

# English 8

## Summer Reading Assignment 2026

Ms. Vollmar

### Welcome to 8th Grade English Language Arts!

Over the summer, you will need to read and annotate one book (please read more if you can).

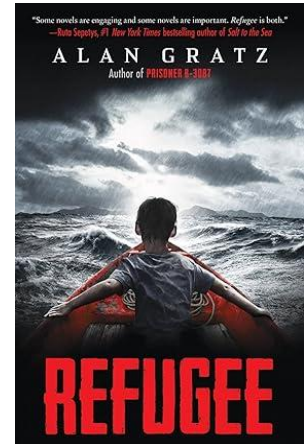
1. Read the required book, [Refugee](#) by Alan Gratz, over the summer. If you can't buy it, you can borrow it from the library. If you need help purchasing the novel, please reach out to me! [svollmar@theaskacademy.org](mailto:svollmar@theaskacademy.org)

2. **Annotate the Book:**

As you read, annotate the book to show your active reading. Use sticky notes (you can also write directly in the book, or on a piece of paper if you prefer). Make annotations to reflect your thinking as you read. Using an audiobook is also allowed ([click here for audiobook](#)), but make sure to still annotate.

Use the strategies below (or your own) to annotate:

- Make **connections** (to your life, what you know, or other texts)
- Ask **questions** (why and how questions help you get to deeper meanings)
- **Summarize** (Who, where, when, the conflict, etc.)
- **Visualize** (draw what you "see" as you read-doodle!)
- Make **predictions** (What do you think will happen next?)



3. **Write:**

Write a **handwritten** response to **ONE** of the following prompts (questions). **PICK ONE**

Your response should be **3-5 paragraphs long and include 3 pieces of evidence from the book**. Please **skip lines**. If you have existing reading or writing accommodations, please reach out to me to support you by May 22nd.

- a. **Resilience:** Compare and contrast the ways in which Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud demonstrate resilience in their respective journeys. How do their unique circumstances shape their ability to cope with adversity?
- b. **Family:** Analyze the role of family in "Refugee." How do the relationships between family members influence the characters' decisions and motivations throughout the narrative?
- c. **Hope:** Discuss the theme of hope in "Refugee." How do the characters maintain hope in the face of overwhelming challenges, and what does this reveal about the human spirit?
- d. **Refugee:** Explore the significance of the title "Refugee." How does the term reflect the experiences of the characters? In what ways does the novel challenge or reinforce common perceptions of refugees?
- e. **Flashbacks:** Examine the use of flashbacks in "Refugee." How do these narrative techniques enhance the readers' understanding of the characters' pasts and the reasons for their current situations?

## First Day of School:

It is *required* that you bring the book on the first day of school with evidence of your active reading (your completed annotations). You will be getting two grades for your summer reading in the first week. We are using this book in the first weeks of school, so it is important that you have read the book.

- **Test:** You will take a short test on [Refugee](#). If you read, you will do great!
- **Annotations:** To get a proficient or higher, you need to annotate every other page or more using 3+ different types of annotations that are listed above.
- **Written Response:** To get proficient or higher, you need to write 4+ paragraphs with 3+ pieces of evidence from the book that fully answer the ONE prompt you picked above.

**This must be done by the 1st day of school! If you do not read by the 1st day, then you will have to read it in class and have zeros for the annotations & writing and test until they are completed.**

### *Rubric for Annotations:*

Target Skill	4 Extending	3 Proficient	2 Nearing	1 Beginning	0 Incomplete
Completion of Reading	I have annotated the <b>whole</b> required text.	I have annotated <b>80-90%</b> of the required text.	I have annotated <b>70%</b> of the required text.	I have annotated <b>50%</b> of the required text.	I have annotated less than <b>50%</b> of the required text..
Number of Annotations	I show evidence of close reading by writing an annotation <b>1 time per page.</b>	I show evidence of close reading by writing <b>3 times per chapter.</b>	I show evidence of close reading by writing <b>2 times per chapter.</b>	I show <b>some</b> evidence of close reading by writing annotations <b>once per chapter.</b>	Little to no evidence of annotations. <b>Annotations are less than once a chapter.</b>
Variety of Annotations	I use <b>4+ different</b> types of annotations.	I use <b>3 different</b> types of annotations.	I use <b>2 different</b> types of annotations.	I use <b>1 type</b> of annotation.	I do not annotate or <b>only use 1 type</b> of annotation.

### *Rubric for Writing*

Proficiency	4 Extending	3 Proficient	2 Nearing	1 Beginning	0 Incomplete
Prompt Response	<b>Fully answers</b> the prompt.		Does <b>not fully answer</b> the prompt.		Does <b>NOT</b> write about any prompt.
Textual Evidence	<b>4 quotes</b> that are incorporated into the writing and are explained	<b>3 quotes</b> that are incorporated into the writing and are explained	<b>1-2 quotes</b> and/or the quotes are not incorporated into the writing	No textual evidence or quotes, <b>but does reference the text</b> and what happens.	Does <b>NOT</b> write about the book.
Organization	<b>5 paragraphs</b> total, with an <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction with a hook, <input type="checkbox"/> <b>3 body</b> paragraphs with transitions, <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conclusion</b> that explains <b>why</b> the ideas matter.	<b>4 paragraphs</b> total, with an <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction, <input type="checkbox"/> 2 body paragraphs, <input type="checkbox"/> conclusion.	<b>3 paragraphs</b> total, with an: <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction, <input type="checkbox"/> 1 body paragraph, <input type="checkbox"/> conclusion.	<b>1-2 paragraphs</b> total, with 1-2 missing elements: <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction, <input type="checkbox"/> body paragraph, <input type="checkbox"/> conclusion.	Does <b>NOT</b> write a full paragraph.