

Hawken Middle School

Required Summer Reading

2008

All Students Grades 6, 7, and 8:

Read the choice book that was assigned. Book discussion groups will take place during the first week of school.

In addition, the required reading from the English Department is:

Entering 6th Grade:

The Book of Virtues, by William J. Bennett

OR

The Book of Virtues for Young People, by William J. Bennett

Read two stories from each of the ten character sections.

Students DO NOT have to turn any written work in, but should write a précis, or a few sentences, to summarize each story for their own memory.

Entering 7th Grade:

Warriors Don't Cry, by Melba Pattillo Beals

Abridged Young Readers Edition

Entering 8th Grade:

Summer reading short story packet and questions.

Reading For Pleasure—Suggested Titles

This list includes many titles recommended for middle school. Find additional descriptions and reviews for these books at Amazon, or your public library's online catalog.

Fiction

Abrahams, Peter. ***Down the Rabbit Hole: An Echo Falls Mystery***, 2005
Like her idol Sherlock Holmes, eighth-grader Ingrid Levin-Hill uses her intellect to solve a murder case in her home town of Echo Falls.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. ***Fever, 1793***, 2000
In 1793 Philadelphia, sixteen-year-old Matilda Cook, separated from her sick mother, learns about perseverance and self-reliance when she is forced to cope with the horrors of a yellow fever epidemic.

Avi. ***The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle***, 1990 (Newbery Honor 1991)
As the lone "young lady" on a transatlantic voyage in 1832, Charlotte learns that the captain is murderous and the crew rebellious.

Bertagna, Julie. ***Exodus***, 2002
In the year 2100, Mara discovers the existence of sky cities that are safe from storms and rising waters, and convinces her people to travel from their threatened island to one of these cities in order to save themselves.

Blackwood, Gary. ***Second Sight***, 2005
In Washington, D.C., during the last days of the Civil War, a teenage boy who performs in a mind reading act befriends a clairvoyant girl whose frightening visions foreshadow an assassination plot.

Card, Orson Scott. ***Ender's Game***, 1984
A veteran of years of simulated war games, Ender believes he is engaged in one more computer war game when, in truth, he is commanding the last fleet of Earth against an alien race seeking the complete destruction of Earth.

Doyle, Arthur Conan. ***The Hound of the Baskervilles: Another Adventure of Sherlock Homes***, 1901
Sir Henry Baskerville calls upon Holmes to investigate the mysterious death of his uncle, Sir Charles. Charles' strange and unexpected death revives the fears about an ancient and resentful beast and a Baskerville family curse.

Farmer, Nancy. ***House of the Scorpion***, 2002 (Newbery Honor 2003)
In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patrón, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. ***Double Identity***, 2005
When Bethany's parents suddenly drop out of sight with no explanation, leaving her with an aunt, Bethany uncovers shocking secrets that make her question everything she thought she knew about herself and her family.

Hamilton, Virginia. ***M.C. Higgins, The Great***, 1974 (Newbery Medal 1975)
As a slag heap due to strip mining creeps closer to his house in the Ohio hills, fifteen-year-old M.C. is torn between trying to get his family away and fighting for the home they love.

Henkes, Kevin. ***Olive's Ocean***, 2003 (Newbery Honor 2004)
Twelve-year-old Martha learns about death, her grandmother and her plans to be an author during a summer visit to her grandmother's ocean cottage.

Kinsella, W.P. ***Shoeless Joe***, 1982
A mystical baseball field is created which is visited by the greats of baseball but is visible only to those who believe in its being real.

Klages, Ellen. ***The Green Glass Sea***, 2006
In 1943, eleven-year-old Dewey Kerrigan lives with her scientist father in Los Alamos, New Mexico, as he works on a top secret government program, and befriends an aspiring artist who is a misfit just like her.

Konigsburg, E. L. ***Silent to the Bone***, 2000
When he is wrongly accused of gravely injuring his baby half-sister, thirteen-year-old Branwell loses his power of speech and only his friend Connor is able to reach him and uncover the truth about what really happened.

Korman, Gordon. ***No More Dead Dogs***, 2000
Eighth-grade football hero Wallace Wallace is sentenced to detention attending rehearsals of the school play where, in spite of himself, he becomes wrapped up in the production.

Lowery, Lois. ***The Giver***, 1993 (Newbery Medal 1994)
Living in a "perfect" world without social ills, a boy approaches the time when he will receive a life assignment from the Elders, but his selection leads him to a mysterious man known as the Giver, who reveals the dark secrets behind the utopian façade.

Nolan, Han. ***A Summer of Kings***, 2006

Over the course of the summer of 1963, fourteen-year-old Esther Young discovers the passion within her when eighteen-year-old King-Roy Johnson, accused of murdering a white man in Alabama, comes to live with her family.

Peck, Richard. ***The Teacher's Funeral: A Comedy in Three Parts***, 2004

In rural Indiana in 1904, fifteen-year-old Russell's dreams of quitting school and joining a wheat threshing crew are disrupted when his older sister takes over the teaching at his one-room schoolhouse after mean old Myrt Arbuckle "hauls off and dies."

Schmidt, Gary. ***The Wednesday Wars***, 2007 Newbery Honor 2008

During the 1967 school year, on Wednesday afternoons when all his classmates go to either Catechism or Hebrew school, seventh-grader Holling Hoodhood stays in Mrs. Baker's classroom where they read the plays of William Shakespeare and Holling learns much of value about the world he lives in.

