

EIGHTH GRADE SUMMER READING 2009

All incoming eighth graders are expected to read during the summer. Students in regular English will be required to read **two books**. Students in honors English will be required to read **three books**. You are on your honor to select from the list of books you **have not** previously read. These books are not included in your book fee as many students like to write in their books and make notations. I have some books that students may check out, or you may use library books (noted by **), and of course you may purchase them. Remember those borrowed are not to be written in - first come on those books. Please encourage your child to read over the summer; it really does help with their vocabulary and writing skills.

All rising 8th graders will read the following:

****Required: *The House of the Scorpion*** by Nancy Farmer (RL5.1/AR15) Winner of Newberry, National Book Award and the Printz Book Award.

In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patron, the 142 year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

Choice books: choose ONE of the following novels:

City of Ember, by Jeanne Dupreau (RL5/AR9) Ember was built deep underground as a last refuge for the human race. Two hundred years later, the great lamps that light the city are beginning to flicker. When Lina finds part of an ancient message, she's sure it holds a secret that will save the city. She and her friend Doon must decipher the message before the lights go out on Ember forever!

Rules of the Road by Joan Bauer (RL5/AR6). Sixteen-year-old Jenna gets a job driving the elderly owner of a chain of successful shoe stores from Chicago to Texas to confront the son who is trying to force her to retire, and along the way Jenna hones her talents as a saleswoman and finds the strength to face her alcoholic father. Fun book with serious undertones.

*****Rifles for Watie*** by Harold Keith 5/6 Newberry Winner

Jeff Bussey is 16 and joins the Union cause against the dread Stand Watie, leader of the Cherokee Indian rebels. He watches friends die in battle, is sent to spy behind enemy lines and discovers that rebels - even Watie - are men he can like and admire. History, fighting and romance - what more can you ask for?

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli (RL4.5/AR6). In this story about the perils of popularity, the courage of nonconformity, and the thrill of first love, an eccentric student named Stargirl changes Mica High School forever. The story is told through the eyes of a boy, so boys and girls will both enjoy this story of high school life and the age old question of whether to conform or not.

Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelson (RL5.3/AR9) After his anger erupts into violence, Cole, in order to avoid going to prison, agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the native American Circle Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island where an encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life. This boy has so much anger, can he possibly change?

Honors must also read the following:

Safely Home by Randy Alcorn (This is not an AR book)

Two friends from college are reunited in China. One is an American executive and is going to experience life with a Chinese family to help his company to understand the Chinese consumer. Ben discovers the persecution of Christian believers; will he regain the faith he has lost with the successes he has experienced? Learn how life really is in China for believers!!

See attached sheets for the assignments for each book.

The House of the Scorpion Project:

Power-point Projects for *The House of the Scorpion*: pick one - 100 points

Grading Criteria - Minimum of 25 slides with pictures and text on each. Don't put too much but cover the material thoroughly.

- With a partner write a section of the book as a one-act play. Take dialogue directly from the book, and use a narrator to relate the story between speakers. Matt finds order in the music of Mozart. Locate music by Mozart to use at the beginning and end of each act.
- Design a family crest for El Patrón's empire. Discuss why this crest may repulse Matt. Create an alternative crest for the Alacrán family after Matt transforms the empire. Include 2 - 3 items that represent each empire and what their significance is. You are also to research family crests and explain how they have been used in the past and the significance of crests in history.
- Read about Cinco de Mayo and draw a parallel between the history of this Mexican holiday and Matt's victory for rights and justice at the end of the novel. Plan a Cinco de Mayo celebration that Matt might have after he breaks down the empire of Opium. Include appropriate food and music. You must prepare food and bring it in the end of the week - speak with me.
- Mariá refers to Saint Francis throughout the novel. With a partner, create a picture book (a power point like a book) about Saint Francis that Mariá might give to Matt. Write an appropriate dedication to Matt. How might the story of Saint Francis offer hope to Matt?
- Dolly, the first mammal to be successfully cloned from an adult cell, was born on July 5, 1996, at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh. She died by lethal injection in 2003 at age six. Use books or the internet to locate more information about Dolly and then do a power- point about the significance of her birth to science.
- You may wish to read about how scientists are using cloning for medical research today. Read opposing viewpoints regarding the issues of human cloning at www.humancloning.org and www.cloninginformation.org.; also <http://www.family.org/socialissues/Sanctity/> - go to stem cell research gives good prolife views.

