

# Grade VIII – Summer Work

Students entering eighth grade in the fall are encouraged to work on math skills and required to read at least FIVE books over the summer.

Students are expected to arrive to school in September ready to actively engage in discussions about these texts.

Unless noted, families must either purchase or borrow their own copies of these books. Audio book accompaniment is also acceptable for readers who benefit from it.

*Please note:* The Grade VIII curriculum in English and social studies explores themes of social issues and human rights, and these book selections will help to deepen students' readiness for the year. Because of these themes, some of these books include language or scenes that are considered racially or culturally charged (including violence, slurs, and swear words). All these books are appropriate for this age group, and teachers will structure class discussions about these topics in September. To strengthen the home-and-school connection, you are invited (but by no means required) to read these selections alongside your child. Most of all, please join us in promoting reading as a wonderful way to unplug, relax, and enjoy the summer.

## English

### 1. At least ONE choice from the VIII Summer Poetry List.

Students should make mental note of poems which appeal to them in style or content. **Select from the following list:**

Maya Angelou: [\*I Shall Not Be Moved\*](#)

Billy Collins:

[\*Sailing Around the Room, New and Selected Poems\*](#)

Emily Dickinson: [\*Poems by Emily Dickinson, Series One\*](#)

Langston Hughes: [\*The Dream Keeper and Other Poems\*](#)

Naomi Shihab Nye:

[\*19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East\*](#)

Tupac Shakur [\*The Rose That Grew From the Concrete\*](#)

### 2. At least ONE choice from the VIII English Summer Novel

**List:** Students should make mental note of style, themes, and character development. **Select from the following list:**

[\*The Poet X\*](#) by Elizabeth Acevedo:

[\*The Old Man and the Sea\*](#) by Ernest Hemingway

[\*The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime\*](#)

[\*that Changed Their Lives\*](#) by Dashka Slater

[\*Watch Us Rise\*](#) by Renee Watson

[\*The Book Thief\*](#) by Markus Zusak

### 3. At least ONE choice from the VIII English Graphic Novel

**List.** Students should make mental note of the artistic style used in depicting these epic stories. **Select from the following list:**

[\*Beowulf\*](#) by Gareth Hinds

[\*March \(book 1\)\*](#) by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin

[\*On a Sunbeam\*](#) by Tillie Walden

If you have any questions about reading or obtaining these English texts, contact [Susan Bogue Myslik](#).

## Community Reading

### 4. ONE choice from the four Community Reading Books

Students selected their book and were given a paper copy before summer. Students from all Upper Division grades will meet in book clubs to discuss in the fall. Questions? Please contact [Alice Lucey](#)

*Flying Lessons* edited by Ellen Oh

*The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill

*Nowhere Boy* by Katherine Marsh

*Piecing Me Together* by Renee Watson

*Undefeated* by Steve Sheinkin

## Social Studies

5. Students must read this text and also complete written work about this book. The assignment can be found [HERE](#)

*Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock's Central High School* by Melba Patillo Beals. The social studies department will provide students with a copy of this book.

Questions? Please contact [David Perry](#)

## Math

Just as students benefit from reading throughout the summer, regular practice with problem solving, computation, and math facts will maintain and strengthen the mathematical gains made during the school year. We recommend students practice the following skills to a level of proficiency to start Grade VIII math. For students who would benefit from targeted skill practice, we recommend that families purchase the [Spectrum Math Workbook](#). For students seeking more mixed skill review, we recommend [Summer Math Skill Sharpener](#) workbook. Please purchase the grade level your child just completed. Questions? Please contact [Christy Keblusek](#).

### Stretch and Challenge

For additional stretch and challenge, we recommend [Problems of the Week](#) on the MathCounts website, [previous AMC8 contest](#) competitions and [previous Purple Comet competitions](#)