

8th Grade Honors English

Honors Reading List

Song of the Sparrow

Lisa Ann Sandell

Beautiful and outspoken, sixteen-year-old Elaine of Ascolat has a temperament as fiery as her red hair. She lives with her father and brothers on King Arthur's army base, the sole girl in the militaristic world of men. While Elaine mends armor and heals wounds, she pines for the handsome young soldier Lancelot. Then a new girl named Gwynivere arrives at the camp. Elaine is thrilled to have a female companion... until Gwynivere proves to be cold, cunning and determined to win over Lancelot herself. The two girls are thrown into grave danger and must learn to work together to survive. Will Elaine find the courage to fight for the kingdom she loves, even though it means losing her Lancelot to Gwynivere?

The Hunger Games

Suzanne Collins

Could you survive on your own out in the wild, with everyone out to make sure you don't see the morning? In the ruins of what used to be North America, lies a capital city with twelve surrounding areas of civilization. The Capitol is a rough place and requires the utmost in survival skills, especially when it creates "The Hunger Games." Each surrounding civilization must choose one boy and one girl to participate in these games, a fight to the death on live TV. Katniss Everdeen is chosen to be the representative from her area; she regards this as a death sentence. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weigh survival against humanity and life against love. ***Students may opt to read the sequel to this novel entitled *Catching Fire*, and it will count as a second book.***

Entertainer and the Dybbuk

Sid Fleischman

Former American soldier Freddie Birch has stayed on after WWII to tour Europe as a ventriloquist. When he encounters a sharp-tongued ghostly young boy in his hotel closet, he quickly learns that the dybbuk (a spirit of a murdered Jewish child) is Avrom Amos, a child who saved Freddie from a POW camp. Avrom thinks that Freddie owes him and requires that Freddie help him track down the SS colonel that killed him.

Go Big or Go Home

Will Hobbs

Fourteen-year-old Brady and his cousin Quinn love extreme sports, but nothing could prepare them for the aftermath of Brady's close encounter with a meteorite after it crashes into his Black Hills, South Dakota, bedroom.

Under a War Torn Sky

L.M. Elliot

Just nineteen-years-old, Henry Forrester is the youngest pilot in his Air Force Squadron. Still, he is one of the best flyers facing Hitler's Luftwaffe in the war-torn skies above France. But when his plane is shot down on a mission behind enemy lines, Henry finds himself on a whole new battleground. He struggles toward freedom on foot, relying on the kindness and cunning of the members of the French resistance to reach the next town and, hopefully, home.

Into the Wild

Sarah Beth Durst

Having escaped from the Wild and the preordained fairy tale plot it imposes, Rapunzel, along with her daughter Julie Marchen, tries to live a fairly normal life, but when the Wild breaks free and takes over their town, it is Julie who has to prevent everyone from being trapped in the events of a story.

8th Grade Honors Assignment

Students must choose **TWO** of the books above to read over the summer. They will complete the two-part assignment for each book.

Project Part I

One-Minute Booktalk

You will present a booktalk to the class within the first week of school. You must bring the book talk in a written format on the first day of school. Be creative in your presentation (dress up like a character, use visual aides, etc.). Think of it as a commercial for your book. Here is suggested outline for your presentation.

- Hold up the book for the class members to view and name the title, author, publisher, and year of publication of the novel.
- Tell a short summary of the plot in about 5 sentences to give an overview of the basic type of book and the events within.
- Describe the main character (protagonist), using three to five relevant adjectives, and explain whether or not that person is someone you would like as a friend.
- State the theme of the story in one sentence. Explain how you learned this message.
- Critique the book by saying who should read the book in the future and giving reasons why you liked or disliked the novel.

Project Part II

Character Scrapbook

You are to imagine that you are a character from the novel and keep a scrapbook of pictures, objects, letters, symbols, and other items you thin the character would find important enough to save in a scrapbook. The items can include pictures of other characters, important events from the plot, prize possessions, or clues to help solve a problem or a mystery. The scrapbook must be bound in some fashion, and everything must be labeled with its significance. You must have at least **TEN** items in your scrapbook.

