



Summer Reading and Writing Assignments

Dear 8th graders,

This summer, your required reading is Ruta Supetys's novel *Salt to the Sea*, a WWII story told by several narrators and therefore from several points of view. Incoming 8th graders have always enjoyed this novel, and we hope you do, too. This book will be your first text in English class next year, so make sure to bring it to class in August. In addition, you are expected to read one additional novel from the list below and to do some writing of your own.

Required: *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Supetys

Choice: Choose at least one from this list:

- *Great Expectations* (or any novel) by Charles Dickens
- *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown (young readers' edition available)
- *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
- *Dune* - Frank Herbert
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* - Betty Smith
- *Slaughterhouse Five* - Kurt Vonnegut
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon
- *Foster* - Claire Keegan
- *And Then There Were None* - Agatha Christie

Over the summer, keep a handwritten journal with at least eight entries. You may use the prompts below or create your own. Additionally, you can fictionalize your entries if you like—pretend to be someone else and write their voice. Lastly, you could write in the form of poetry, song lyrics or drama as well. Be honest, be descriptive, be creative.

1. Write about a meaningful moment from your summer. What happened, and why does it matter?
2. Write about a time you said or did something you regret. What happened? What did you learn from this experience?
3. Write about a moment when you felt proud of yourself. What happened? What led to that feeling?
4. Write about a time when something someone said deeply affected you. What was said? How did you respond?
5. Respond to something you read this summer. What ideas stood out to you? What questions did it raise?
6. If you could live in any book, which would you choose, and why? What would your experience be like?
7. Rewrite or extend a scene from a book you enjoyed. What would you change, and why?
8. Write a short story inspired by a dream, memory, or “what if” scenario.
9. Imagine you discover a time machine. Where do you go, and why? What happens?
10. Write a short story inspired by a personal pet peeve or frustration.
11. Choose a photograph (real or imagined) and write the story behind it.
12. Conduct a short interview with someone in your life. What did you learn about this person? What surprised you?
13. Write about a day in your life, but focus on specific details and reflection, not just summary.
14. Free choice: write about any topic that matters to you!

Wishing you a healthy and happy summer and looking forward to seeing you in the new school year,

Daniel Bush
English Department Chair