June, 2024

Dear Students,

Welcome to 8th Grade! The eighth-grade team would like you to read two books this summer. We recommend the books below, but if you want to read books that are not on the list, that is fine too. If you listen to audiobooks, we recommend following along in a physical book as well.

As you read your books, you should note the key characters, events, setting, and conflict, and how each contributed to the plot. Write the notes in the margin (if you own the book) or use a notebook or open an electronic document for your notes. When we get back to school in September, we will be working with these notes to complete our first assignment, so make sure they are legible and thorough.

There are many different types of books on this list, graphic novels, action, sports, realistic, romantic, historical fiction – a little something for everyone. Choose books that interest you so your reading will be enjoyable.

We highly recommend you read more than just 2 books and hope you find many books you enjoy from this list! You will need acquire these books on your own. If you cannot get a physical copy of the books you choose (through the library or for purchase), you can look for them in an electronic format from the Briarcliff Public Library or the New York Public Library. You can also access audiobooks here. You can find instructions on how to access those here: Libby and NY Public Library

Have a wonderful summer and happy reading!
Read over the summer will help you improve your comprehension and writing skills. There are many types of books on this list, some short, some long, some serious, some funny, true stories and fiction. Find a few you’re interested in and enjoy them on summer break!

Alcott, Louisa May  **LITTLE WOMEN**: Grown-up Meg, tomboyish Jo, timid Beth, and precocious Amy. The four March sisters couldn't be more different. But with their father away at war, and their mother working to support the family, they have to rely on one another. Whether they're putting on a play, forming a secret society, or celebrating Christmas, there's one thing they can't help wondering: Will Father return home safely?

Alexander, Kwame  **SOLO**: Blade never asked for a life of the rich and famous. In fact, he'd give anything not to be the son of Rutherford Morrison, a washed-up rock star and drug addict. His one light is his girlfriend, Chapel, but her parents have forbidden their relationship. In reality, the only thing Blade and his dad have in common is the music that lives inside them. When a family secret comes to light, the music disappears. In its place is a letter that could bring Blade the freedom and love he's been searching for.

Anderson, M.T.  **ASSASSINATION OF BRANGWAIN SPURGE**: Uptight elfin historian Brangwain Spurge is on a mission: survive being catapulted across the mountains into goblin territory, deliver a priceless peace offering, and spy on the goblin kingdom - from which no elf has returned alive in more than a hundred years. Brangwain's host, the goblin archivist Werfel, is delighted to show Brangwain around. They should be the best of friends, but a series of double crosses, blunders, and cultural misunderstandings throws these two bumbling scholars into the middle of an international crisis.

Austen, Jane  **MANSFIELD PARK**: Fanny Price, a teenaged girl of low social rank brought up on her wealthy relatives’ countryside estate feels the sharp sting of rejection when her cousin Edmund, the only person who treats her as an equal, is won over by a flirtatious, exciting--and unprincipled--London girl.

Bolden, Tonya  **CROSSING EBENEZER CREEK**: Freed from slavery, Mariah and her young brother Zeke join Sherman's march through Georgia, where Mariah meets a free black named Caleb and dares to imagine the possibility of true love, but hope can come at a cost.
Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker  **THE WAR I FINALLY WON**: When Ada's clubfoot is surgically fixed at last, she knows for certain that she's not what her mother said she was--damaged, deranged, crippled mentally as well as physically. She's not a daughter anymore, either. Who is she now? World War II rages on and Ada & Jamie, move with Susan, into a cottage with Lady Thorton and Maggie. Life in the crowded home is tense. Then Ruth moves in. Ruth, a Jewish girl, from Germany. Could Ruth be a spy? *Sequel to THE WAR THAT SAVED MY LIFE*

Brown, Daniel James  **FACING THE MOUNTAIN: A TRUE STORY OF JAPANESE AMERICAN HEROES IN WORLD WAR II**: This is a remarkable true story, resistance history and courtroom drama follows three courageous Japanese American soldiers as they fought for the US during WWII as part of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team only to face discrimination at home.

