

MANDATORY Mount Olive Middle School 8th Grade Pre-Honors ELA Summer Reading 2024

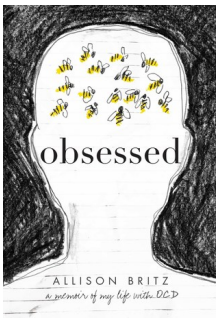
Summaries acquired from GoodReads.com

Directions:

1. Choose one memoir from the list below or pick one of your own choosing.
2. As you are reading, consider the **traits of the narrator/memoir writer**. Notice how the author crafts his or her story and the structure of the piece.
3. Be prepared to discuss the elements of writing the author uses to craft a memoir.
4. You will use your Summer Reading memoir as well as other materials from class to write your own memoir in September.

**** Please get your parents/ guardians' approval before choosing your memoir. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Ms. Margosiak at lea.margosiak@motsd.org. ****

All of these titles are available at the Mount Olive Public Library. You may check out a hard copy or a digital copy using the [Libby App](#). Help with the Libby App is available [here](#).

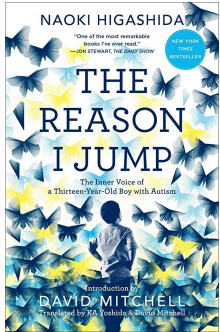


Obsessed: A Memoir of my Life with OCD by Allison Britz (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

A brave teen recounts her debilitating struggle with obsessive-compulsive disorder—and brings readers through every painful step as she finds her way to the other side—in this powerful and inspiring memoir.

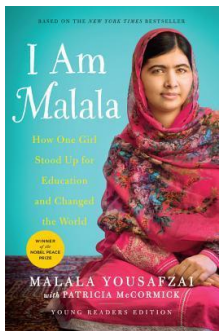
Until sophomore year of high school, fifteen-year-old Allison Britz lived a comfortable life in an idyllic town. She was a dedicated student with tons of extracurricular activities, friends, and loving parents at home. But after awakening from a vivid nightmare in which she was diagnosed with brain cancer, she was convinced the dream had been a warning. Allison believed that she must do something to stop the cancer in her dream from becoming a reality. It started with avoiding sidewalk cracks and quickly grew to counting steps as loudly as possible. Over the following weeks, her brain listed more dangers and fixes. She had to avoid hair dryers, calculators, cell phones, computers, anything green, bananas, oatmeal, and most of her own clothing. Unable to act “normal,” the once-popular Allison became an outcast. Her parents questioned her behavior, leading to explosive fights. When

notebook paper, pencils, and most schoolbooks were declared dangerous to her health, her GPA imploded, along with her plans for the future. Finally, she allowed herself to ask for help and was diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder. This brave memoir tracks Allison's descent and ultimately hopeful climb out of the depths.



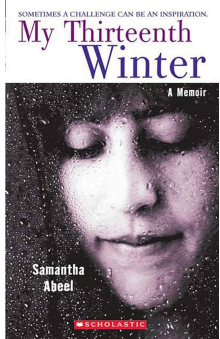
The Reason I Jump by Naoki Higashida (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

Written by Naoki Higashida, a very smart, very self-aware, and very charming thirteen-year-old boy with autism, it is a one-of-a-kind memoir that demonstrates how an autistic mind thinks, feels, perceives, and responds in ways few of us can imagine. Parents and family members who never thought they could get inside the head of their autistic loved one, at last, have a way to break through to the curious, subtle, and complex life within.



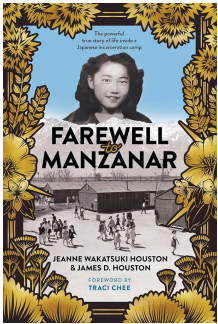
I Am Malala by Patricia McCormick & Malala Yousafzai (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.



My Thirteenth Winter by Samantha Abeel (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

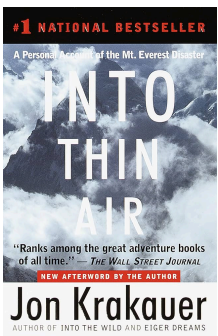
In this beautiful and chilling memoir, twenty-five-year-old Samantha Abeel describes her struggles with a math-related learning disability, and how it forced her to find inner strength and courage. Samantha Abeel couldn't tell time, remember her locker combination, or count out change at a checkout counter -- and she was in seventh grade. For a straight-A student like Samantha, problems like these made no sense. She dreaded school, and began having anxiety attacks. In her thirteenth winter, she found the courage to confront her problems -- and was diagnosed with a learning disability. Slowly, Samantha's life began to change again. She discovered that she was stronger than she'd ever thought possible -- and that sometimes, when things look bleakest, hope is closer than you think.



Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

Jeanne Wakatsuki was seven years old in 1942 when her family was uprooted from their home and sent to live at Manzanar internment camp—with 10,000 other Japanese Americans. Along with searchlight towers and armed guards, Manzanar ludicrously featured cheerleaders, Boy Scouts, sock hops, baton twirling lessons and a dance band called the Jive Bombers who would play any popular song except the nation's #1 hit: "Don't Fence Me In."

Farewell to Manzanar is the true story of one spirited Japanese-American family's attempt to survive the indignities of forced detention—and of a native-born American child who discovered what it was like to grow up behind barbed wire in the United States.

