Summer Reading List for Grade 6 – 8 2026 – 2027

College Prep (CP) English, Advanced English, and Pre-AP English I Courses

Please keep track of the title and author of the book(s) you have read (see attached). Within the first two weeks of your return to school, you will be given an assignment to complete related to your book choice(s). Make sure to take notes on this book using your graphic organizer. This will be due **on the first day of class.**

Grade 6

English 6 - Choose ONE of the following titles and complete one graphic organizer.

Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Chaldenko (historical fiction)

First in a series of three - Murderers, mob bosses, and convicts . . . these guys are not your average neighbors. Unless you live in Alcatraz. It's 1935 and 12-year-old Moose Flanagan and his family have just moved to the infamous island that's home to criminals like notorious escapee Roy Gardner, Machine Gun Kelly, and of course, Al Capone. Now Moose must try to fit in at his new school, avoid getting caught up in one of the warden's daughter's countless plots, and keep an eye on his sister Natalie, who's not like other kids. All Moose wants to do is protect Natalie, live up to his parents' expectations, and stay out of trouble. But on Alcatraz, trouble is never very far away. [growing up, autism, intense family pressure/parentification, and mention of violence]

Confetti Girl by Diana Lopez (realistic fiction)

Apolonia "Lina" Flores is a sock enthusiast, a volleyball player, a science lover, and a girl who's just looking for answers. Even though her house is crammed full of books (her dad's a bibliophile), she's having trouble figuring out some very big questions, like why her dad seems to care about books more than her, why her best friend's divorced mom is obsessed with making cascarones (hollowed eggshells filled with colorful confetti), and, most of all, why her mom died last year. Like colors in cascarones, Lina's life is a rainbow of people, interests, and unexpected changes. [identify, growing up, death, divorce]

Wonder by R.J. Palacio (realistic fiction)

August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. Beginning from Auggie's point of view and expanding to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others, the perspectives converge to form a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance. In a world where bullying among young people is an epidemic, this is a refreshing new narrative full of heart and hope. [ableism, the death of an animal, betrayal by friends, bullying]

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli (realistic fiction)

From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. First, they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal. [identity, conformity, popularity, social ostracization, bullying]

Grade 7

English 7 - Choose ONE of the following titles and complete one graphic organizer.
Honors English 7 - Choose TWO of the following titles and complete a graphic organizer for EACH book.

Al Capone Shines My Shoes by Gennifer Chaldenko (historical fiction)

Second in a series of three - If you read Al Capone Does my Shirts you may want to read the second in the series What do you do when your neighbors are a bunch of hit men, con men, and mad dog murderers? Well, if you're Moose Flanagan, you ask the most notorious convict of them all, Al Capone, for help. But when that convict comes through for you and then asks you for a favor in return and suddenly it's a whole different ball game. Picking up where the Newbery Honor winning Al Capone Does My Shirts left off, this lively second romp featuring Moose, his friends, and some of Alcatraz's "finest" is just as satisfying as the first. [growing up, autism, intense family pressure/parentification, and mention of violence]

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The Giver by Lois Lowry (science fiction)

In the seemingly perfect community of "The Giver," twelve-year-old Jonas's life is disrupted when he is selected as the Receiver of Memory. He learns the truth about his world's fragile perfection and the importance of human experiences like pain, love, and choice, which are absent from his community. [euthanasia, death, mild violence, and mild coarse language]

The Batboy by Mike Lupica (realistic fiction)

Brian is living every baseball kid's dream: he is a batboy for his hometown Major League team. Brian believes that it's the perfect thing to bring him and his big-leaguer dad closer together. And if that weren't enough, this is the season that Hank Bishop, Brian's baseball hero, returns to the Tigers for the comeback of a lifetime. The summer couldn't get much better! Until Hank Bishop starts to show his true colors, and Brian learns that sometimes life throws you a curveball. [substance Use/drugs in sports, interpersonal conflict]

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin (mystery)

This highly inventive mystery involves sixteen people who are invited to the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. They could become millionaires-it all depends on how they play the tricky and dangerous Westing game, a game involving blizzards, burglaries, and bombings! Ellen Raskin has created a remarkable cast of characters in a puzzle-knotted, word-twisting plot filled with humor, intrigue, and suspense. [themes of death, murder, and intense mystery with moderate violence]

Grade 8

English 8 - Choose ONE of the following titles and complete one graphic organizer.
Pre-AP English 1 - Choose TWO of the following titles and complete a graphic organizer for EACH book.

The City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau (science fiction)

This is book one in a series by Jeanne DuPrau. The city of Ember was built as the last refuge for humanity. Two hundred years later, the great lamps that light the city are beginning to dim. When Lina finds part of an ancient message, she's sure it holds a secret that will save the city. Now, she and her friend Doon must race to figure out the clues to keep the lights on. If they succeed, they will have to convince everyone to follow them into danger. But if they fail? The lights will burn out and the darkness will close in forever. [death of a parental figure]

Akata Witch by Nnedi Okorafor (magical realism)

Sunny has always been different - she's Black, but she's also albino. But while living in Nigeria she meets a new group of friends who show her the world of the Leopard People and help her to develop powers she didn't know she had. Now Sunny and her friends must use their newfound skills to fight a villain more powerful than they could imagine. [prejudice against women, death]

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen (adventure/fiction)

Thirteen-year-old Brian Robeson, haunted by his secret knowledge of his mother's infidelity, is traveling by single-engine plane to visit his father for the first time since the divorce. When the plane crashes, killing the pilot, the sole survivor is Brian. He is alone in the Canadian wilderness with nothing but his clothing, a tattered windbreaker, and the hatchet his mother had given him as a present. At first consumed by despair and self-pity, Brian slowly learns survival skills—how to make a shelter for himself, how to hunt and fish and forage for food, how to make a fire—and even finds the courage to start over from scratch when a tornado ravages his campsite. When Brian is finally rescued after fifty-four days in the wild, he emerges from his ordeal with new patience and maturity, and a greater understanding of himself and his parents. [mention of divorce, injury]

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith (realistic fiction)

The beloved American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century, Betty Smith's A Tree Grows in Brooklyn is a poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter, and heartache, crowded with life and people and incidents. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than sixty years. By turns overwhelming, sublime, heartbreaking, and uplifting, the daily experiences of the unforgettable Nolans are raw with honesty and tenderly threaded with family connectedness -- in a work of literary art that brilliantly captures a unique time and place as well as incredibly rich moments of universal experience. [alcoholism, addiction]

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain (adventure/fiction)

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn follows Huckleberry Finn as he flees from his abusive father and runs away with the runaway slave Jim down the Mississippi River on a raft. Their journey is filled with various adventures, encounters, and moral dilemmas as they navigate the river and confront the hypocrisy and racism of antebellum society. [racism, slavery, violence, some mature themes and language]

John Paul II CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Summer Reading List for Grade 6 – 8 2026 – 2027

College Prep (CP) English, Advanced English, and Pre-AP English I Courses

Summer Reading Log

Name: _____

Directions – As you read, summarize, and discuss key features in the book using the graphic organizer. This may be typed or neatly handwritten and turned in the first week of school. Complete chapter notes for each book read. **Each chapter** must have a summary and writing prompt; please don't combine chapters. Feel free to add additional boxes or enlarge the boxes. This will be turned in via *Google Classroom* within the first few days of school.

Chapter	Chapter Summary	Choose ONE – ● Discuss ONE trait ONE of the characters has in this chapter. ● Discuss how ONE of the characters changes from the beginning to the end of the chapter. ● Discuss how the setting in this chapter contributes to the plot. ● Discuss a literary device used in this chapter.

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