

Grade 8 Summer Reading Assignment 2026

Literature can enrich students' lives, encourage critical and imaginative thinking, educate while it entertains, and lay a foundation for literary experiences later in life. Summer vacation is a great time to open the pages of an interesting book and be transported to places that will build creativity, imagination, and a lifelong love of reading. We look forward to hearing about this reading adventure in the fall.

Before our Grade 8 year begins together, you will read one book from any of the four theme categories below. Read another book of your own choosing for a total of **two books**. These books are meant to be genuinely enjoyable summer reads and stories worth your time and attention. Please choose books you have not previously read.

You might want to select a book from this [extensive and comprehensive list](#) provided by the Middle School Library. The titles listed cover a broad range of interests and reading levels and should allow each reader to have a successful and enjoyable experience.

| Holocaust and World War II | |
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| Prisoner B-3087 <i>by Alan Gratz</i> | Based on the true story of Jack Gruener, a Jewish boy from Krakow who survived ten Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Gripping and fast-paced, this book reads like a thriller while bearing the full weight of history. 272 pages |
| Girl in the Blue Coat <i>by Monica Hesse</i> | Amsterdam, 1943. A Dutch teenager who delivers black market goods is asked to do something far more dangerous: find a Jewish girl who has vanished from a hiding place. A mystery, a war novel, and a story of moral courage all at once. 320 pages |
| Japanese Internment | |
| Farewell to Manzanar <i>by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston</i> | A memoir by a Japanese-American woman recalling her family's experience at the Manzanar internment camp during World War II. Personal, readable, and historically essential. 210 pages |
| Weedflower <i>by Cynthia Kadohata</i> | A novel following twelve-year-old Sumiko, a Japanese-American girl sent to an Arizona internment camp after Pearl Harbor. Accessible and emotionally powerful. 272 pages |
| Identity and Coming of Age | |

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| Brown Girl Dreaming <i>by Jacqueline Woodson</i> | A National Book Award-winning verse memoir about growing up Black in the 1960s and 70s South. Beautifully written and a quick read, it is also a masterclass in how a writer shapes memory into meaning. 368 pages |
| Other Words for Home <i>by Jasmine Warga</i> | Jude never expected to leave her home in Syria, but when civil war reached her coastal town, she and her mother fled to Cincinnati — where she must learn to navigate a new language, a new country, and a new version of herself. Told in spare, beautiful poems, this Newbery Honor book is a moving portrait of loss, resilience, and the search for home. 368 pages |
| Social Justice and Civil Rights | |
| Enrique's Journey (Young Adult Adaptation) <i>by Sonia Nazario</i> | The Pulitzer Prize-winning true story of a Honduran teenager who travels thousands of miles alone, riding the tops of freight trains through Mexico, to find his mother in the United States. Urgent, humanizing, and impossible to put down. 288 pages |
| I Am Malala (Young Readers Edition) <i>by Malala Yousafzai</i> | The adapted memoir of the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who defied the Taliban in Pakistan to fight for girls' education. A story of extraordinary courage, conviction, and faith in the power of a single voice. 256 pages |

When You Return

When we return in September, you will be asked to do some writing about your book. There will also be a quiz on the details of your specific book choice. Read carefully — you will want to remember the plot, the characters, key events, and the choices people make.

No outside research is needed. The best preparation is simply reading with attention and curiosity.

Please bring your book with you on the first day of school.
