

SUMMER READING 2024



Sayreville Middle School

Required Summer Reading for
Incoming 6th, 7th, and 8th graders



"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The goal of the Sayreville Middle School summer reading program is to provide independent practice of reading skills and to foster a lifelong love of reading for our students. It is with this in mind that we present our program for 2024.

For each grade level, a theme or topic was selected to align with the district curriculum. Students are required to read one book from the provided list or based on the description of the genre/topic for their grade level. Please work with your child to select a book that meets the expectations and aligns with your child's interests and reading comfort level.

We encourage your child to read beyond our expectations and embrace this summer as an opportunity to explore their personal interests while expanding their vocabulary, strengthening their literacy skills, and seeing the world around them from the perspectives of new authors and characters.

This summer, Rutgers University Athletics is offering one free football ticket (with purchase) to any student that fulfills their K-8 Rutgers Reading Pledge. Information can be found here: <https://app.scarletknights.com/RUReading>. In addition, we encourage students to participate in the Sayreville Public Library's summer reading program: <https://sayrevillelibrary.org/summer-reading/>.

Your child should develop a reading schedule that works for their summer calendar. **All summer reading is to be completed by September 13, 2024.** On that day in their LAL classes, students will begin discussing and writing about the books they read over the summer.

In supporting the students with their summer reading, all LAL teachers are reviewing the expectations during class, and school media specialists are meeting with classes to discuss the assignment and provide book suggestions. Additionally, we have shared these expectations with the Sayreville Public Library so that they can assist students with book selection.

The English Language Arts department at SMS thanks you for your support of our program and wishes our families a summer filled with stories and rewarding reading experiences!

Incoming Grade 6 Summer Reading Overcoming Challenges

Students are to choose ONE of the books described below. In LAL classes in September, students will be expected to write a literary essay about the reading, so notetaking is strongly encouraged.

<p><i>Charlie Joe Jackson’s Guide to Extra Credit</i> by Tommy Greenwald</p> <p>Charlie Joe Jackson, the most reluctant reader ever born, made it his mission to get through middle school without reading a single book from cover to cover. Now he’s back – and trying desperately to get straight A’s to avoid going to academic camp for the summer. To do this, he will have to betray his friend, lose the girl of his dreams, and end up acting in a school play about the invention of paper towels.</p>	<p><i>Finally: A Wish Novel</i> by Wendy Mass (Book 2 of Willow Falls Series)</p> <p>After her twelfth birthday, Rory checks off a list of things she is finally allowed to do, but the unexpected consequences interfere with her involvement in the movie being shot at her school, while a weird prediction starts to make sense. (Students may substitute book 1 of this series if they have not already read it: <i>11 Birthdays</i> by Wendy Mass)</p>
<p><i>Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library</i> by Chris Grabenstein</p> <p>Kyle Keeley is the class clown and a huge fan of all games – board games, word games, and particularly video games. His hero, Luigi Lemoncello, the most notorious and creative game maker in the world, just so happens to be the genius behind the construction of the new town library. Lucky Kyle wins a coveted spot as one of twelve kids invited for an overnight sleepover in the library, hosted by Mr. Limoncello and riddled with games. Kyle and the other kids must solve every clue and figure out every puzzle to find the hidden escape route!</p>	<p><i>Soul Surfer</i> by Bethany Hamilton</p> <p>In this moving personal account of faith and fortitude, internationally ranked surfer Bethany Hamilton tells how she survived a shark attack that cost her arm – but not her spirit. This is the inspirational story of Bethany’s life as a young surfer, her recovery after the attack, the adjustments she’s made to her unique surfing style, her unprecedented bid for a top showing in the World Surfing Championships, and, most fundamentally, her belief in God. It is a story of girl power and spiritual grit that illustrates that the body is no more essential to surfing – perhaps even less so – than the soul.</p>
<p><i>New Kid</i> by Jerry Craft</p> <p>Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds – and not really fitting into either one.</p>	<p><i>Titanic: Voices from the Disaster</i> by Deborah Hopkinson</p> <p>Early morning on April 15, 1912, the RMS <i>Titanic</i>, on her glorious maiden voyage from Southampton to New York, sank after striking an iceberg in the North Atlantic. Recollections from <i>Titanic</i> survivors and witnesses to the disaster bring the horrors of that night to life. Now, the saga of the <i>Titanic</i> is told in a brand-new way as, together with historical photographs and illustrations, the stories of these survivors capture the fateful voyage from the majestic liner’s celebrated launch to her cataclysmic icy end.</p>
<p><i>Charlie Thorne and the Last Equation</i> by Stuart Gibbs</p> <p>The CIA forces twelve-year-old Charlotte Charlie Thorne, a rebellious genius, to use her code-breaking skills on an epic global chase to locate Einstein’s last equation before dangerous agents discover it and unlock the solution to harnessing energy.</p>	<p><i>The First Rule of Punk</i> by Celia A. Pérez</p> <p><i>The First Rule of Punk</i> seriously rocks (pun intended)! Twelve-year-old punk-rocker Malú has to navigate her identity at a new school and in a new home in this fun story with themes of friendship, finding your place, and learning to rock out like no one’s watching.</p>

