

Eighth Grade Summer Reading

Part One

Write three journal entries: one in June, one in July, and one in August. You may write them at the end of your 7th grade journal (and, ideally, continue to use the same journal for 8th grade) or at the beginning of your 8th grade journal, but head them with the names of the months rather than numbering them. You could write about how you are spending your summer, your thoughts about current events or summer movies or books you are reading or life in general, or anything else.

Part Two

Read two of the following. This year they **are not listed in order of difficulty** but roughly chronologically by setting (from the Civil War *Across Five Aprils* to the Vietnam-era *Wednesday Wars*). Try to look at multiple options to find books you will enjoy reading.

<i>Across Five Aprils</i>	Irene Hunt
<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>	Harriet Beecher Stowe
<i>The Killer Angels</i>	Michael Shaara (unless you read it last summer)
<i>Cold Sassy Tree</i>	Olive Ann Burns
<i>My Antonia</i>	Willa Cather
<i>Letters of a Woman Homesteader</i>	Elinore Pruitt Stewart
<i>Hondo</i>	Louis L'Amour
<i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>	Betty Smith (unless you read it last summer)
<i>The Jungle</i>	Upton Sinclair
<i>The Age of Innocence</i>	Edith Wharton
<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>	Ernest Hemingway
<i>For Whom the Bell Tolls</i>	Ernest Hemingway
<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	John Steinbeck
<i>The Chosen</i>	Chaim Potok
<i>Wolf Hollow</i>	Lauren Wolk
<i>The Wednesday Wars</i>	Gary D. Schmidt

Your book reports will have two sections. In the first section, describe anything about the real history of the book's setting that can be observed from the book (you may write about major events going on in America or the world at the time, but if none are mentioned in the book, just write about how people dressed, interacted, entertained themselves, ate, worked, or anything else you notice). **Do not do outside research. You need observations from the book about its time and place, even if they are minor and don't seem to be very important historically.** In the second, explain why you liked or did not like the book. Perhaps you liked some things and did not like others; if so, explain what you liked and what you didn't and why. In any case, **be specific and support your opinions** with examples from the book. Avoid generalizations such as saying the book was interesting or boring. If you think it was interesting, tell me what interested you; if you think it was boring, tell me what bored you.

Head your report with your name, the name of the book, and the author's name. **Do not summarize the plot.** Each report should be 200-500 words and be carefully written and proofread.

Part Three

Read a biography of a person famous in the 20th century. Don't worry if the subject was born before the 20th century or has lived into the 21st; what is important is that significant events in his or her life occurred in the 1900s. Write a short report explaining why the subject of the biography is famous and whether, after reading the biography, you admire this person and why or why not (**not summarizing his or her life**). Again, your name, the name of the book, and the author's name should be at the top of the page; your report should be 200-500 words and be carefully written and proofread.