

Entering 8th Grade Summer Reading 2018

Everyone must read the following book and complete the writing assignment that follows:

REQUIRED BOOK

Of Mice and Men John Steinbeck

One of the themes found in *Of Mice and Men* is the ability to overcome trials and hardships by believing in a better future. Almost all of the characters in Steinbeck's novels face difficult times but are ultimately sustained by an individual or collective dream. While reading *Of Mice and Men*, please highlight and annotate for this theme. Pay close attention to character development and perhaps what joins each of these characters. I look forward to discussing this book in the fall! *Of Mice and Men* will lend itself to our first five-paragraph essay once the school year begins.

1. **Writing Assignment:** Please choose **one** of the following characters: (George, Lennie, Curley's wife, or Crooks). In a page response, explain what trials that character faces and how that character is able to endure difficult times. Make sure your paragraph is built around three examples and that you use two quotes from the book to support your argument.

Your response should be typed, double-spaced, font 12, Times New Roman.

ADDITIONAL READING

You will also read **AT LEAST 2 (TWO) ADDITIONAL BOOKS** as part of your summer reading. You should **CHOOSE ONE OF THE BOOKS FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST**. For your **SECOND BOOK**, YOU ARE FREE TO CHOOSE ANY OTHER BOOK, although you may choose another book from the list below.

FICTION

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn Betty Smith

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn is a poignant literary classic that tells the story of Francie Nolan as she grows up in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY, from 1902 to 1919. The novel is filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than

sixty years. The daily experiences of the unforgettable Nolans are raw with honesty and tenderly threaded with family connectedness.

Wintergirls Laurie Halse Anderson

Lia and Cassie are best friends, “wintergirls” frozen in fragile bodies, competitors in a deadly contest to see who can be the thinnest. But then Cassie suffers the ultimate loss--her life--and Lia is left behind, haunted by her friend's memory and racked with guilt for not being able to help save her. In her most powerfully moving novel since *Speak*, award-winning author Laurie Halse Anderson explores Lia's struggle, her painful path to recovery, and her desperate attempts to hold on to the most important thing of all: hope.

I Am the Messenger Markus Zusak

Would-be washed-up loser Ed Kennedy is on the road to nowhere until he accidentally foils a bank robbery. Then, cryptic messages start arriving in the mail, and Ed finds himself on a wild variety of missions that will keep readers on the edge of their seats.

The Giver Lois Lowry

Twelve-year-old Jonas lives in a seemingly ideal world. Not until he is given his life assignment as the Receiver does he begin to understand the dark secrets behind this fragile community. (Utopian/distopian literature)

Inside Out and Back Again Thanhha Lai

(historical fiction)

For all the ten years of her life, Hà has only known Saigon: the thrills of its markets, the joy of its traditions, and the warmth of her friends close by. But now the Vietnam War has reached her home. Hà and her family are forced to flee as Saigon falls, and they board a ship headed toward hope. In America, Hà discovers the foreign world of Alabama: the coldness of its strangers, the dullness of its food . . . and the strength of her very own family.

The Secret Life of Bees Sue Monk Kidd

When Lily's fierce-hearted black "stand-in mother," Rosaleen, insults three of the town's most vicious racists, Lily decides they should both escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters who introduce Lily to a mesmerizing world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna who presides over their household. This is a remarkable story about divine female power and the transforming power of love—a story that women will share and pass on to their daughters for years to come.

When I was Puerto Rican Esmeralda Santiago

(historical fiction)

Growing up in rural Puerto Rico, Esmeralda learned the proper way to eat a guava, the sound of tree frogs in the mango groves at night, the taste of the delectable sausage called *morcilla*, and the formula for ushering a dead baby's soul to heaven. When her mother takes off to New York with her seven, soon to be eleven children, Esmeralda must learn new rules, a new language, and eventually take on a new identity. Santiago brilliantly recreates the idyllic landscape and tumultuous family life of her earliest years and her tremendous journey from the barrio to Brooklyn, translating for her mother at the welfare office, to high honors at Harvard.

A Separate Peace John Knowles

Set at a boys boarding school in New England during the early years of World War II, *A Separate Peace* is a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. Gene is a lonely, introverted intellectual. Phineas is a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. What happens between the two friends one summer, like the war itself, banishes the innocence of these boys and their world.

Non-Fiction

Into Thin Air John Krakauer

A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist and mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. The storm, which claimed five lives and left countless more--including Krakauer's--in guilt-ridden disarray, would also provide the impetus for *Into Thin Air*, Krakauer's epic account of the May 1996 disaster.

