

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF EDISON TOWNSHIP
9th GRADE SUMMER READING

Directions: Select **ONE book** (either fiction OR non-fiction) and **ONE non-fiction article** from the list below. When you return to school in September, you will submit one **Double-Entry Journal** for the full-length text you read (worksheet is attached to this packet). Please choose quotations that support the theme below. Assignments and links to the non-fiction articles are provided on the school and District Websites.

GRADE 9 THEME: Journey

There are many types of **journeys** one can take in life. They can be internal and lead to a process of self-discovery, or external involving an actual physical journey that might be filled with challenges or obstacles. Include references from the fiction or non-fiction texts that relate to the theme of **journeys**.

For students entering Grade 9

Fiction

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

The extraordinary #1 *New York Times* bestseller is an unforgettable story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. She scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist--books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson (first book in a series)

National Book Award Finalist and Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction

As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel.

Challenger Deep by Neal Shusterman

National Book Award and Golden Kite Award Winner. A captivating novel about mental illness that lingers beyond the last page, *Challenger Deep* is a heartfelt tour de force by *New York Times* bestselling author Neal Shusterman.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

National Book Award Winner and *New York Times* bestseller. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior, a budding cartoonist of Native American descent attempts to break away from the life he thought he was destined to live.

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets to the Universe by Benjamin Alire Saenz

A Printz Honor Book. Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When they two meet at the swimming pool, they seem to have nothing in common. But as the loners start spending time together, they discover that they share a special friendship--the kind that changes lives and lasts a lifetime. And it is through this friendship that Ari and Dante will learn the most important truths about themselves and the kind of people they want to be.

A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness

The #1 *New York Times* bestseller is an unflinching, darkly funny, and deeply moving story of a boy, his seriously ill mother, and an unexpected monstrous visitor.

Non-Fiction

The Warrior's Heart by Eric Greitens, Navy SEAL

The New York Times bestselling author. In this adaptation of his best-selling book, *The Heart and the Fist*, Eric speaks directly to teens, interweaving memoir and intimate second-person narratives that ask readers to put themselves in the shoes of himself and others. Readers will share in Eric's evolution from average kid to humanitarian to warrior, training and serving with the most elite military outfit in the world. Along the way, they'll be asked to consider the power of choices, of making the decision each and every day to act with courage and compassion so that they grow to be tomorrow's heroes.

The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland by Jim DeFede

When 38 jetliners bound for the United States were forced to land at Gander International Airport in Canada by the closing of U.S. airspace on September 11, the population of this small town on Newfoundland Island swelled from 10,300 to nearly 17,000. The citizens of Gander met the stranded passengers with an overwhelming display of friendship and goodwill. As the passengers stepped from the airplanes, exhausted, hungry and distraught after being held on board for nearly 24 hours while security checked all of the baggage, they were greeted with a feast prepared by the townspeople. Local bus drivers who had been on strike came off the picket lines to transport the passengers to the various shelters set up in local schools and churches. Linens and toiletries were bought and donated. A middle school provided showers, as well as access to computers, email, and televisions, allowing the passengers to stay in touch with family and follow the news. This book recounts the inspiring story of the residents of Gander, Canada, whose acts of kindness have touched the lives of thousands of people and been an example of humanity and goodwill.

Positive: A Memoir by Paige Rawl

An astonishing memoir for the untold number of children whose lives have been touched by bullying. *Positive* is a must-read for teens, their parents, educators, and administrators—a brave, visceral work that will save lives and resonate deeply. Paige Rawl has been HIV positive since birth, but growing up, she never felt like her illness defined her. On an unremarkable day in middle school, she disclosed to a friend her HIV-positive status—and within hours the bullying began. Then one night, desperate for escape, fifteen-year-old Paige found herself in her bathroom staring at a bottle of sleeping pills. That could have been the end of her story. Instead, it was only the beginning. Paige's memoir calls for readers to choose action over complacency, compassion over cruelty—and above all, to be *Positive*.

Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story by Caren Stelson

National Book Award Longlist

This striking work of narrative nonfiction tells the true story of six-year-old Sachiko Yasui's survival of the Nagasaki atomic bomb on August 9, 1945, and the heartbreaking and lifelong aftermath. Having conducted extensive interviews with Sachiko Yasui, Caren Stelson chronicles Sachiko's trauma and loss as well as her long journey to find peace. This book offers readers a remarkable new perspective on the final moments of World War II and their aftermath.

Please Stop Laughing at Me by Jodee Blanco

The New York Times bestseller. From fifth grade through high school, Blanco was teased, shunned, and, at times, physically assaulted by her classmates because she was different. You will be shocked, moved, and ultimately inspired by this harrowing tale of survival.

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates by Wes Moore

The New York Times bestseller. Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence?

Non-Fiction Articles

["Do Our Kids Get Off Too Easy?" – Alfie Kohn](#)

["The Whistle-Blower's Quandary"- Adam Waytz, James Dungan and Liane Young](#)

["Angela Whitiker's Climb" – Isabel Wilkerson](#)

**Links of articles are also provided on the school and District Websites.*

A reading program is a joint responsibility between school and family. Parents might very reasonably disagree about what material constitutes suitable reading for children. The titles suggested are not Board of Education approved texts. They are works that are recommended by such organizations as the American Library Association, the *New York Times*, and the National Council for Teachers of English. They appear on many reading lists across the nation. Nevertheless, certain titles may contain subject matter that some parents may not want their children to read (whether Grimm's Fairy Tales for young children or books with mature themes and graphic language for older students). Only parents can determine appropriate choices for their children. Check with teachers, local librarians, and book websites for reading levels and information about the various titles.