

## *Summer Reading for incoming 8th graders at STM*

Choose two novels (from two different genres) to read over summer vacation. For the first novel you read, complete the summer reading project by following the directions below. Please return the rubric with your project. For the second novel, read carefully as you will take a test over the novel the first week of school. Students wishing to receive extra credit for first quarter may choose to read a third book (from a third genre). Create a story map for the extra credit book.

If you have any questions, feel free to ask in school or email me. Please know that I will not be regularly checking my email over the summer, so it is important to look through this information now and ask questions before summer vacation begins. This information is also posted on my website should you need to review it there.

Enjoy your summer and enjoy these books. I look forward to seeing you and your projects in August.

Good luck,

Mrs. Rose  
k\_rose@stmcyclones.org

### *Summer Reading Project:*

Split your book into four equal sections according to page numbers or chapters. After reading each section, stop and answer one question in a complete paragraph. Please type your paragraphs. In addition to the paragraphs, also complete a story map.

Choose one question per section (total of four). Do not repeat questions. Remember to answer your questions in complete paragraphs including textual support.

1. Describe the conflict the main character(s) faces.
2. Describe the setting and its impact on the storyline.
3. Analyze the relationship between two major characters in the novel.
4. Is the title a good title for this book?
5. If this book took place in a different setting, how would the story change?
6. How does the author create suspense?
7. Chose a dynamic character from the novel and explain how he/she changed throughout the course of the book.
8. What is the mood for this section?
9. What advice would you give the main character after reading this section?
10. Which character can you connect to most in the book?
11. Make a prediction.
12. What is the author's theme?
13. Name a decision a character made that you disagree with. Explain.
14. How would you solve a complication from this section?
15. How do the characters in your book combat the injustices they face?
16. Does the main character live a just or unjust life?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## *Summer Reading Rubric for incoming 8th graders at STM*

Section one: \_\_\_\_\_ Question number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ideas** 10...8...6

- The author writes with originality, clarity, and specifics from the text while showing a strong understanding of the novel.

**Other writing skills** 5...4...3...2...1

- The author writes with appropriate organization, conventions, word choice, voice, and sentence fluency.

Section two: \_\_\_\_\_ Question number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ideas** 10...8...6

- The author writes with originality, clarity, and specifics from the text while showing a strong understanding of the novel.

**Other writing skills** 5...4...3...2...1

- The author writes with appropriate organization, conventions, word choice, voice, and sentence fluency.

Section three: \_\_\_\_\_ Question number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ideas** 10...8...6

- The author writes with originality, clarity, and specifics from the text while showing a strong understanding of the novel.

**Other writing skills** 5...4...3...2...1

- The author writes with appropriate organization, conventions, word choice, voice, and sentence fluency.

Section four: \_\_\_\_\_ Question number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ideas** 10...8...6

- The author writes with originality, clarity, and specifics from the text while showing a strong understanding of the novel.

**Other writing skills** 5...4...3...2...1

- The author writes with appropriate organization, conventions, word choice, voice, and sentence fluency.

Story Map: \_\_\_\_\_/15

Total : \_\_\_\_\_/75

The book I chose for my summer reading project is \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

The book I chose for my summer reading test is \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

The book I chose for extra credit (optional) is \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

# *Summer Reading List for incoming 8th graders at STM*

## Classics

### **Little Women by Louisa May**

Generations of readers young and old, male and female, have fallen in love with the March sisters of Louisa May Alcott's most popular and enduring novel, *Little Women*. Here are talented tomboy and author-to-be Jo, tragically frail Beth, beautiful Meg, and romantic, spoiled Amy, united in their devotion to each other and their struggles to survive in New England during the Civil War.

### **The War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells**

The Martians are landing on earth! They've already destroyed London. Who or what can stop them from taking over the whole world? This classic story brings the hysteria and madness of such a nightmare to life.

### **The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare**

Kit Tyler is marked by suspicion and disapproval from the moment she arrives on the unfamiliar shores of colonial Connecticut in 1687. Alone and desperate, she has been forced to leave her beloved home on the island of Barbados and join a family she has never met. Torn between her quest for belonging and her desire to be true to herself, Kit struggles to survive in a hostile place. Just when it seems she must give up, she finds a kindred spirit. But Kit's friendship with Hannah Tupper, believed a witch by the colonists, proves more taboo than Kit could have imagined and ultimately forces her to choose between her heart and her duty.

## Realistic Fiction

### **Freak the Mighty by W.R. Philbrick**

At the beginning of eighth grade, Max, a slow learner who is HUGE for his age and his new friend Freak, whose birth defect has affected his body but not his brilliant mind, find that when combining forces they make a powerful team.

### **The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton**

Three brothers struggle to stay together after their parents' death, as they search for an identity among the conflicting values of their adolescent society in which they find themselves "outsiders."

### **Peak by Roland Smith**

This emotional, tension-filled story shows a fourteen-year-old boy's attempt to be the youngest person to reach the top of Mount Everest. Here's the perfect antidote for a kid who thinks books are boring. In his latest, Smith introduces 14-year-old Peak Marcello (named by his mountaineering parents) as he's arrested for scaling Manhattan's Woolworth Building, in an attempt to graffiti his tag-a blue mountain peak-high on the side of it. Peak is headed for a long stint in juvie when his estranged father swoops into the courtroom with a solution that will get the media's newest darling-the papers have dubbed Peak "Spider Boy"-immediately and far out of sight.

