

8th Grade



List

Choose one of the following books. While reading, make annotations (notes) on the plot elements (main character, minor character, setting, problem, important events, etc.) of each chapter and summarize the chapter. You will be able to use your notes on your summer reading assessment. **Please note that students taking Honors ELA must read the selection at the bottom of the list.**



Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson

Jacqueline Woodson, one of today's finest writers, tells the moving story of her childhood in mesmerizing verse. Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.

The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen

"Hannah Stern, an American-born Jewish adolescent, is uninterested in the culture, faith and customs of her relatives; however, Hannah begins to reevaluate her heritage when she has a supernatural experience that transports her back to a Nazi death camp in 1941. There, she meets a young girl named Rivkah, a fellow captive in the camp. As Rivkah and Hannah struggle to survive in the face of daily atrocities, they form an unbreakable bond."

Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

"Kek comes from Africa. In America he sees snow for the first time, and feels its sting. He's never walked on ice, and he falls. He wonders if the people in this new place will be like the winter – cold and unkind. In Africa, Kek lived with his mother, father, and brother. But only he and his mother have survived, and now she's missing. Kek is on his own. Slowly, he makes friends: a girl who is in foster care; an old woman who owns a rundown farm, and a cow whose name means 'family' in Kek's native language. As Kek awaits word of his mother's fate, he weathers the tough *Minnesota winter by finding warmth in his new friendships, strength in his memories, and belief in his new country.*" -Google Books

(Honors requirement- see other side)

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List

Honors ELA Classes Students taking the Honors ELA class must read the book described below. This book will be the focus of our 1st Quarter studies.

THE BOOK THIEF by Markus Zusak

“It is 1939 in Nazi Germany. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who 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.”