

8th Grade Summer Reading List

Choose and Read ONE book from the list below.

I Will Always Write Back by Caitlin Alifirenka, Liz Welch, and Martin Ganda	The true story of two pen pals: Caitlin, a typical American teenager, and Martin, a poor but incredibly bright and hard-working boy in the African country of Zimbabwe who's struggling to get enough money to stay in school.
Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson	The book tells the story of an impulsive and adventurous young boy named Jim Hawkins who comes across a treasure map. He goes on a journey to try and recover the treasure, which once belonged to the famous Captain Flint. On his journey, he meets Long John Silver, a one-legged cook who ends up leading a pirate mutiny.
The Giver by Lois Lowry	Morally driven and interesting story about 12-yr-old Jonas who lives in a society free of crime and sadness, or emotions at all. One person is given the gift to become society's historian, a blessing, and a curse.
Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson	Jesse's life changes when he befriends Leslie, an outsider. Together they create a world full of magical creatures. Soon, one of the friends must draw on the strength of their "kingdom" to cope with a tragedy.
The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman	Details the deterioration of a woman's mental health while she is on a "rest cure" on a rented summer country estate with her family. Her obsession with the yellow wallpaper in her bedroom marks her descent into psychosis from her depression throughout the story.
American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang	Jin Wang, a Chinese American teenager who struggles with his identity in a predominantly American culture. A journey of self-discovery.
The City of Ember by Jeanne Du Prau	A post-apocalyptic underground city threatened by aging infrastructure and corruption. Lina Mayfleet and Doon Harrow follow clues left by the original builders to the safety in the outside world.
The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne	During World War II, 8-yr-old Bruno and his family leave Berlin to take up residence near the concentration camp where his father has just become commandant. Unhappy and lonely, he finds Shmuel, a Jewish boy of his age. Separated by a barbed-wire fence, the boys begin a forbidden friendship, oblivious to the real nature of their surroundings.
Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls	Billy Coleman lives in the Ozark mountains. His dream is to purchase redbone coonhound dogs and train them to hunt. Follow their adventures and challenges.
The Red Badge of Courage by Steven Crane	During the American Civil War, the story is about a young private of the Union Army, Henry Fleming, struggles with wanting to be a war hero, while trying not to succumb to cowardice.
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak	About a girl during World War II in Germany. Her foster parents hide a Jewish man, but that only brings attention to the family.
The Endless Steppe: Growing up in Siberia by Esther Hautzig	The story of a girl and her family being forced from Poland by Russia for being "political enemies," they are then shipped to Siberia and she and her family are forced to stay there for 5 years, trying to survive and make a living for themselves.
The Dreamer by Pam Munoz Ryan and Peter Sis	This story follows the early experiences of Neftali Reyes, a boy who is spellbound by the wonders of the natural world and grows into the man that we know.
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley	The story of a gifted scientist, Victor Frankenstein, who succeeds in giving life to a being of his own creation. However, this is not the perfect specimen he imagines that it will be, but rather a hideous creature who is rejected by Victor and mankind in general.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee	A young girl's coming of age and a darker drama about the roots and consequences of racism and prejudice, probing how good and evil can coexist in a single community or individual.
Saturday Night Dirt: A MOTOR Novel by Will Weaver	Headwaters Speedway is the place to be. Thanks to rainouts across the state, this dirt track is drawing big-time stock cars and local drivers. Trace Bonham in his Street Stock Chevy that's sure to be a winner if he can figure out why it's acting up. Beau Kim: his Modified is patched together from whatever parts he scraped up. Amber Jenkins has what it takes to run rings around them all. Melody Walters, can she keep the speedway afloat?
My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George	A boy who learns courage, independence, and the need for companionship while attempting to live in the Catskill Mountains of New York State.
The Stars Beneath our Feet by David Barclay Moore	A boy tries to steer a safe path through the projects in Harlem in the wake of his brother's death.
Watership Down by Richard Adams	In a world where rabbits rule, a brave band of bunnies embarks on a wild quest for a better home. Led by the courageous Hazel and the visionary Fiver, they face treacherous dangers, cunning enemies, and make unexpected alliances along the way. "Watership Down" is a rabbit tale of adventure, resilience, and the enduring spirit of fluffy heroes.
Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence by Doris Pilkington	Based on a true story, the book is a personal account of an Indigenous Australian family's experiences as members of the Stolen Generation—the forced removal of mixed-race children from their families during the early 20th century.
Any book of your choice by J.R.R. Tolkien	
Any book of your choice by C.S. Lewis	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW

8th Grade Summer Reading Guidelines

Instructions:

- Choose **one** book from the list provided. The book can be borrowed from the library or purchased online, locally, or electronically.
- After reading the book, **write a short essay** that answers the following questions about your chosen book. The essay should be **1-2 pages, double-spaced, typed, and MLA-formatted**. (Students who are new to FCS are not required to use MLA-formatting if they are not already familiar with it.)
- Do not copy the questions or use bullet points. Instead, your essay should be in **paragraph** form. (At least **3 Paragraphs, 3-5 sentences each**.)
- **Use your own words**. Do not copy any part of your essay from another source (e.g. a website, a book), you will receive a failing grade and a discipline write-up. That is called plagiarism.
- **This is due on the first day of class!!!**

Questions:

1. Include: title and year of publication.
2. Author's name.

Choose 1 question from each section.

Personal and Textual Connections

- How does the story make you feel?
- Have you ever had a similar experience?
- Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life?

Setting

- When and where does the story take place?
- Is the place important to the story? How?
- Does the season or the time affect the characters or the story?

Characters

- Who is the main character in the story?
- What choices does the character have?
- Who is another character who either hurts or helps the main character?

Choose 2 questions for the last section:

Plot

- What is the story's problem? How did it get solved?
- What is the most exciting part (the climax) of the story?
- How did the story end? Did you enjoy the ending?
- Do you have any unanswered questions about the story?