



May 2021

Dear seventh grade students (and parents),

We are so excited to teach you (your children) this fall! To prepare for an exciting and productive school year in English, over the summer, each of you will be required to read **one book**. When we return in the fall, there will be a quiz and a writing assignment over your chosen novel. Notes are recommended, but not required, to prepare for these assessments.

You can choose to read either [The Wednesday Wars](#) by Gary D. Schmidt or [Counting by 7s](#) by Holly Goldberg Sloan. You only have to read one novel but are free to read both! Below is a summary of each novel.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email Tia Woods (TWoods@DenverDJS.org). Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ms. Woods".

[The Wednesday Wars](#) by Gary D. Schmidt

Meet Holling Hoodhood, a seventh-grader at Camillo Junior High, who must spend Wednesday afternoons with his teacher, Mrs. Baker, while the rest of the class has religious instruction. Mrs. Baker doesn't like Holling—he's sure of it. Why else would she make him read the plays of William Shakespeare outside class? But everyone has bigger things to worry about, like Vietnam. His father wants Holling and his sister to be on their best behavior: the success of his business depends on it. But how can Holling stay out of trouble when he has so much to contend with? A bully demanding cream puffs; angry rats; and a baseball hero signing autographs the very same night Holling has to appear in a play in yellow tights! As fate sneaks up on him again and again, Holling finds Motivation—the Big M—in the most unexpected places and musters up the courage to embrace his destiny, in spite of himself.

[Counting by 7s](#) by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is *not* a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.