Deuker, Carl  **GUTLESS**: Falling short of varsity qualifications because of his tendency to avoid physical aggression, talented football player Brock Ripley struggles to face his fears when his team's star quarterback begins bullying Brock's best friend.

Florence, Debbi Michiko  **JUST BE COOL, JENNA SAKAI**: When boyfriend Elliott breaks up with Jenna Sakai before Christmas break, she just about convinces herself that relationships are for suckers and she is better off without them; but unfortunately she finds herself in competition with Elliott for a journalism scholarship, and worse her first assignment for the newspaper club is to write a personal essay, which is difficult when you are someone who prefers to keep your emotions bottled up--and then there is Rin Watanabe, a boy as stubborn as Jenna herself, and a mystery that Jenna cannot help but investigate.

Fukuda, Andrew  **THIS LIGHT BETWEEN US**: In 1935, ten-year-old Alex Maki from Bainbridge Island, Washington is disgusted when he's forced to become pen pals with Charlie Levy of Paris, France--a *girl*. He thought she was a boy. In spite of Alex's reluctance, their letters continue to fly across the Atlantic--and along with them, the shared hopes and dreams of friendship. Until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the growing Nazi persecution of Jews force them to confront the darkest aspects of human nature.

Glaser, Mechthild  **BOOK JUMPER**: A teen girl discovers she is a book jumper--she can leap directly into books, meet the characters, and experience the world of the book.

Green, Tim  **FOOTBALL GENIUS**: Troy has an unusual gift for predicting football plays before they occur. He attempts to use his ability to help his favorite
team, the Atlanta Falcons, but he must first prove himself to the coach and players.

Hardinge, Frances  A FACE LIKE GLASS: When Neverfell, who has no memory, arrives in Caverna, her facial expressions make her very dangerous to the people who live with blank faces or pay dearly to learn to simulate emotions.

Higuera, Dona Barba ALEBRIJES: When thirteen-year-old Leandro takes the fall for his sister and is exiled into an ancient drone, he embarks on a perilous journey beyond the city's walls where he encounters mutant monsters, wasteland pirates, and fellow outcasts as he tries to save his sister and fellow Cascabeles from the oppressive regime.

Horowitz, Anthony NIGHTSHADE REVENGE: Alex Rider Series, Book 14: When Nightshade kidnaps his best friend, teen spy Alex Rider must enter the world of virtual reality gaming where the lines between what's real and what's digital are deliberately being blurred by a ruthless enemy.

Jackson, Tiffany D. LET ME HEAR A RHYME: Brooklyn, 1998. Biggie Smalls was right: Things done changed. But that doesn't mean that Quadir and Jarrell are cool letting their best friend Steph's music lie forgotten under his bed after he's murdered--not when his rhymes could turn any Bed Stuy corner into a party. With the help of Steph's younger sister Jasmine, they come up with a plan to promote Steph's music under a new rap name: the Architect. Soon, everyone wants a piece of him. When his demo catches the attention of a hotheaded music label rep, the trio must prove Steph's talent from beyond the grave.

Johnson, Maureen TRULY DEVIOUS: True-crime aficionado Stevie Bell is set to begin her first year at Ellingham Academy, and she has an ambitious plan: She will solve the cold case murder of the school founder’s family. That is, she will solve the case when she gets a grip on her demanding new school life and her housemates: the inventor, the novelist, the actor, the artist, and the jokester. But something strange is happening. Mystery makes a surprise return, and death revisits Ellingham Academy. The past has crawled out of its grave. Someone has gotten away with murder. Sequels: THE VANISHING STAIR, THE HAND ON THE WALL

Kanter, Marisa WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU: When Halle Levitt arrives to spend senior year in her grandfather's small town, she meets Nash, her online best friend who thinks her online persona, Kels, is as confident and popular as he is.

