilling escape to freedom across the wild highlands of Scotland.

Shabanu by Suzanne Fisher Staples

Shabanu and her sister are to marry brothers as soon as they all come of age. But she will

eventually lose her betrothed and be promised to a wealthy landowner to settle a feud. The richness and tragedy of a whole culture are reflected in the fate of this girl's family. Through an involving plot Staples gives readers insight into lives totally different from their own.

Honors students:

Two required: *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

For students entering grade 8:

Each student reads two books.

One required: *Tiger Rising* by Kate DiCamillo

One choice book from the following list of memoirs:

Cursed by a Happy Childhood: Tales of Growing Up, Then and Now by Carl Lennertz

These short pieces, most of them no more than 2-3 pages in length, began as a kind of diary for Lennertz's preteen daughter. The result is a mix of childhood memoirs from the 1950s and 1960s, observations and advice.

Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter by Adeline Yen Mah

The author recounts her difficult childhood in China where she and her siblings were mistreated by their stepmother. This work for children is an adaptation of the author's adult memoir *Falling Leaves*.

Guts by Gary Paulsen

Gary Paulsen shares the story of his own adventurous life. The only child of alcoholic parents, Paulsen was left on his own for much of his childhood--a fact that forced him to develop such survival skills as hunting and living in the woods. At age 14 he ran away from home and took up with a traveling circus. Years later, Paulsen competed in Iditarod races and other endurance events.

My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir by Samantha Abeel

Though she is only 25 years old, author Samantha Abeel has a lifetime of experiences to share. *My Thirteenth Winter* chronicles her childhood and teen years with dyscalculia, a learning disability that prevents her from telling time, counting change accurately, and performing simple math --- functions that most people take for granted.

Bad Boy by Walter Dean Myers

This book takes the reader through the first 17 challenging years of the author's life as he grows up in the inner city, playing basketball and becoming a voracious reader.

Tuesdays With Morrie: An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson by Mitch Albom

A chronicle of the relationship between a boy and his spiritual mentor, as well as what happens when the relationship is lost for a while, and then rediscovered.

A Girl's Life Online by Katherine Tarbox

Katie Tarbox is eighteen when she tells her story - an eye-opening tale of one teenager's descent into the seductive world of the Internet. Tarbox's experience with her online boyfriend, which began when she was thirteen, would affect her life for years to come and result in her becoming the first "unnamed minor" to test a federal law enacted to protect kids from online sexual predators.

Knots in my Yo-Yo String by Jerry Spinelli

This Italian-American Newbery Medalist presents a humorous account of his childhood and youth in Norristown, Pennsylvania.

For students entering grade 7:

Each student reads two books.

One required: Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix

One choice book from the following list:

Touching Spirit Bear - by Ben Mikaelson

After his anger erupts into violence, Cole avoids going to prison by agreeing to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the Native American Circle of Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island where an encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life.

Homeless Bird - by Gloria Whelan

When thirteen-year-old Koly enters into an ill-fated arranged marriage, she must either suffer a destiny dictated by India's tradition or find the courage to oppose it.

Dancing in Cadillac Light - by Kimberly Willis Holt

In 1968, eleven-year-old Jaynell's life in the town of Moon, Texas, is enlivened when her eccentric Grandpap comes to live with her family.

Surviving the Applewhites - by Stephanie Tolan

Jake, a budding juvenile delinquent, is sent for home schooling to the arty and eccentric Applewhite family's Creative Academy, where he discovers talents and interests he never knew he had.

Heat - Mike Lupica

Pitching prodigy Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball because rival coaches doubt he is only twelve years old and he has no parents to offer them proof.

Esperanza Rising - Pam Munoz Ryan

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.

For students entering grade 6:

Each student reads two books.

One required: Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

One choice book from the following list of friendship books:

Lunch Money by Andrew Clements

Twelve-year-old Greg, who has always been good at moneymaking projects, is surprised to find himself teaming up with his lifelong rival, Maura, to create a series of comic books to sell at school.

Crash by Jerry Spinelli

Seventh-grader John "Crash" Coogan has always been comfortable with his tough, aggressive behavior, until his relationship with an unusual Quaker boy and his grandfather's stroke make him consider the meaning of friendship and the importance of family.

Deaf Child Crossing by Marlee Matlin

Despite the fact that Megan is deaf and Cindy can hear, the two girls become friends when Cindy moves into Megan's neighborhood, but when they go away to camp, their friendship is put to the test.

When Zachary Beaver Came to Town by Kimberly Willis Holt

During the summer of 1971 in a small Texas town, thirteen-year-old Toby and his best friend Cal meet the star of a sideshow act, 600-pound Zachary, the fattest boy in the world.

Friendship According to Humphrey by Betty G. Birney

When Humphrey the hamster returns to Mrs. Brisbane's class after the winter break, a new class pet and some other surprises give him an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of friendship.

