Summer Reading 2015-2016
Westminster Middle School

Summer reading provides the opportunity for the members of each class to read one or two common books over the summer and return to school to discuss them with friends and classmates. In addition, we encourage our students to read books for pure pleasure and to pursue their personal reading interests all summer long.

“What a miracle it is that out of these small, flat, rigid squares of paper unfolds world after world after world, worlds that sing to you, comfort and quiet or excite you. Books help us understand who we are and how we are to behave. They show us what community and friendship mean; they show us how to live and die.” — Anne Lamott

Descriptions and reviews for summer reading books are available on the George Woodruff Library Summer Reading Research Guide:

http://westminsterschools.libguides.com/summerreading

Many of the summer reading titles are available for checkout as a digital download. For access to our ebook and audiobook selections as well as instructions for downloading them onto your device go to

http://westminsterschools.libguides.com/Axis360-GWL

You should finish or review the common read in August, starting school ready to discuss it.

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Students entering 6th grade:
*Total of 3 books to read

Two Required Common Reads:

1. Wonder by R.J. Palacio

   Review: Wonder is a rare gem of a novel--beautifully written and populated by characters who linger in your memory and heart. August Pullman is a 10-year-old boy who likes Star Wars and Xbox, ordinary except for his jarring facial anomalies. Homeschooled all his life, August heads to public school for fifth grade and he is not the only one changed by the experience--something we learn about first-hand through the narratives of those who orbit his world. August’s internal dialogue and interactions with students and family ring true, and though remarkably courageous he comes across as a sweet, funny boy who wants the same things others want: friendship, understanding,
and the freedom to be himself. “It is only with one’s heart that one can see clearly. What is essential is invisible to the eye.” From The Little Prince and R.J. Palacio’s remarkable novel, Wonder. – Review by Seira Wilson for Amazon.com

**Assignment:** Answer the following Critical Questions for reading:
1. Where and when does the story take place?
2. In your opinion, who are the main characters (provide a descriptive sentence about each)?
3. What is the biggest problem the main character faces?
4. How does the main character change throughout the novel? Which experience changes him the most?
5. How does the novel end?
6. Which precept was your favorite? Why?

2. **Something to Hold** by Katherine Schlick Noe

**Review:** Something to Hold is a remarkable story of prejudice and courage told through the eyes of eleven-year-old Kitty, a white girl whose family moves to an Oregon state Indian reservation in 1962. Kitty gets a rough and friendless start at school but soon sees, for the first time, the injustice regularly meted out to her Indian classmates, and recognizes that the ugly stereotyping she hears from outsiders is far from the truth. Kitty’s compassion and desire to help her fellow students is moving, as is her curiosity and respect for Indian culture. Based on the author’s own childhood experiences, Something to Hold is a work of historical fiction that still resonates in the world we live in today. - Review by Seira Wilson for Amazon.com

One book of your choice from our Books Can Give You Wings list.

Read a minimum of one book of your choice from Books Can Give You Wings! This is the recreational reading list for the Middle School, provided by the George Woodruff Library and found on the library webpage:

http://www.westminster.net/george_woodruff_library

or on our Summer Reading Research Guide:


When a title in a series is given (marked with an asterisk *), any title in that series can be read. Newer titles appear in red.
Students entering 7th Grade
*Total of 3 books to read

One Required Common Read:

_Uglies_ by Scott Westerfeld

**Review:** Playing on every teen’s passionate desire to look as good as everybody else, Scott Westerfeld (_Midnighters_) projects a future world in which a compulsory operation at sixteen wipes out physical differences and makes everyone pretty by conforming to an ideal standard of beauty. The "New Pretties" are then free to play and party, while the younger "Uglies" look on enviously and spend the time before their own transformations in plotting mischievous tricks against their elders. The fast-moving story is enlivened by many action sequences in the style of videogames. Behind all the commotion is the disturbing vision of our own society. Teens will be entranced, and the cliffhanger ending will leave them gasping for the sequel. Review by Patty Campbell for Amazon.com

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One Dystopian Novel chosen from the list below:

Choose 1 that you have not previously read.