Kinsella, W.P. SHOELESS JOE: Ray Kinsella's fanatic love of baseball drives him to build a baseball stadium in his corn field and kidnap the author, J.D. Salinger, and bring him to a baseball game.
**Lee, Stacey**  
**WINSTON CHU VS. THE WHIMSIES:** Twelve-year-old Winston Chu’s mom wants him to learn impulse control, but it won’t happen overnight. Winston inadvertently stops a robbery at an oddities shop in Chinatown. As a reward, Mr. Pang invites Winston to choose any item in the store, but warns the first thing Winston touches will be the thing he gets. Winston accidentally grabs a broom first. Mr. Pang hands him the broom, along with a dustpan as his reward. When he gets home some things go missing, and all Winston can think about are the broom and dustpan. Did they somehow take his stuff? It’s time check out the store where there's more going on than meets the eye. It’s time to fight magic with magic. And this time, Winston better have a plan.

**Lupica, Mike**  
**QB 1:** Jake Cullen, fourteen, lives in the shadows of his former NFL playing father and older brother who took his team to the Texas State Championship last season, until he becomes the starting quarterback for the high school football team and finally has his chance to shine.

**Lupica, Mike**  
**DEFENDING THE CHAMP:** When the girls soccer team learns it has been canceled due to budget cuts, they come up with a plan to raise the necessary funds through a face-off with the boys’ team, which is led by sneering superstar Chase Gwinn.

**Lynch, Chris**  
**ICEMAN:** The guys on Eric's hockey team call him the Iceman, because he's a heartless player, cold as ice. But Eric knows he's not cold, he's on fire, burning with a need he just can't explain. Least of all to his family--not to his dad, whose only joy in life is watching Eric smash other hockey players to a pulp. Or his mom, who starts every conversation with, "Your problem is..." Or even his brother, Duane, once a star athlete, now a star slacker. Can Eric find a way to make them understand how he feels--before the fire inside consumes him completely?

**Martin, Pedro**  
**MEXIKID: A GRAPHIC MEMOIR:** Pedro Martin's grown up in the U.S. and feeling “somewhat American” and “somewhat Mexican”hearing stories about his legendary abuelito, but during a family road trip to Mexico, he connects with his grandfather and learns more about his own Mexican identity in this graphic format memoir.

**McGee, Katharine**  
**AMERICAN ROYALS:** What if America had a royal family? When America won the Revolutionary War, its people offered General George Washington a crown. Two and a half centuries later, the House of Washington still sits on the throne. As Princess Beatrice gets closer to becoming the first queen regnant, the duty she has embraced her entire life suddenly feels stifling. Nobody cares about the spare except when she's breaking the rules, so Princess Samantha doesn't care much about anything, either... except the one boy who is off-limits to her. And then there’s
Prince Jefferson. Most of America adores their handsome prince . . . but two very different girls are vying to capture his heart.

Nayeri, Daniel  **EVERYTHING SAD IS UNTRUE: (A TRUE STORY):** At the front of a middle school classroom in Oklahoma, a boy named Khosrou (whom everyone calls 'Daniel') stands, trying to tell a story. His story. But no one believes a word he says. To them he is a dark-skinned, hairy-armed boy with a big butt whose lunch smells funny; who makes things up and talks about poop too much. But Khosrou's stories, stretching back years, and decades, and centuries, are beautiful, and terrifying, from the moment he, his mother, and sister fled Iran in the middle of the night, stretching all the way back to family tales set in the jasmine-scented city of Isfahan, the palaces of semi-ancient kings, and even the land of stories.

Neilson, Jennifer  **A NIGHT DIVIDED:** When the Berlin Wall went up, Gerta, her mother, and her brother Fritz were trapped on the eastern side where they were living, while her father, and her other brother Dominic were in the West--four years later, now twelve, Gerta sees her father on a viewing platform on the western side and realizes he wants her to risk her life trying to tunnel to freedom.

Ness, Patrick  **A MONSTER CALLS:** Thirteen-year-old Conor awakens one night to find a monster outside his bedroom window, but not the one from the recurring nightmare that began when his mother became ill--an ancient, wild creature that wants him to face truth and loss.

