



BOYERTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

MIDDLE SCHOOL WEST

Safety & Well-Being Acceptance & Respect Communication & Collaboration Learning & Growth
To cultivate an exceptional, innovative learning community that enables all students to succeed in a changing world.

May 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians and Prospective Grade 8 Students:

This summer, you are required to select a book for a summer reading requirement from a short, carefully chosen list of interesting and high-quality novels. The purpose of summer reading is to continue the development of your reading strategies and to support vocabulary enrichment as well as spark your interest in some great books.

This summer reading will prepare you for thoughtful discussion in your English/Language Arts 8 class as you begin your eighth grade year. You are required to select one of the titles from the books described on the back of this letter. These are all popular books and are available in a variety of places. We have contacted the Boyertown Public Library as well as local booksellers to ask them to have these books in stock.

Although it is not necessary, we encourage you to buy the book that you select so that you can make notes in it and highlight interesting parts. It is important that you have a solid understanding of the characters, setting, and plot in the book you choose since you will be using it in class discussions and activities. (So, if you were wondering, "Does this count?" It does!)

As you read your book, some key ideas you may want to remember:

- Highlight parts that you want to discuss or share when you return to school.
- Make note of any interesting or unknown vocabulary words.
- Question the author; write your questions in the margin as a strategy to help you better understand the plot.
- Make predictions as you read and revise your predictions as you learn more.
- Make use of your inferring skills as you read since most authors have messages that are not easily recognized as part of the plot...what is the theme of your novel?

When you return to school in fall, remember to bring your book with you. We look forward to kicking off the year with great discussions about your summer reading!

From One Reader to Another,

Michael R. Stoudt
Asst. Superintendent

Amy Dombrowski
Principal, MS West



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Book Descriptions for Prospective Grade 8 Students

Choose one of the following:

***Summer of Broken Things* — Margaret Peterson Haddix** (Lexile: 710)

Fourteen-year-old Avery Armisted and sixteen-year-old Kayla Butts could not be more opposite. The two girls were friends as little kids, but that's ancient history now. It's a huge surprise when Avery's father offers to bring Kayla along on a summer trip to Spain. There, the two uncover a secret their families had hidden from both of them their entire lives. Can the girls put aside their differences and work through it together? Or will the lies and betrayal only push them—and their families—farther apart?

***Posted* — John David Anderson** (Lexile: 750)

When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well. In the middle of this, a new girl named Rose arrives at school and sits at Frost's lunch table. Rose is not like anyone else at Branton Middle School, and it's clear that the close circle of friends Frost has made for himself won't easily hold another. As the sticky-note war escalates, and the pressure to choose sides mounts, Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same.

***Black Duck* — Janet Taylor Lisle** (Lexile: 790)

It is spring 1929, and Prohibition is in full swing. So when Ruben and Jeddy find a dead body washed up on the shore of their small coastal Rhode Island town, they are sure it has something to do with smuggling liquor. Soon the boys, along with Jeddy's strong-willed sister, Marina, are drawn in, suspected by rival bootlegging gangs of taking something crucial off the dead man. Then Ruben meets the daring captain of the Black Duck, the most elusive smuggling craft of them all, and it isn't long before he's caught in a war between two of the most dangerous prohibition gangs.

***When* — Victoria Laurie** (Lexile: 820)

Maddie Fynn is a shy girl cursed with an eerie intuitive ability: she sees a series of unique digits hovering above the foreheads of each person she encounters. Maddie and her family realize that these mysterious digits are actually death dates, and just like birthdays, everyone has one. Forced by her mother to use her ability to make extra money, Maddie identifies the quickly approaching death date of one client's young son, but because her ability only allows her to see the when and not the how, she's unable to offer any more insight. When the boy goes missing on that exact date, law enforcement turns to Maddie. Soon, Maddie is entangled in a homicide investigation, and more young people disappear and are later found murdered. A suspect for the investigation, a target for the murderer, and attracting the attentions of a mysterious young admirer who may be connected to it all, Maddie's whole existence is about to be turned upside down. Can she right things before it's too late?

***Are You Experienced?* — Jordan Sonnenblick** (Lexile: 840)

Rich is fifteen and plays guitar. When his girlfriend asks him to perform at protest rally, he jumps at the chance. Unfortunately, the police show up, and so does Rich's dad. He's in big trouble. Again. To make matters worse, Rich's dad always gets depressed this time of year. This happens near the anniversary of his uncle's death, but whenever Rich asks questions, his dad shuts down. Frustrated, Rich breaks into a locked cabinet that holds his dad's prized possession: an electric guitar signed by Jimi Hendrix. Before he knows it, Rich is transported to the side of a road in Upstate New York with a beautiful girl bending over him. It will take him a while to realize it's 1969, he's at Woodstock, and the girl's friends includes his fifteen-year-old dad and his uncle, who's still alive. What Rich learns, does, and who he meets, could change his life forever.