Grading Rubric for Reading Project

Part I – Booktalk

- Oral presentation: vocal level, speed, and inflection, eye-contact, creativity, and originality. (25 points)
- Writing: contains all important elements of novel, shows command of grammar, well-organized, powerful word choice, entertaining and creatively written. (25 points)

Part II – Scrapbook

- Creativity/Originality/Scrapbook Format (10 points)
- Number of items (20 points)
- Depth of novel insight (20 points)

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Airball: My Life in Briefs

L.D. Harkrader

Uncoordinated seventh-grader Kirby Nickel braves his coach's ire and becomes captain of the basketball team in order to help him prove that NBA star Brett McGrew is the father he has never known.

All the Lovely Bad Ones: A Ghost Story **Mary Downing Hahn**

While spending the summer at their grandmother's Vermont Inn, two prankster siblings awaken young ghosts from the inn's distant past that refuse to "rest in peace."

Gabriel's Horses

Alison Hart

Young African-American Gabriel dreams of becoming a famous jockey some day. Meanwhile he assists his father with caring for Master Gile's thoroughbred horses. But when war breaks out, Confederate raiders threaten local farmers destroying their homes and land and stealing their horses, Gabriel's father decides to join a black union army battalion in order to buy Gabriel and his mother's freedom.

La Linea

Ann Jaramillo

On Miquel's fifteenth birthday, his father finally sends money and instructions for him to leave San Jacinto, Mexico and join his parents in California. His plans change when his younger sister, Elena, disguises herself and sneaks along for the journey. The two endure many hardships along their journey.

Schooled

Gordon Korman

Sheltered from the outside world on his hippie grandmother's commune, 13-year-old Capricorn "Cap" Anderson is forced to move into a foster home and attend the local middle school when grandmother falls from a tree and is hospitalized. With long, tangled hair, hemp clothes and odd behavior, Cap is immediately labeled a nerd, which lands his name on the ballot for the election of class president.

Scribbler of Dreams

Mary E. Pearson

Kaitlin Malone knows what it is like to date the enemy. She was raised to hate the Crutchfields and absolutely does—until she meets Bram Crutchfield. It turns out he's a great guy, one she can talk to, share things with...even love. But when Kaitlin gives her heart to Bram, her world spins out of control. Soon the Crutchfields are her friends and she's a traitor to her own family.

8th Grade Assignment

Students will be expected to read ONE of the books above, complete a Poster Map, and turn it in on the first day of school. Please encourage students to take notes to include in their project as they read. All work must show individuality, organization, and creativity. Use the following instructions to complete the assignment.

Directions: Create a poster displaying the important elements of the novel. The poster should be large enough for all class members to view. The information should be represented in a concise, accurate manner that exhibits your understanding and reading of the novel. Feel free to be creative, original, and colorful.

The following information must be included on the poster:

- **Title, Author, and Publisher of the novel.**
- **Character (Protagonist)**
In a paragraph or character map include the following:
 - Physical and personality description
 - Background information
 - Problems and decision-making
 - Draw or cut out a picture to represent this character
- **Plot**
In a paragraph or sequence chart include the following:
 - A short summary
 - The main conflict/problem
 - Climax of the story
 - The resolution to the problem
 - Draw a plot diagram
- **New Vocabulary (3-5 words)**
Do the following:
 - Print the word in large letters
 - Copy the sentence from the book and the page #
 - Guess at the contextual meaning
 - Include the dictionary meaning
 - Write an original sentence
- **Setting**
 - Tell where and when the story takes place
 - Include pictures of the most important or interesting places
- **Symbol**
 - Draw or cut out a picture of an object that has special meaning in the book or that can represent the book in a symbol.
- **Mood**
 - Complete three sentences that show when your feelings were strongly felt.
 - Example: I felt _____ during the part in the story when _____.
- **Theme**
 - State the message or lesson learned from the book in one sentence and then explain it.