Older, Daniel José  **BALAD & DAGGER:** When sixteen-year-old Mateo and Chela discover each other and their powers during a political battle between neighborhood factions, they set aside their differences to unravel the mystery behind their sunken homeland and to stop a dangerous political operative who is trying to harness their gifts to unleash terror on the world. From the Rick Riordan Presents imprint.

Reintgen, Scott  **NYXIA:** Emmett accepts an interstellar space contract but learns en route that to win the promised fortune he and nine other recruits face a brutal competition, putting their very humanity at risk.

Remarque, Erich M.  **ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT:** In 1914 a room full of German schoolboys, fresh-faced and idealistic, are goaded by their schoolmaster to troop off to the 'glorious war'. With the fire and patriotism of youth they sign up. What follows is the moving story of a young 'unknown soldier' experiencing the horror and disillusionment of life in the trenches.

Rhodes, Jewell Parker  **PARADISE ON FIRE:** Addy is haunted by the tragic fire that killed her parents, leaving her to be raised by her grandmother. Years later, Addy's
grandmother has enrolled her in a summer wilderness program. Deep in the forest the kids learn new skills: camping, hiking, rock climbing, and how to start and safely put out campfires. Most important, they learn to depend upon each other for companionship and survival. But then comes a devastating forest fire...

Riordan, Rick, editor: CURSED CARNIVAL AND OTHER CALAMATIES: NEW STORIES ABOUT MYTHIC HEROES: Ten bestselling and award-winning authors contributed to this collection: Roshani Chokshi, J.C. Cervantes, Yoon Ha Lee, Carlos Hernandez, Kwame Mbalia, Rebecca Roanhorse, Tehlor Kay Mejia, Sarwat Chadda, Graci Kim, and Rick Riordan. There's something for everyone in this group of fast-paced and funny adventure stories that show what it takes to be a hero in any time, setting, and universe.

Schmidt, Gary D ORBITING JUPITER: The shattering story of Joseph, a father at thirteen, who has never seen his daughter, Jupiter. After spending time in a juvenile facility, he's placed with a foster family on a farm in rural Maine. Here Joseph, damaged and withdrawn, meets twelve-year-old Jack, who narrates the account of the troubled teen who wants to find his baby at any cost. In the time they're together the two boys discover the true meaning of family and the sacrifices it requires.

Scieszka, Jon, editor SPORTS PAGES: the third volume in Jon Scieszka's Guys Read Library of Great Reading, features ten short stories guaranteed to put you in the ring, under the basket, and right behind home plate. From fiction to nonfiction, from baseball to mixed martial arts and everything in between, these are a collection of stories about the rush of victory and the crush of defeat on and off the field.

Sharpe, Tess CAPTAIN MARVEL: LIBERATION RUN: When a mysterious spacecraft comes hurtling toward Earth, Carol Danvers--the hero known as Captain Marvel--narrowly prevents it from crashing. The craft's pilot is a young inhuman woman, part of a group who rejected that society's caste system and left for the stars in search of a new life. What they found, however, was imprisonment on a planet where Inhumans are treated like currency, and possession of an Inhuman girl brings great power and influence. To refuse means death, and Rhi has risked everything to seek help.

Stevenson, Robert Louis TREASURE ISLAND: The tale is told by an adventurous boy, Jim Hawkins, who gets hold of a treasure map and sets off with an adult crew in search of the buried treasure. Among the crew, however, is the treacherous Long John Silver who is determined to keep the treasure for himself. Stevenson's first full-length work of fiction brought him immediate fame and continues to captivate readers of all ages.
**Tolkein, J.R.R.**

**FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING:** One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them, One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them. In a sleepy village in the Shire, young Frodo Baggins finds himself faced with an immense task, as his elderly cousin Bilbo entrusts the Ring to his care. Frodo must leave his home and make a perilous journey across Middle-earth to the Cracks of Doom, there to destroy the Ring and foil the Dark Lord in his evil purpose.