### **Schooled by Gordon Korman**

Cap lives in isolation with his grandmother, a former hippie; but when she falls from a tree and breaks her hip, Cap is sent to a foster home where he has his first experience in a public school.

### **Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson\***

Melinda Sordino busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops. Now her old friends won't talk to her and people she doesn't even know hate her from a distance. The safest place to be is alone, inside her own head. But even that's not safe. Because there there's something she's trying not to think about, something about the night of the party that, if she let it in, would blow her carefully constructed disguise to smithereens. And then she would have to speak the truth.

### **Tangerine by Edward Bloor**

Twelve-year-old Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother Erik, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness, and slowly begins to remember the incident that damaged his eyesight.

### **Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls**

A young boy living in the Ozarks achieves his heart's desire when he becomes the owner of two redbone hounds and teaches them to be champion hunters. But when tragedy occurs, only the legend of the red fern can comfort him.

## **Historical Fiction**

### **Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt**

The unforgettable story of young Jethro Creighton, who comes of age during the turbulent years of the Civil War, by the Newbery Award-winning author of *Up a Road Slowly*. "An impressive book both as a historically authentic Civil War novel and as a beautifully written family story."--University of Chicago Center for Children's Books.

### **The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen**

Hannah thinks tonight's Passover Seder will be the same as always. Little does she know that this year she will be mysteriously transported into the past where only she knows the horrors that await.

Hannah resents the traditions of her Jewish heritage until time travel places her in the middle of a small Jewish village in Nazi-occupied Poland.

### **Dragonwings by Laurence Yep**

Moon shadow is eight years old when he sails from China to join his father, Windrider, in America. Windrider lives in San Francisco and makes his living doing laundry. Father and son have never met. But Moon Shadow grows to love and respect his father and to believe in his wonderful dream. And Windrider, with Moon Shadow's help is willing to endure the mockery of the other Chinese, the poverty, the separation from his wife and country even the great earthquake to make his dream come true.

### **Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers\***

In a graphic story, 17-year-old Richie Perry, just out of his Harlem high school, enlists in the Army in the summer of 1967 and spends a devastating year on active duty in Vietnam.

### **My Brother Sam is Dead by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier**

All his life, Tim Meeker has looked up to his brother Sam. Sam's smart and brave -- and is now a part of the American Revolution. Not everyone in town wants to be a part of the rebellion. Most are supporters of the British -- including Tim and Sam's father. With the war soon raging, Tim know he'll have to make a choice -- between the Revolutionaries and the Redcoats . . . and between his brother and his father.

### **The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane**

In the spring of 1863, as he faces battle for the first time at Chancellorsville, Virginia, a young Union soldier matures to manhood and finds peace of mind as he comes to grips with his conflicting emotions about war.

### **Sunrise over Fallujah by Walter Dean Myers\***

Operation Iraqi Freedom, that's the code name. But the young men and women in the military's Civil Affairs Battalion have a simpler name for it: WAR. In this new novel, Walter Dean Myers looks at a contemporary war with the same power and searing insight he brought to the Vietnam war of his classic, *FALLEN ANGELS*. He creates memorable characters like the book's narrator, Birdy, a young recruit from Harlem who's questioning why he even enlisted; Marla, a blond, tough-talking, wisecracking gunner; Jonesy, a guitar-playing bluesman who just wants to make it back to Georgia and open a club; and a whole unit of other young men and women

and drops them in country in Iraq, where they are supposed to help secure and stabilize Iraq and successfully interact with the Iraqi people. The young civil affairs soldiers soon find their definition of "winning" ever more elusive and their good intentions being replaced by terms like "survival" and "despair."

## Science Fiction and Fantasy

### **The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer**

Matteo Alacrán was not born; he was harvested. His DNA came from El Patrón, lord of a country called Opium — a strip of poppy fields lying between the United States and what was once called Mexico. Matt's first cell split and divided inside a petri dish. Then he was placed in the womb of a cow, where he continued the miraculous journey from embryo to fetus to baby. He is a boy now, but most consider him a monster — except for El Patrón. El Patrón loves Matt as he loves himself, because Matt is himself. As Matt struggles to understand his existence, he is threatened by a sinister cast of characters, including El Patrón's power-hungry family, and he is surrounded by a dangerous army of bodyguards. Escape is the only chance Matt has to survive. But escape from the Alacrán Estate is no guarantee of freedom, because Matt is marked by his difference in ways he doesn't even suspect.

### **The Seems: the Glitch in Sleep by John Hulme and Michael Wexler**

The world as you know it was created and is still maintained by The Seems. From the Department of Weather to the Department of Emotions, the Seems ensure our world is just as we like it. Occasionally, something in one of these departments will break down, and a Fixer is sent in to repair it before there is damage to our world. Becker Drane may seem like your average 7th grader, but he's actually one of 37 Fixers in the entire world, and is just about to embark on his first mission. Will Becker fix the Glitch in Sleep and become the hero of the Seems, or will his first assignment be his last?

### **A Wrinkle in Time by Madeline L'Engle**

Meg Murry and her friends become involved with unearthly strangers and a search for Meg's father, who disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government.

*Students wishing to read **Speak, Fallen Angels, or Sunrise over Fallujah** must have a signed note from a parent indicating parental permission to read these books due to the mature content. Students must bring the note to literature class on the first day of school. **Parents- I have included these three books because I have watched students who do not readily enjoy reading devour these books. For this reason I would like to offer them as options for students but do not want any child reading a book his or her parents do not approve of.***