In preparation for our study of literary archetypes and social conflict in 7th grade, you will have the opportunity to read dystopian novels. You may read any one dystopian novel from the list provided below. We hope that you will find a novel that is both pleasurable to read and will serve as an entry point for the school year. _Remember, you should finish or review your selection in August, starting school ready to discuss this book. See list on attached page._
The Divergent Series by Veronica Roth:
Divergent
Insurgent
Allegiant

The Hunger Games Trilogy by Suzanne Collins:
Hunger Games
Catching Fire
Mockingjay

The Shadow Series by Orson Scott Card:
Ender’s Game
Ender’s Shadow
Shadow of the Hegemon

The Matched Trilogy by Ally Condie:
Matched
Crossed
 Reached

The Giver Quartet by Lois Lowry:
The Giver
Gathering Blue
Messenger
Son

The Uglies Series by Scott Westerfeld:
Pretties
Specials
Extras

The Books of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau
The City of Ember
The People of Sparks
The Prophet of Yonwood
The Diamond of Darkhold
The Roar Series by Emma Clayton:
The Roar
The Whisper

The Dark Life Series by Kat Falls:
Dark Life
Rip Tide

The Epic Series by Conor Kostick:
Epic
Saga
Edda

The Incarceron Series by Catherine Fisher:
Incarceron
Sapphique

The Shadow Children Series by Margaret Peterson Haddix:
Among the Hidden
Among the Impostors
Among the Betrayed
Among the Barons
Among the Brave
Among the Enemy
Among the Free

The Life as We Knew It Series by Susan Beth Pfeffer:
Life as We Knew It
The Dead and the Gone
This World We Live In

The Lunar Chronicles by Marissa Meyer:
Cinder
Scarlet
Cress

The Legend Novels by Marie Lu:
Legend
Prodigy
Champion

Ship Breaker by Paolo Bacigalupi
Students entering 8th Grade

*Total of 3 Books To Read*

Two Required Common Reads:

1. **All the Broken Pieces by Ann E. Burg**

   **Review:** In 1977, 12-year-old Matt Pin lives a fractured life. He is the son of a Vietnamese woman and an American soldier and was airlifted to safety from the war zone. Adopted by a caring American couple, he has vivid and horrific memories of the war and worries about the fates of his mother and badly injured little brother. Matt's adoptive family adores him, and he is the star pitcher for his middle school baseball team, but there are those who see his face and blame him for the deaths of the young men they lost in the war. The fractured theme runs the course of this short novel in verse: Matt's family, the bodies and hearts of the Vietnam vets, the country that is "only a pocketful of broken pieces" that Matt carries inside him. Ultimately, everything broken is revealed as nonetheless valuable. While most of the selections read less like poems and more like simple prose, the story is a lovely, moving one. — Heather M. Campbell (Reviewed May 1, 2009) (School Library Journal, vol. 55, issue 5, p101)

2. **Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah.**

   **Review:** *Chinese Cinderella* is the perfect title for Adeline Yen Mah's compelling autobiography in which, like the fairy-tale maiden, her childhood was ruled by a cruel stepmother. "Fifth Younger Sister" or "Wu Mei," as Yen Mah was called, is only an infant when her father remarries after her mother's death. As the youngest of her five siblings, Wu Mei suffers the worst at the hands of her stepmother Niang. She is denied carfare, frequently forgotten at school at the end of the day, and whipped for daring to attend a classmate's birthday party against Niang's wishes. Her father even forgets the spelling of her name when filling out her school enrollment record. In her loneliness, Wu Mei turns to books for company: "I was alone with my beloved books. What bliss! To be left in peace with Cordelia, Regan, Gonoril, and Lear himself--characters more real than my family... What happiness! What comfort!" Even though Wu Mei is repeatedly moved up to grades above those of her peers, it is only when she wins an international play-writing contest in high school that her father finally takes notice and grants her wish to attend college in England. Despite her parent's heartbreaking neglect, she eventually becomes a doctor and realizes her dream of being a writer. — Review by Jennifer Hubert for Amazon.com
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