



Summer Reading- Grade 8
Stoneham Middle School



Welcome to eighth grade! We hope you have a wonderful vacation and we look forward to meeting you in the fall. Students will be required to read a minimum of **two** books during the summer months. Please read the following requirements carefully.

Required Reading #1: In order to integrate summer reading with our English curriculum, we have chosen novels by writers whose themes revolve around the universal coming-of-age experienced by young adults. **You are required to read at least one book from the following list.**

Hope Was Here by Joan Bauer- Ever since her mother left, Hope has, with her comfort-food-cooking aunt Addie, been serving up the best in diner food from Pensacola to New York City. Moving has been tough, so it comes as a surprise to 16-year-old Hope that rural Wisconsin, where she and her aunt have now settled, offers more excitement, friendship, and even romance (for both Hope and Addie) than the big city.

Tangerine by Edward Bloor- Legally blind, Paul Fisher has lived most of his life in the shadow of his football star brother. But things change when they move to Tangerine County, where bizarre natural disasters are everyday occurrences, and Paul wins an unlikely new crew of friends on the soccer field. In a climactic ending, Paul finally confronts his parents with the truth about the brother he fears, and readers will cheer for this bright, funny, decent kid.

Life As We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer- A meteor is going to hit the moon, and 16-year-old Miranda, like the rest of her family and neighbors in rural Pennsylvania, intends to watch it from the comfort of a lawn chair in her yard. But the event is not the benign impact predicted. The moon is knocked closer to Earth, setting off a chain of horrific occurrences: tsunamis, earthquakes, and, later, volcanic eruptions that disrupt life across the planet. Written in the form of Miranda's diary, this disquieting and involving story depicts one family's struggle to survive in a world where food, warmth, and well-being disappear in the blink of an eye.

Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse- In a series of poems, 15-year-old Billie Joe relates the hardships of living on her family wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Depression.

Tears of a Tiger by Sharon Draper- A young African-American boy has difficulty coming to terms with the death of a friend who died in a car accident as a result of drinking and driving.

The Rules of Survival by Nancy Werlin- Seventeen-year-old Matt writes an extended letter to his youngest sister, Emmy, recalling their childhood with Nikki, their sadistic and mentally disturbed mother. When Nikki, just out of jail, kidnaps Emmy, Matt finds out exactly how far he will go to ensure his sister's safety.

Rash by Pete Hautman- The story takes place on a futuristic gridiron in the United Safer States of America, where citizens must wear helmets when walking and get a prescription for aspirin. After punching someone, Bo is sent to a jail/pizza factory and is tapped to join the prison's illegal football team. Loopyly inventive touches combine with solid character development for a thoroughly enjoyable yarn.

When Zachary Beaver Came To Town by Kimberly Willis Holt- A humdrum Texas summer is transformed when Toby and Cal befriend a surly sideshow star, arguably "the fattest boy in the world." Holt deftly fleshes out her characters and expands their worldview beyond the borders of their small town.

A Mango-Shaped Space by Wendy Mass- Afraid that she is crazy, thirteen-year-old Mia, who sees a special color with every letter, number, and sound, keeps this a secret until she becomes overwhelmed by school, changing relationships, and the death of her beloved cat, Mango.

Uglies by Scott Westerfeld- Tally is faced with a difficult choice when her new friend Shay decides to risk life on the outside rather than submit to the forced operation that turns sixteen year old girls into gorgeous beauties, and realizes that there is a whole new side to the pretty world that she doesn't like.

Essay Preparation Directions: Make sure you read all directions before starting. You are required to keep 4x6 inch note cards for EACH of the following topics listed below. **Be sure to include page numbers citing where you obtained your information.**

Card #

1. Character: Describe all major (and some minor) characters. For example, you may want to include the characters' personality, appearance, how others treat them and how they treat others.
2. Conflicts: Explain the obstacles/problems facing the main character (i.e. person vs. person, person vs. nature, person vs. themselves, person vs. animal)
3. Plot: Briefly summarize the *exposition* (introduction), *rising action*, *climax*, *falling action*, and *resolution*.
4. Setting: Include a vivid description of the main setting; remember to use descriptive adjectives.
5. Theme: What lesson/s does the author want the reader to come to understand?

All information should be bulleted or in note format, not necessarily in complete sentences.

Make sure to note all page numbers.

You are to bring these note cards with you on the first day of school. These materials will be used to produce a formal essay during the first few days of school.

Required Reading #2: The second reading is a book of your choice by one of the authors listed below. Please prepare a typed, double-spaced book review consisting of two paragraphs of 9-12 sentences each.

Paragraph 1- Summarize the major events that occur in the book, without giving away the ending. Included should be a description of the setting, characters, and major conflict (9-12 sentences).

Paragraph 2- Would you recommend this book to other readers. Explain why or why not. Were the characters believable? Did the plot hold your attention? Did the book come to a satisfying conclusion? Add any additional information that will help fellow readers decide if they should try this title (9-12 sentences).

Issac Asimov
Mike Lupica
Madeline L'Engle
Scott O'Dell
Dan Gutman
Chris Crutcher
Sharon Creech
Meg Cabot

Ray Bradbury
S.E. Hinton
Phillip Pullman
Richard Peck
Joan Bauer
Jerry Spinelli
Sharon Draper
Anthony Horowitz

Susan Cooper
M.E. Kerr
Walter Dean Myers
Cynthia Voight
Robin McKinley
Gary Soto
Robert Cormier
Tamora Pierce