

Seabury Hall Middle School 7th Grade Summer Reading List

Students who are life-long readers are more successful in their academic classes, plain and simple. People who read well also write better, have larger vocabularies, score higher on tests, and communicate more effectively. All seventh graders are required to read at least one book on this list prior to the first day of school **and** two books of their choice, from their own reading level. The other two books may come from this list, but that is not a requirement. I have included a variety of authors to appeal to a broad spectrum of student interests. Please choose novels that you have never read before.

The American Library Association (ALA), and College Board (CB) recommend these titles. Students need to complete the accompanying questionnaire and have it to turn in on the first day of class in the fall. **I suggest that parents and students together select thoughtfully and carefully from the list.**

The Chocolate War - Cormier, Robert: Does Jerry Renault dare to disturb the universe? You wouldn't think that his refusal to sell chocolates during his school's fundraiser would create such a stir, but it does; it's as if the whole school comes apart at the seams. To some, Jerry is a hero, but to others, he becomes a scapegoat--a target for their pent-up hatred. And Jerry? He's just trying to stand up for what he believes, but perhaps there is no way for him to escape becoming a pawn in this game of control.

Cold Sassy Tree - Burns, Olive Ann: Willy Tweedy tells about a fourteen-year-old boy living in a small, turn-of-the-century Georgia town. Cold Sassy Tree, a novel full of warm humor and honesty. Will's hero is his Grandpa Rucker, who runs the town's general store, carrying all the power and privilege thereof. When Grandpa Rucker suddenly marries his store's young milliner barely three weeks after his wife's death, the town is set on its ear.

Ellen Foster - Gibbons, Kaye: In Ellen Foster, the title character is an 11-year-old orphan who refers to herself as "old Ellen," an appellation that is disturbingly apt. Ellen is an old woman in a child's body; her frail, unhappy mother dies, her abusive father alternately neglects her and makes advances on her, and she is shuttled from one uncaring relative's home to another before she finally takes matters into her own hands and finds herself a place to belong.

The Giver - Lowry, Lois: In a world with no poverty, no crime, no sickness and no unemployment, and where every family is happy, 12-year-old Jonas is chosen to be the community's Receiver of Memories. Under the tutelage of the Elders and an old man known as the Giver, he discovers the disturbing truth about his utopian world and struggles against the weight of its hypocrisy.

Hiroshima - Hersey, John: Through a staccato, present-tense narration that moves back and forth between the experiences of a 12-year-old girl and the men on the Enola Gay, Yep's novella tells the events of the day the first atomic bomb was dropped and its aftermath.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy - Adams, Douglass: Join Douglas Adams's hapless hero Arthur Dent as he travels the galaxy with his intrepid pal Ford Prefect, getting into horrible messes and generally wreaking hilarious havoc.

I Am the Cheese - Cormier, Robert: Imagine discovering that your whole life has been a fiction, your identity altered, and a new family history created. Suddenly nothing is as it once seemed; you can trust no one, maybe not even yourself. It is exactly this revelation that turns 14-year-old Adam Farmer's life upside down.

Life of Pi - Martel, Yann: An impassioned defense of zoos, a death-defying trans-Pacific sea adventure à la "Kon-Tiki," and a hilarious shaggy-dog story starring a four-hundred-and-fifty-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker: this audacious novel manages to be all of these as it tells the improbable survivor's tale of Pi Patel, a young Indian fellow named for a swimming pool (his full first name is Piscine) who endures seven months in a lifeboat with only a hungry, outsized feline for company.

Mango Shaped Space - Mass, Wendy: For 13-year-old Mia Winchell, the world has always been filled with a wonderful, if sometimes dizzying, sensory onslaught--numbers, letters, words, and sounds all cause her to see a distinct array of colors. She keeps her unusual condition a secret until eighth grade, but then her color visions make math and Spanish impossibly confusing, and she must go to her parents and a doctor for help.

Night - Wiesel, Elie:

In Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel's memoir *Night*, a scholarly, pious teenager is wracked with guilt at having survived the horror of the Holocaust and the genocidal campaign that consumed his family. His memories of the nightmare world of the death camps present him with an intolerable question: how can the God he once so fervently believed in have allowed these monstrous events to occur?

The Pigman - Zindel, Paul:

For sophomores John and Lorraine, the world feels meaningless; nothing is important. They certainly can never please their parents, and school is a chore. To pass the time, they play pranks on unsuspecting people. It's during one of these pranks that they meet the "Pigman"--a fat, balding old man with a zany smile plastered on his face.

A Wrinkle in Time - L'Engle, Madeleine: Everything changes for the Murray family when three eccentric and otherworldly women appear - Mrs. Who, Mrs. Which, and Mrs. Whatsit - and whisk Meg, Charles Wallace, and their new friend Calvin off on a mission across the universe to rescue Meg's father. Soon the children are embroiled in nothing less than the eternal cosmic war between Darkness and Light, and Meg will have to be braver than she can possibly imagine.