

4th Grade Summer Reading List

Rising 4th Graders:

Students will have two required reading selections this summer. These assignments will be due the first week of school. Students need to have a physical copy of the book *The Boy at the Back of the Class* that they can bring to school for work we will be doing in class.

Required Reading:

[Mary and the Trail of Tears: A Cherokee Removal Survival Story](#) (historical fiction)

by Andrea L. Rogers

Twelve-year-old Mary and her Cherokee family are forced out of their home in Georgia by U.S. soldiers in May 1838. From the beginning of the forced move, Mary and her family are separated from her father. Facing horrors such as internment, violence, disease, and harsh weather, Mary perseveres and helps keep her family and friends together until they can reach the new Cherokee nation in Indian Territory. Featuring nonfiction support material, a glossary, and reader response questions, this Girls Survive story explores the tragedy of forced removals following the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

[The Boy at the Back of the Class](#) (realistic fiction)

by Onjali Q. Rauf

There used to be an empty chair at the back of Mrs. Khan's classroom, but on the third Tuesday of the school year a new kid fills it: nine-year-old Ahmet, a Syrian refugee. The whole class is curious about this new boy--he doesn't seem to smile, and he doesn't talk much. But after learning that Ahmet fled a Very Real War and was separated from his family along the way, a determined group of his classmates bands together to concoct the Greatest Idea in the World--a magnificent plan to reunite Ahmet with his loved ones. This accessible, kid-friendly story about the refugee crisis highlights the community-changing potential of standing as an ally and reminds readers that everyone deserves a place to call home.

Required Writing About the Literature:

Mary and The Trail of Tears:

Answer the following reading comprehension questions on a separate Google document.

1. Why were the Cherokee forced to move from Georgia?
2. Why do you think the removal of Cherokees is called The Trail of Tears? Include an example from the book to support your answer.
3. Choose a character from the book who changes. What is the character like at the end of the book versus the beginning? Include an example from the book to support your answer.
4. Read "A Note From The Author" pages 104 - 109. What reasons does the author give to help us understand why the new territory would not easily be considered "home" for the Cherokee Nation in 1838.
5. What does "home" mean to you?

The Boy at the Back of the Class:

Write a summary of your reading in paragraph form.

Places in Alabama History (optional activity): _

In 4th Grade, we discuss many historical places around our state. Students learn about [Alabama's historical markers](#) that acknowledge significant places in Alabama. (You may have noticed the new historical marker at the Highlands' main entrance.) Students are eager to share new markers they discover. Birmingham is over 150 years old and there is a lot of history to experience here. Here is a suggested list of places that relate to topics we will be discussing this year:

- Birmingham Civil Rights Institute
- 16th Street Baptist Church
- Kelly Ingram Park
- Southern Museum of Flight
- Vulcan Park and Museum
- Heaviest Corner in the World
- Alabama Theater
- Sloss Furnace
- Alabama Sports Hall of Fame

Summer is a great time to visit some of the historical landmarks, sites, and museums around Birmingham. I would love to hear about any trips your family may have taken this summer around our town or state!