**Wang, Jen**

**THE PRINCE AND THE DRESSMAKER:** In this graphic novel, Prince Sebastian is looking for a bride--or rather, his parents are looking for one for him. Sebastian is too busy hiding his secret life from everyone. At night he puts on daring dresses and takes Paris by storm as the fabulous Lady Crystallia! Sebastian's secret weapon (and best friend) is the brilliant dressmaker Frances—the only other person who knows the truth: sometimes this boy wears dresses. But Frances dreams of greatness and being someone's secret weapon means being a secret. How long can Frances defer her dreams to protect a friend?

**Wein, Elizabeth**

**THE ENIGMA GAME:** Told in multiple voices, fifteen-year-old Jamaican Louisa Adair uncovers an Enigma machine in the small Scottish village where she cares for an elderly German woman, and helps solve a puzzle that could turn the tide of World War II.

**Williams, Alicia**

**GENESIS BEGINS AGAIN:** Thirteen-year-old Genesis tries again and again to lighten her black skin, thinking it is the root of her family's troubles, before discovering reasons to love herself as is.

**Yoon, Nicola**

**THE SUN IS ALSO A STAR:** Natasha is a girl who believes in science and facts. Daniel has always been a good son and good student. But when he sees Natasha he forgets all that and believes there is something extraordinary in store for both of them. *Printz Honor Book, 2017*

**NON-FICTION**

**Alexander, Kwame**

**THE PLAYBOOK: 52 RULES TO AIM, SHOOT, AND SCORE IN THIS GAME CALLED LIFE** Kwame Alexander shares poetry and inspiring lessons about the rules of life, as well as uplifting quotes from athletes such as Stephen Curry and Venus Williams and other exemplars like Sonia Sotomayor and Michelle Obama in this motivational and inspirational book just right for graduates of any age and anyone needing a little encouragement.

**Bascomb, Neal**

**THE NAZI HUNTERS: HOW A TEAM OF SPIES AND SURVIVORS CAPTURED THE WORLDS MOST NOTORIOUS NAZI:** In 1945 at the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the head of
operations for the Nazi’s 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.

Bausum, Ann

**WITH COURAGE AND WITH CLOTH: WINNING THE FIGHT FOR A WOMEN’S RIGHT TO VOTE**: The long, arduous and sometimes violent struggle for a woman’s right to vote is told in an engaging narrative. The roots of the movement as well as the other efforts it spawned are well told.

Blumenthal, Karen

**BOOTLEG: MURDER, MOONSHINE, AND THE LAWLESS YEARS OF PROHIBITION**: It began with the best of intentions. Worried about the effects of alcohol on American families, mothers and civic leaders started a movement to outlaw drinking in public places. Over time, their protests, petitions, and activism paid off with a Constitutional Amendment banning the sale and consumption of alcohol. Instead, it began a decade of lawlessness, when the most upright citizens casually broke the law, and a host of notorious gangsters entered the public eye.

Day, Nick

**THE MONA LISA VANISHES: A LEGENDARY PAINTER, A SHOCKING HEIST AND THE BIRTH OF A GLOBAL CELEBRITY**: On a hot August day in Paris a desperate guard burst into the office of the director of the Louvre and shouted, *La Joconde, c'est partie!* The *Mona Lisa*, she's gone! No one knew who was behind the heist. Was it an international gang of thieves? Was it the young Spanish painter Pablo Picasso, who was about to remake the very art of painting? Travel back to an extraordinary period of revolutionary change: turn-of-the-century Paris. Meet the infamous thieves--and detectives--of the era. And follow Leonardo da Vinci, painter of the *Mona Lisa*, through his dazzling, wondrously weird life. Discover how the *Mona Lisa*--the most famous painting in the world should never have existed at all.