Choice Book reading project:

Book in A...

The Outside: (25 pts)

Choose a container for your book project that suits your needs or theme of your book (manila envelope, paper bag, plastic bag, can with a cover, box, or any other container that you can imagine. Be creative!) Decorate the container with details appropriate to the book. We should know something about the book by examining the outside. Be sure your name and title of book are labeled.

The Inside: (75 pts) The inside of the container should include the following materials and activities pertaining to the book.

____ 1. **Questions** - Write 10 questions that could be answered by reading the book that you have chosen to read for this assignment. Five of the questions should be easier questions with answers that are obvious simply by reading the book. Five of the questions should be harder questions with answers that require more thinking, interpretation, and or combining of information from the book. (25 pts.)

____ 2. **Vocabulary** - A ten word glossary of unfamiliar words from the book and a short definition for each word. Each word needs to be used in a new meaningful sentence. (25pts.)

____ 3. **Other** - find five items that depict the story in some way. These items may be actual items. (25 pts.)

Literature Elements: The following elements must be presented and labeled somewhere in your project:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Setting(s) | 2. Character(s) | 3. External Conflict(s) |
| 4. Internal Conflict(s) | 5. Climax | 6. Resolution |
| Optional: | 7. Example of flashback | 8. Example of foreshadow |

Presentation: Students will present their Book in A ... project to the class the first week of school. They will explain the following: **why** they decorated their container as they did, the five items and at least 3 of the literature elements. (25 pts)

Grading Rubric for Book in A ...

Outside:

- ____ 5 pts - Container size, shape is appropriate for theme of book
____ 5 pts - Decorations neat and eye appealing
____ 10 pts - Decorations convey theme of the book
____ 5 pts - Some elements are represented

Inside: Questions

- ____ 10 pts - 10 questions typed and in box
____ 5 pts - 5 simple questions
____ 10 pts - 5 harder questions
 Vocabulary -
____ 5 pts - 10 words typed in a glossary
____ 10 pts - words are all defined
____ 10 pts - words are each used in a meaningful sentence

Other -

- ____ 10 pts - 5 meaningful items that depict the story
____ 15 pts - literature elements labeled, discussed and explained

Presentation:

- ____ 10 pts - Book in A ... requirements: Decorations, 5 items, & 3 elements
____ 5 pts - Voice strong and easy to understand
____ 5 pts - Eye contact with audience
____ 5 pts - Presentation poise - not using distracting movements, standing tall, no gum or hands in pockets.

____ / 125 Book in A ... Total Grade

Safely Home questions to answer: answer each question in paragraph form beginning with restating the question. You might have to do a bit of research on these. You may also ask your parents and pastor what their thoughts are.

1. What is it like being a Christian in China?
Why is China intolerant of Christianity? Has it always been that way?
How do God and Christians benefit from a repressive government, such as Mao Zedong's? In other words, why does God allow it?
2. Describe Ben Fielding's life and goals prior to coming to China. Compare his life and goals to Li Quan's.
3. How was Fielding saved? Why the book of John? Why the title, *Safely Home*? How did Quan honor Jesus tangibly and did it make an impression on Ben? How else could we honor Christ in a tangible way?
4. Compare Li Quan's funeral with his reception into heaven. Should we mourn at Christian funerals? Have you ever been to an unusually happy Christian funeral? Tell us about it. If it's not too morbid to think about, what would you want to happen at your funeral?
5. Where does Alcorn get controversial in this book? Do you agree or disagree with him?
6. There were several "fronts" in this book: U.S., China, Business, Heaven, Prison, Home churches, etc. With that in mind, do you think the book followed one major theme, or was there more than one theme?
7. Ben was trying to explain to Ming why his marriage had fallen apart, Ming didn't understand. She asked Ben, "Do you not face difficulty together, hostility from the world, persecution that makes you stand together?" Ben stated that they had hard times, but that hostility and persecution aren't that common in America. Ming responds, "Perhaps that was problem." Agree? Disagree? Explain.
8. In prison Quan prayed for God to give him a ministry. He didn't pray to be released, to be healed from his physical pain. He didn't ask God, "Lord, don't you know my family needs me?" What can we learn from this?

