

Sebastian River Middle School

8th GRADE SUGGESTED SUMMER READING 2008

MYP students are required to read four books from this list and **complete a four-step summary** (directions at the bottom) for each book. Be ready to turn in your summaries to your Language Arts teacher during the first week of school and to take the AR tests on your books. A student may select a book not on the list if it is an award winner.

8th Grade Focus: Tolerance

Tangerine by Edward Bloor

Paul Fisher, a stellar soccer player despite being legally blind, finally comes into his own when his family moves to the strange town of Tangerine, Florida.

Game by Walter Dean Myers

Drew Lawson knows basketball is taking him places. It has to, because his grades certainly aren't. But lately his plan has run squarely into a pick. Coach's new offense has made another player a star, and Drew won't let anyone disrespect his game. Just as his team makes the playoffs, Drew must come up with something big to save his fading college prospects. It's all up to Drew to find out just how deep his game really is.

The Contender by Robert Lipsyte

A Harlem high school drop-out escapes from a gang of punks into a boxing gym. He learns being a contender is hard and often discouraging work and that you don't know anything until you try.

Escaping the Giant Wave by Peg Kehret

When an earthquake creates a tsunami while thirteen-year-old Kyle is babysitting his sister during a family vacation at a Pacific Coast resort, he tries to save himself, his sister, and a boy who has bullied him for years.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor

An African-American family living in the South during the 1930s is faced with prejudice and discrimination which its children don't understand.

Owning It: Stories about Teens with Disabilities edited by Donald R. Gallo

Chris Crutcher takes us on a wild ride through the mind of a teen with ADD, while David Lubar's protagonist gets a sobering lesson from his friends. In Gail Giles's tale, Brad can't help barking at his classmates but finds understanding when he gives a comical (and informative) presentation to his entire school. And Robert Lipsyte introduces us to an elite task force whose number-one enemy is cancer. Whether their disabilities are physical or psychological, the subjects of these powerful short stories — written by ten outstanding young adult authors — meet every day with wit, intelligence, and courage.

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck

Sustained by the hope of someday owning a farm of their own, two migrant laborers arrive to work on a ranch in central California.

March Toward the Thunder by Joseph Bruchac

Louis Nolette is a fifteen-year-old Abenaki Indian from Canada who is recruited to fight in the northern Irish Brigade in the Civil War. Even though he is too young, and not American or Irish, he finds the promise of good wages and the Union's fight to end slavery persuasive reasons to join up. But war is never what you expect, and as Louis fights his way through battle after battle, he encounters prejudice and acceptance, courage and cowardice, and strong and weak leadership in the most unexpected places.

Milkweed by Jerry Spinelli

Follows a young Jewish orphan in the Warsaw ghetto during World War Two as he slowly understands the horrible reality that surrounds him and attempts to steal in order to help others survive.

Beacon Hill Boys by Ken Mochizuki

Set in Seattle's racially mixed Beacon Hill neighborhood in the turbulent 1970s, this thought-provoking novel follows Dan, a Japanese American teenager, through high school experiences and his involvement as an activist for Asian American rights. A Funny, poignant novel that raises important questions about cultural identity.

Born Confused by Marth Brookes

Indian-American Dimple Lala lives in New Jersey with her busy parents who are both doctors. She tries to fit in to her life in America, while still respecting the rich cultural traditions of her native India.

Caged Eagles by Eric Walters

The story of young Jed and the challenge he faces in learning to understand and take pride in his native heritage.

Children of the River by Linda Crew

Having fled Cambodia four years earlier to escape the Khmer Rouge army, seventeen-year-old Sundara is torn between remaining faithful to her own people and enjoying life in her Oregon high school as a "regular" American.

Cuba 15 by Nancy Osa

Growing up in suburban Chicago with a Cuban father and a Polish mother, Violet insists she is an American. This is a warm and humorous story of a girl's search for her roots and of her loving family.

Escape from Saigon: How a Vietnam War Orphan Became an American Boy by Andrea Warren

Chronicles the experiences of an orphaned Amerasian boy from his birth and early childhood in Saigon through his departure from Vietnam in the 1975 Operation Babylift and his subsequent life as the adopted son of an American family in Ohio.

The Garbage King by Elizabeth Laird

In Ethiopia, Dani and Mamo lead very different lives. Dani lives in a grand home full of servants, and Mamo has no home at all. But now fate brings the two boys together, and their only chance of survival is to trust each other.

Habibi by Naomi Shihab Nye

When fourteen-year-old Liyane Abboud, her younger brother, and her parents move from St. Louis to a new home between Jerusalem and the Palestinian village where her father was born, they face many changes and must deal with the tensions between Jews and Palestinians.

Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson

Sent with her governess to live with the dreadful Carter family in exotic Brazil in 1910, Maia endures many hardships before fulfilling her dream of exploring the Amazon River.

Kira-Kira by Cynthia Kadhota

Chronicles the close friendship between two Japanese-American sisters growing up in rural Georgia during the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the despair when one sister becomes terminally ill.

Little Soldier by Bernard Ashley

Taken from Africa to a foster home in London after his family is killed by an enemy tribe, Kaninda discovers the meaning of hate and the value of not hating.

Obasan by Joy Kogawa

A powerful story of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, told through the eyes of a child.

Overboard by Elizabeth Fama

Escaping from a sinking ferry in the waters off Sumatra, fourteen-year-old Emily fights for survival for herself and a young Indonesian boy, who draws courage from his quiet but firm Islamic faith.

Hero by S.L. Rottman

Hot-headed, confused, and fiercely defensive, 15-year-old Sean is easily drawn into fights at school and then tangles with the law. Sean is sentenced to community service at a horse farm. Under Mr. Hassler's steady hand, the boy experiences, and sometimes resists, the structure and guidance for which he has hungered. However, patterns of distrust, violence, and isolation cannot be overcome in one week of community service. Sean is tested, fails, and emerges to try again, all the while gaining a sense of personal responsibility for his future.

The Disappeared by Gloria Whelan

The Disappeared. Los desaparecidos. This is the name given to those who opposed Argentina's dictatorial government and were kidnapped to ensure their silence. With her hometown of Buenos Aires ensconced in the political nightmare, Silvia devises a plan to save her missing brother. She'll make Norberto, son of the general who arrests dissenters, fall in love with her-and he'll have his father set Eduardo free.

Unseen Companion by Denise Gosliner Orensten

In rural Alaska in 1969, the lives of several teenagers come together while trying to find out what happened to a sixteen-year-old boy who is missing.

Zack by William Bell

The son of a Jewish father and black mother, high school senior Zack has never been allowed to meet his mother's family, but after doing a research project on a former slave, he travels from his home in Canada to Natchez, Mississippi to find his grandfather.

Suggested authors/series:

Redwall series by Brian Jacques

Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants series

by Ann Brashares

Mark Twain

Jane Yolen

Chris Crutcher

Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer

J.R.R. Tolkien

Robert Cormier

Louisa May Alcott

Charlotte or Emily Bronte

Mildred Taylor

When you return from summer vacation:

To qualify for **Mrs. Shirah's Summer Reading Challenge Celebration** in the fall, students need to have read a total of **four (4) books**. For **each book** students must complete the following:

1. Write a one-paragraph summary (5-7 sentences) detailing the plot of the book.
2. Write one paragraph comparing two characters or themes in the book.
3. Draw a cartoon or scene to illustrate the most exciting part of the book.
4. Write one paragraph to recommend or not recommend the book to someone.

Be prepared to turn in your **four (4) required** assignments and take an AR test on all four books you read. Your Language Arts teacher will give you instructions.