Endurance Alfred Lansing

The astonishing saga of polar explorer Ernest Shackleton's survival for over a year on the ice-bound Antarctic seas, as Time magazine put it, "defined heroism." Alfred Lansing's scrupulously researched and brilliantly narrated book has long been acknowledged as the definitive account of the *Endurance's* fateful trip. Lansing consulted with ten of the surviving members and gained access to diaries and personal accounts by eight others. *Endurance* teaches respect for survival and is an unforgettable story.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens Sean Covey

Based on his father's bestselling [*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*](#), Sean Covey applies the same principles to teens, using a vivacious, entertaining style. To keep it fun, Covey writes, he "stuffed it full of cartoons, clever ideas, great quotes, and incredible stories about real teens from all over the world... along with a few other surprises." Did he ever! Flip open to any page and become instantly absorbed in real-life stories of teens who have overcome obstacles to succeed, and step-by-step guides to shifting paradigms, building equity in "relationship bank accounts," creating action plans, and much more.

I Have Lived a Thousand Years Livia Bitton-Jackson

It wasn't long ago that Elli led a normal life--a life rich and full that included family, friends, school, and thoughts about boys. But these adolescent daydreams quickly darken in March 1944, when the Nazis invade Hungary. First, Elli can no longer attend school, have possessions, or talk to her neighbors. Then she and her family are forced to leave their house behind to move into a crowded ghetto, where privacy becomes a luxury of the past and food becomes a scarcity. *I Have Lived a Thousand Years* is a story of cruelty and suffering, but at the same time a story of hope, faith, perseverance, and love.

Enrique's Journey Sonia Nazario

Enrique's Journey recounts the unforgettable quest of a Honduran boy looking for his mother, eleven years after she is forced to leave her starving family to find work in the United States. Braving unimaginable peril, often clinging to the sides and tops of freight trains, Enrique travels through hostile worlds full of thugs, bandits, and corrupt cops. But he pushes forward, relying on his wit, courage, hope, and the kindness of strangers. As Isabel Allende writes: "This is a twenty-first-century Odyssey. If you are going to read only one nonfiction book this year, it has to be this one."

The Dark Game: True Spy Stories Paul B. Janeczko

Ever since George Washington used them to help topple the British, spies and their networks have helped and hurt America at key moments in history. In this fascinating collection, Paul B. Janeczko probes such stories as that of Elizabeth Van Lew, an aristocrat whose hatred of slavery drove her to be one of the most successful spies in the Civil War; the "Choctaw code talkers," Native Americans who were instrumental in sending secret messages during World War I; the staggering engineering behind a Cold War tunnel into East Berlin to tap Soviet phones (only to be compromised by a Soviet mole); and many more famous and less-known examples.

Rocket Boys Homer Hickam

"Until I began to build and launch rockets, I didn't know my home town was at war with itself over its children, and that my parents were locked in a kind of bloodless combat over how my brother and I would live our lives. I didn't know that if a girl broke your heart, another girl, virtuous at least in spirit, could mend it on the same night. And I didn't know that the enthalpy decrease in a converging passage could be transformed into jet kinetic energy if a divergent passage was added. The other boys discovered their own truths when we built our rockets, but those were mine." So begins Homer "Sonny" Hickam Jr.'s extraordinary memoir of life in Coalwood, West Virginia--a hard-scrabble little mining company town where the only things that mattered were coal mining and high school football, and where the future was regarded with more fear than hope. Looking back after a distinguished NASA career, Hickam shares the story of his youth, taking readers into the life of the little mining town of Coalwood and the boys who would come to embody its dreams.

Chasing Lincoln's Killer James L. Swanson

Based on rare archival material, obscure trial manuscripts, and interviews with relatives of the conspirators and the manhunters, CHASING LINCOLN'S KILLER is a fast-paced thriller about the pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth: a wild twelve-day chase through the streets of Washington, D.C., across the swamps of Maryland, and into the forests of Virginia.

The Nazi Hunters Neal Bascomb

In 1945, at the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the head of operations for the Nazis' Final Solution, walked into the mountains of Germany and vanished from view. Sixteen years later, an elite team of spies captured him at a bus stop in Argentina and smuggled him to Israel, resulting in one of the century's most important trials -- one that cemented the Holocaust in the public imagination. THE NAZI HUNTERS is the thrilling and fascinating story of what happened between these two events.