Spinelli, Jerry. ***Love, Stargirl*** 2007

(Sequel to ***Stargirl***, 2000) Still moping months after being dumped by her Arizona boyfriend Leo, fifteen-year-old Stargirl, a home-schooled free spirit, writes "the world's longest letter" to Leo, describing her new life in Pennsylvania.

Verne, Jules. ***Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea***, 1869

A classic science fiction story of Captain Nemo and his submarine the Nautilus in which three people are taken prisoner and forced to sail under the sea with many anticipated twentieth century scientific achievements.

Notable Books for a Global Society

An award given to a book written “for enhancing student understanding of people and cultures throughout the world.” For more on the criteria see:

<http://www.csulb.edu/org/childrens-lit/proj/nbgs/intro-nbgs.html>

Alexie, Sherman. ***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian***, 2007
Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

Beah, Ishmael. ***A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier***, 2007
A human rights activist offers a firsthand account of war from the perspective of a former child soldier, detailing the violent civil war that wracked his native Sierra Leone and the government forces that transformed a gentle young boy into a killer as a member of the army.

Myers, Walter Dean. ***Harlem Summer***, 2007
In 1920s Harlem, sixteen-year-old Mark Purvis, an aspiring jazz saxophonist, gets a summer job as an errand boy for the publishers of the groundbreaking African American magazine, "The Crisis," but soon finds himself on the enemy list of mobster Dutch Shultz.

Sheth, Kashmira. ***Keeping Corner***, 2007.
In India in the 1940s, thirteen-year-old Leela's happy, spoiled childhood ends when her husband since age nine, whom she barely knows, dies, leaving her a widow whose only hope of happiness could come from Mahatma Ghandi's social and political reforms.

Wells, Rosemary. ***Red Moon at Sharpsburg***, 2007
Finding courage she never thought she had, a young Southern girl musters the strength and wit to survive the ravages of the Civil War and keep her family together through it all.

Boyne, J. ***The Boy in the Striped Pajamas***, 2006
Bored and lonely after his family moves from Berlin to a place called "Out-With" in 1942, Bruno, the son of a Nazi officer, befriends a boy in striped pajamas who lives behind a wire fence.

Holm, J. L. ***Penny from Heaven***, 2006
As she turns twelve during the summer of 1953, Penny gains new insights into herself and her family while also learning a secret about her father's death.

Hobb, W. ***Crossing the Wire***, 2006
Fifteen-year-old Victor Flores journeys north in a desperate attempt to cross the Arizona border and find work in the United States to support his family in central Mexico.

Park, Linda Sue ***Project Mulberry***, 2005

While working on a project for an after-school club, Julia, a Korean American girl, and her friend Patrick learn not just about silkworms, but also about tolerance, prejudice, friendship, patience, and more.

Staples, Suzanne Fisher. ***Under the Persimmon Tree***, 2005

During the 2001 Afghan War, the lives of Najmah, a young refugee from Kunduz, Afghanistan, and Nusrat, an American-Muslim teacher who is awaiting her husband's return from Mazar-i-Sharif, intersect at a school in Peshawar, Pakistan.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. ***Becoming Naomi León***. 2004

When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father.

Morpurgo, Michael. ***Kensuke's Kingdom***, 2003

When Michael is swept off his family's yacht, he washes up on a desert island, where he struggles to survive--until he finds he is not alone.

Park, Linda Sue. ***A Single Shard***, 2001

Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge in a potters' village, and longs to learn how to throw the delicate celadon ceramics himself.

Fletcher, Susan. ***Shadow Spinner***, 1998

When Marjan, a thirteen-year-old physically handicapped girl, joins the Sultan's harem in ancient Persia, she gathers for Shahrazad the stories which will save the queen's life.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. ***The Watson's Go to Birmingham***, 1995 Newbery Honor 1996

The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963

Non-Fiction

Keller, Bill. ***Tree Shaker: The Story of Nelson*** Medella, 2008

The story of Nelson Mandela who challenged apartheid in South Africa and who went on to become the president of the country.

Krull, Kathleen. ***Marie Curie***, 2007

Traces the life and work of the Polish-born scientist whose study of radioactivity led to her receiving two Nobel Prizes.

Levine, Ellen. ***Rachel Carson: A Twentieth-Century Life***, 2007

Presents the life and accomplishments of the American biologist, whose influential work, "The Silent Spring," about the danger of pesticides had a significant impact on the environmental movement of the 1960s.

Toobin, Jeffrey. ***The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court***, 2007

Drawing on interviews with the Supreme Court justices and other insiders, a look at the powerful, often secretive world of the Supreme Court offers profiles of each justice and how their individual styles affect the way in which they wield their power.

Walker, Gabrielle. ***An Ocean of Air: Why the Wind Blows and Other Mysteries of the Atmosphere***, 2007

A study of Earth's atmosphere traces a journey of scientific discovery, from the Renaissance scientist who realized that we live at the bottom of a dense ocean of air, to a well-meaning inventor who nearly destroys the ozone layer.

Summaries supplied by the title verso page, and Baker & Taylor.

Many of the 2007-2008 books will not be available in paperback.

All books can be found through CLEVENET.