Fleming, Candace

**THE ENIGMA GIRLS: HOW TEN TEENAGERS BROKE CIPHERS, KEPT SECRETS, AND HELPED WIN WORLD WAR II**: You are to report to Station X at Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire, in four days time. That is all you need to know. "This was the telegram hundreds of young British women received in the spring of 1941. As they arrived these young people had no idea what kind of work they were stepping into, who had recommended them or why had they been chosen. This is the fascinating story of the brave and dedicated young women who helped turn the tides of World War II for the Allies, with their hard work and determination at Bletchley Park.
Freedman, Russell

**THE VOICE THAT CHALLENGED A NATION: MARIAN ANDERSON AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS:** A biography of the great singer Marian Anderson and her role in bringing the injustice of segregation in the arts to national awareness. *Newbery Honor Book, 2005*

Hoose, Phillip M.

**CLAUDETTE COLVIN: TWICE TOWARD JUSTICE:** The story of fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin, an African-American girl who refused to give up her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama, nine months before Rosa Parks, and covers her role in a crucial civil rights case. *Newbery Honor Book 2010, National Book Award, 2009*

Keenan, Sheila

**THE HEARTBEAT OF WOUNDED KNEE (YOUNG READERS ADAPTATION):** Since the late 1800s, it has been believed that Native American civilization has been wiped from the United States. The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee argues that Native American culture is far from defeated--if anything, it is thriving as much today as it was one hundred years ago. The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee looks at Native American culture as it exists today--and the fight to preserve language and traditions.

Roach, Mary

**FUZZ: WHEN NATURE BREAKS THE LAW:** Roach tags along with animal-attack forensics investigators, human-elephant conflict specialists, bear managers, and "danger tree" faller blasters. Intrepid as ever, she travels from leopard-terrorized hamlets in the Indian Himalaya to St. Peter’s Square in the early hours before the pope arrives for Easter Mass, when vandal gulls swoop in to destroy the elaborate floral display. She taste-tests rat bait, learns how to install a vulture effigy, and gets mugged by a macaque.

Seiple, Samantha

**LINCOLN’S SPYMASTER: ALLAN PINKERTON, AMERICA’S FIRST PRIVATE EYE:** Pinkerton was just a poor immigrant barrel-maker in Illinois when he stumbled across his first case just miles from his home. His reputation grew and people began approaching Pinkerton with their cases, he assembled a team of undercover agents, and together they caught train robbers, counterfeitors, and other outlaws. Seeing firsthand the value of Pinkerton's service, President Lincoln, seeing how useful Pinkerton’s team was, funded Pinkerton's spy network, a precursor to the Secret Service.

Stone, Tanya Lee

**THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE BARBIE: A DOLL’S HISTORY AND HER IMPACT ON US:** Is Barbie a blond Chucky slashing away at little girls’ self-esteem? Or is she My First Feminist, with her lab coats, astronaut helmets, and high-fashion gowns, encouraging girls to imagine themselves in whatever roles they choose? This book explores how Barbie
has influenced generations of girls, discussing criticisms of the doll, her role in fashion, and her surprising popularity during her first fifty years.

Tougas, Michael  
**ABANDON SHIP! THE TRUE WORLD WAR II STORY ABOUT THE SINKING OF THE LACONIA:** On September 12, 1942, the RMS Laconia was attacked by a German submarine. What the Germans didn't know was that they had just attacked their allies: locked below decks on the British ship were nearly 1,800 Italian prisoners of war. When the Germans realized their mistake, they made the unprecedented decision to rescue all survivors regardless of their nationality, attempting to declare the waters a neutral zone.

Turner, Pamela  
**SAMURAI RISING: THE EPIC LIFE OF MINAMOTO YOSHITSUNE:** Minamoto Yoshitsune should not have been a samurai. But his story is legend in this real-life saga. When Yoshitsune was a baby, his father went to war with a rival samurai family--and lost. Yoshitsune was sent away to live in a monastery. Skinny, small, and unskilled in the warrior arts, he nevertheless escaped and learned the ways of the samurai. His daring feats and impossible bravery earned him immortality.