

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Assignment

**Required Reading:** *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson

**Assessment:** Students will be given a test within the first week of school.

**Choice Book:** see below

**Assessment:** Students will write a one-paragraph essay discussing the theme of their chosen work. This will be done within the first week of school.

**Students should choose one of the following titles:**

\*Book contains mature language/situations. Parents should give approval.

*The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

The protagonist, Bilbo Baggins, is an unlikely hero who is taken from his comfortable lifestyle by a powerful wizard and a motley band of dwarves. These comrades embark on a dangerous quest that transforms Bilbo into a skillful, resourceful adventurer.

\**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon

A murder mystery narrated by an autistic fifteen-year old boy who is mathematically gifted and socially hopeless. Late one night, Christopher comes across his neighbor's poodle, Wellington, impaled with a garden fork. Christopher resolves, against the objection of his friends and neighbors, to discover who murdered Wellington.

*Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

The precocious son of a zookeeper, 16 year-old Patel is raised in Pondicherry, India, where he tries on various faiths for size, attracting "religions in the way a dog attracts fleas." After a harrowing shipwreck, Pi finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean trapped on a 26-foot lifeboat with a wounded zebra, a spotted hyena, a seasick orangutan, and a 450-pound Bengal tiger.

\**The Bean Trees* by Barbara Kingsolver

This debut novel follows the gritty, outspoken Taylor Greer, who leaves her native Kentucky to head west. She becomes mother to an abandoned baby and, when her jalopy dies in Tucson, is forced to work in a tire garage and to room with a young, battered divorcee who also has a little girl.

\**Pigs in Heaven* by Barbara Kingsolver

The story of Taylor Green and her adopted daughter Turtle continues as the Cherokee Nation comes calling, ready to lay claim to the child Taylor has been raising as her own.

*Heat* by Mike Lupica

Michael's ultimate dream is to play in the major leagues like his hero, El Grande, Yankee star and fellow Cuban refugee. Tragically, Papi died of a heart attack a few months back, leaving Michael and his older brother, Carlos, to struggle along on their own.

*\*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams

Arthur Dent and his pal Ford Perfect travel the galaxy getting into horrible messes and creating havoc. This hilarious science fiction book is a must-read for fans of this genre.

*\*In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez

*In the Time of the Butterflies* is inspired by the true story of the three Mirabal sisters who, in 1960, were murdered for their part in an underground plot to overthrow the government. These historical figures--known as "las mariposas," or "the butterflies," in the underground—are portrayed in their teenage years as they gradually get involved with the revolution.

*\*The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd

The main character, 13-year-old Lily, undergoes a quest to discover the truth about her mother's death in South Carolina during the 1960's.

*The Hiding Place* by Corrie ten Boom

This is the story of how Corrie ten Boom and her family joined the Dutch resistance helping the Jews escape the savage death camps of Nazi Germany. In the midst of these dark times, Corrie discovers that no pit is so deep that the love of God is not deeper still.

*All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot

Here is the heartwarming, true story of Dr. James Herriot, an English country veterinarian and the many lives he touches, both animal and human.

*Christy* by Catherine Marshall

This is the story of a 19-year-old who leaves her privileged life to go to the Smokey Mountains to teach school.

*Nothing but the Truth* by Avi

A "documentary novel" told in the form of a school memo, diary entries, etc. A high school boy hums along with the National Anthem and gets caught in a struggle for justice.

*The Clay Marble* by Minfong Ho

Set in a Cambodian refugee camp in the early 1980s, this novel describes how a young girl copes, helped by stories and a magic marble.

*Crispin - The Cross of Lead* by Avi

A boy journeys across medieval England in an attempt to clear his name after being accused of a crime he did not commit.

*Moves Make the Man* by Bruce Brooks

An African-American boy and an emotionally troubled white boy in North Carolina form a precarious friendship.

*Catherine, Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman

The daughter of an English country knight keeps a journal in which she records the events of her life, particularly her longing for adventures beyond the usual roles for women.

*The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm* by Nancy Farmer

In 2194 in Zimbabwe, General Matsika's three children are kidnapped and put to work in a plastic mine, while three mutant detectives use their special powers to search for them.

*Beware, Princess Elizabeth* by Caroline Meyer

After the death of Henry VIII in 1547, his daughter, 13-year-old Elizabeth, must endure the political intrigues and dangers of the reigns of her half-brother Edward and her half-sister Mary before finally becoming queen.

*Saturnalia* by Paul Fleishman

In 1861 in Boston, 14-year-old William, a Narraganset Indian captured in a raid six years earlier, leads a productive life as an apprentice, but he is anxious to make some connections with his Indian past.

*A Corner of the Universe* by Ann M. Martin

The summer that Hattie turns 12, she meets the childlike uncle she never knew and becomes friends with a girl who works at a carn