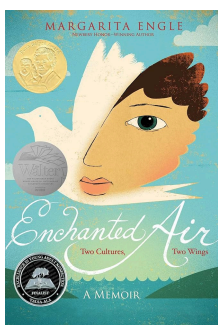


Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

When Jon Krakauer reached the summit of Mt. Everest in the early afternoon of May 10, 1996, he hadn't slept in fifty-seven hours and was reeling from the brain-altering effects of oxygen depletion. As he turned to begin his long, dangerous descent from 29,028 feet, twenty other climbers were still pushing doggedly toward the top. No one had noticed that the sky had begun to fill with clouds. Six hours later and 3,000 feet lower, in 70-knot winds and blinding snow, Krakauer collapsed in his tent, freezing, hallucinating from exhaustion and hypoxia, but safe. The following morning, he learned that six of his fellow climbers hadn't made it back to their camp and were desperately struggling for their lives. When the storm finally passed, five of them would be dead, and the sixth so horribly frostbitten that his right hand would have to be amputated.

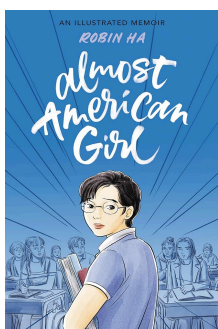
Into Thin Air is the definitive account of the deadliest season in the history of Everest by the acclaimed journalist and author of the bestseller Into the Wild. On assignment for Outside Magazine to report on the growing commercialization of the mountain, Krakauer, an accomplished climber, went to the Himalayas as a client of Rob Hall, the most respected high-altitude guide in the world. A rangy, thirty-five-year-old New Zealander, Hall had summited Everest four times between 1990 and 1995 and had led thirty-nine climbers to the top. Ascending the mountain in close proximity to Hall's team was a guided expedition led by Scott Fischer, a forty-year-old American with legendary strength and drive who had climbed the peak without supplemental oxygen in 1994. But neither Hall nor Fischer survived the rogue storm that struck in May 1996.

Krakauer examines what it is about Everest that has compelled so many people -- including himself -- to throw caution to the wind, ignore the concerns of loved ones, and willingly subject themselves to such risk, hardship, and expense. Written with emotional clarity and supported by his unimpeachable reporting, Krakauer's eyewitness account of what happened on the roof of the world is a singular achievement.



Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings by Margarita Engle (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)
Margarita is a girl from two worlds. Her heart lies in Cuba, her mother's tropical island country, a place so lush with vibrant life that it seems like a fairy tale kingdom. But most of the time she lives in Los Angeles, lonely in the noisy city and dreaming of the summers when she can take a plane through the enchanted air to her beloved island. Words and images are her constant companions, friendly and comforting when the children at school are not.

Then a revolution breaks out in Cuba. Margarita fears for her far-away family. When the hostility between Cuba and the United States erupts at the Bay of Pigs Invasion, Margarita's worlds collide in the worst way possible. How can the two countries she loves hate each other so much? And will she ever get to visit her beautiful island again?

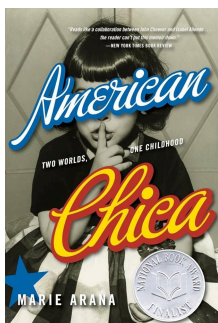


Almost American Girl Graphic Memoir by Robin Ha (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

A teen graphic novel memoir about a Korean-born, non-English-speaking girl who is abruptly transplanted from Seoul to Huntsville, Alabama, and struggles with extreme culture shock and isolation, until she discovers her passion for comic arts.

For as long as she can remember, it's been Robin and her mom against the world. Growing up in the 1990s as the only child of a single mother in Seoul, Korea, wasn't always easy, but it has bonded them fiercely together. So when a vacation to visit friends in Huntsville, Alabama, unexpectedly becomes a permanent relocation—following her mother's announcement that she's getting married—Robin is devastated. Overnight, her life changes. She is dropped into a new school where she doesn't understand the language and struggles to keep up. She is completely cut off from her friends at home and has no access to her beloved comics. At home, she doesn't fit in with her new stepfamily. And worst of all, she is furious with the one person she is closest to—her mother.

Then one day Robin's mother enrolls her in a local comic drawing class, which opens the window to a future Robin could never have imagined.



American Chica Two Worlds One Childhood by Maria Arana (available at the Mount Olive Public Library)

In her father's Peruvian family, Marie Arana was taught to be a proper lady, yet in her mother's American family she learned to shoot a gun, break a horse, and snap a chicken's neck for dinner. Arana shuttled easily between these deeply separate cultures for years. But only when she immigrated with her family to the United States did she come to understand that she was a hybrid American whose cultural identity was split in half. Coming to terms with this split is at the heart of this graceful, beautifully realized portrait of a child who "was a north-south collision, a New World fusion. An American Chica."

Here are two vastly different Peru—earthquake-prone, charged with ghosts of history and mythology—and the sprawling prairie lands of Wyoming. In these rich terrains resides a colorful cast of family members who bring Arana's historia to life...her proud grandfather who one day simply stopped coming down the stairs; her dazzling

	grandmother, “clicking through the house as if she were making her way onstage.” But most important are Arana’s he a brilliant engineer, she a gifted musician. For more than half a century these two passionate, strong-willed people struggled to overcome the bicultural tensions in their marriage and, finally, to prevail.
--	---