

8th Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Riverdale – English Language Arts

Required Novel: *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson

Assignment Due Date

Students must finish reading *Chains* by the **first week of school**. **Standard ELA students will take a comprehension test on the novel during the second week of school. A summer writing assignment will be provided for enriched ELA students.**

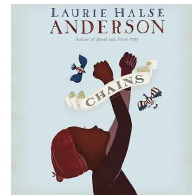
About the Book

Chains is the first book in the *Seeds of America* trilogy and tells the compelling story of Isabel, a young enslaved girl living in New York City at the start of the American Revolution. When Isabel and her sister are sold to a cruel Loyalist family, she begins to search for freedom and justice, navigating complex loyalties and moral choices during one of the most turbulent times in American history. This powerful narrative explores themes of freedom, resilience, identity, and courage.

Where to Get the Book

You can find *Chains* at your local library or purchase it online:

 [Buy on Amazon](#)



Tips for Reading Success

To help students engage with the book meaningfully, we recommend the following approach:

- **Divide the reading** into manageable sections (e.g., one chapter per day) to avoid rushing through it.
- **Take notes** on key characters, events, and themes. Pay special attention to Isabel's internal struggles and how she changes over the course of the novel.
- **Ask questions** while reading. For example:
 - What does freedom mean to Isabel?
 - How do different characters demonstrate loyalty or betrayal?
 - What historical events are referenced, and how do they affect Isabel's life?
- **Mark important passages** or keep a reading journal to reflect on significant moments or quotes.

Goal

This summer reading assignment helps students build vocabulary, improve reading comprehension, and prepare for discussions and writing in the fall. We believe *Chains* will provide students with both an engaging story and a rich context for exploring early American history and the complexities of human rights.

Thank you for encouraging your child to read this summer!

If you have questions, feel free to contact Mrs. Moorhead or Mrs. Eckenhoff.
heather.moorhead@gmsdk12.org / dana.eckenhoff@gmsdk12.org

8th Grade English Teachers