Incoming Grade 7 Summer Reading Characterization, Conflict & Theme

Introduction: In the 7th grade, you will read three different genres of books; **Realistic Fiction**, **Historical Fiction**, and **Dystopian Fiction**. In ALL of these genres, the 7th grade will focus on three main literary devices, **characterization**, **conflict**, and **theme**.

Directions:

- Select **ONE** of the **THREE** book choices below to read as your summer reading book assignment.
- Be prepared to write an **ESSAY** during the first week of school on the book that you selected that focuses on **ONE** of the main literary devices we will be covering in LAL this year; **characterization**, **conflict**, or **theme**.
- You are strongly encouraged to take notes when you read; the notes may be used when completing the summer reading essay in September.

Title	Genre	Overview
<p><i>Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish</i> by Pablo Cartaya</p>	<p>Realistic Fiction</p>	<p>Marcus is the biggest kid in eighth grade. He's six feet tall, weighs 180 pounds, and has a mustache. Due to his mature appearance, he's often perceived as a bully. Marcus is trying to cope with many personal issues, including the fact that his dad left him and his family when he was a little boy. After an incident at school, his mom decides it's time for a trip to Puerto Rico to regroup and visit family. Marcus sees it as a perfect opportunity to find and confront his estranged father.</p>
<p><i>White Bird : A Wonder Story</i> by R. J. Palacio</p>	<p>Historical Fiction</p>	<p>Tells the story of Julian's Grandmère's childhood as she, a Jewish girl, was hidden by a family in a Nazi-occupied French village during World War II and how the boy she once shunned became her savior and best friend.</p>
<p><i>The Maze Runner</i> By James Dashner</p>	<p>Dystopian Fiction</p>	<p>When Thomas wakes up in the lift, the only thing he can remember is his name. He's welcomed to his new home, the Glade, by strangers—boys whose memories are also gone. Outside the towering stone walls that surround the Glade is a limitless, ever-changing maze. It's the only way out—and no one's ever made it through alive.</p>

Incoming Grade 8 Summer Reading Characters that Go Against the Status Quo

In the hit Disney Channel original movie, *High School Musical*, an entire song is dedicated to sticking to the status quo. As people express the things that make them different (and go against the stereotypical group they belong to), they are rebuffed and reminded to “not mess” with the flow of things and to keep things as they are. While this song and its movie are a lighthearted example of the struggles that people can face in going against the status quo, the truth is that throughout history, there are examples of those who have been unable to find the courage to break against the status quo to do what is right or to better their own situation.

In 8th grade, you will read various engaging texts such as George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, and William Shakespeare’s famous play *Romeo and Juliet*. In these stories, we will witness characters struggle with the decision to either stay the often miserable and difficult course and leave things the way they are or to find courage to stand up for what they believe in or what is right and strike out against the status quo.

To prepare you to explore what motivates some people to stay in terrible circumstances while others are willing to stand up for themselves and make change, we are asking you to **read a book this summer that features a character who goes against the status quo in some way**. The book should be age appropriate and can be any genre you like.

In September, you will be asked to write about how the character went against the status quo. As you read, think about what prompted or motivated them to go against it and if and how anything changed because of their actions. If you would like to take notes as you read, you will be able to use them in September when writing.

In choosing a book, you may want to consider the following genres or motifs that often feature a character going against the status quo or involved in a conflict against society:

historical fiction books
dystopian novels
biographies/autobiographies/personal memoirs
realistic fiction