

Baldwin Union Free School District

960 Hastings Street ♦ Baldwin, NY 11510-4798

www.baldwinschools.org



Dr. Carol McGill
ELA Supervisor
mcgillc@baldwinschools.org
(516) 434-6120

Dear 7th Grade Students & Families,

We hope this letter finds you well and ready for a relaxing, enjoyable summer! As we move into the summer break, we want to share important information about the **8th Grade Summer Reading Assignment**, which is designed to help you maintain strong reading habits and prepare for success in the upcoming school year.

Reading over the summer is essential for supporting vocabulary growth, comprehension skills, and critical thinking. Just as importantly, it encourages students to build a lifelong love of reading. This summer, you will read a book of your choice and complete three creative and thoughtful activities from our **8th Grade Summer Reading Choice Board**.

Students should:

- Choose **one book** to read over the summer. This can be from a recommended list or any age-appropriate book that genuinely interests them.
- Complete **three activities** from the Choice Board, selecting one from each row across, down, or diagonally.
- Be prepared to participate in a small-group **Book Club discussion** in September.
- Submit their completed tasks at the start of the school year to earn **up to 10 bonus points** on a first-marking-period assessment.

The Choice Board offers a range of engaging activities, such as writing a letter to a character, connecting the book to a meaningful song, creating a comic strip of a key scene, or recording a podcast or video review. These options encourage creativity, reflection, and personal connection to the text.

Books can be borrowed from the **Baldwin Public Library** or accessed through digital platforms. We encourage family members to speak with your child about their reading—ask questions about the characters, themes, and events, and share your own reading experiences with them.

We wish you a safe, restful, and book-filled summer—and we look forward to welcoming your child to 8th grade in September!

Warmly,

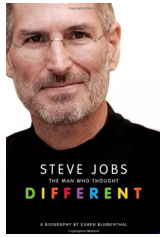
Dr. Carol McGill and the 8th Grade ELA Teachers
Supervisor of ELA 6–12

**2026 Summer Reading
8th Grade
Choice Board**

Directions: Pick **one** option from each row **across, diagonal or down** and complete the task based on your reading of the text

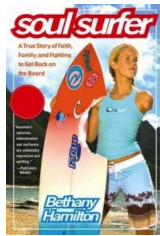
Quotes: Write down 3 meaningful quotes from the book. For each, explain its significance - What does it suggest, symbolize, or reveal about the story or characters? You may use this attached worksheet or create your own.	Character Letter: Write a letter to a character in your book about a conflict they experienced. In your letter: • Talk about the conflict and how the character handled it. • Explain what lesson the character might have learned. • Describe how you can use that lesson in your own life.	Song Connection: Choose a song that connects to the story you read. • Write down the song title, artist, and the lyrics that relate to the book . • In 2–3 sentences, explain how the song connects to a character, theme, or event in the story.
The Story of an Object: Pick an object that would be meaningful to a character in the novel and write the story of it. For help, click here	Character Change: Think about how your main character changes from the beginning to the end of the book. • Describe who they are at the start and how they grow or change by the end. Use specific evidence from the book to support your explanation. • Include two images (these can be drawings or pictures you find) that represent your character or their journey.	Comic Scene: Choose an important, exciting, or emotional moment from your book—this could be the climax, a turning point, or your favorite part. • Create a comic strip with at least 4–6 panels to show what happened. • Include the setting, character names, and any key objects to help tell the story clearly. • Make sure your comic connects to the book and shows why this moment matters.
Podcast/Video: Record a short podcast (audio or video) where you either review your book like a podcast host or pretend you're interviewing one of the characters.		
Library Summer Reading Program: Join the Baldwin Public Library summer reading program and bring in evidence of your participation to your 8th-grade teacher. Click here to join	Create a Timeline: Create a timeline of major events in the book. Choose at least 6–10 major events that move the story forward. Include moments from the beginning (exposition), middle (rising action/climax), and end (falling action/resolution).	Setting: Draw or describe a background that shows knowledge of the setting of one or more important scenes for the characters, add one symbol at least from the story - write what it symbolizes next to it.

8th Grade Summer Reading Book List



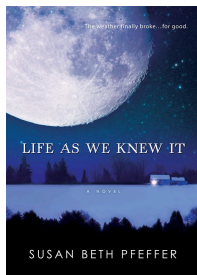
Steve Jobs by Karen Blumenthal
From the start, his path was never predictable. Steve Jobs was given up for adoption at birth, dropped out of college after one semester, and at the age of twenty, created Apple in his parents' garage with his friend Steve

Wozniak. Then came the core and hallmark of his genius—his exacting moderation for perfection, his counterculture life approach, and his level of taste and style that pushed all boundaries. A devoted husband, father, and Buddhist, he battled cancer for over a decade, became the ultimate CEO, and made the world want every product he touched.



Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton
They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing—not even the loss of her arm—could come between her and the

waves? That Halloween morning in Kauai, Hawaii, Bethany responded to the shark's stealth attack with the calm of a girl with God on her side.



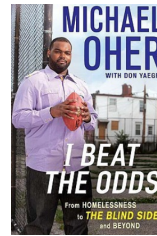
Life as We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer.

When a meteor knocks the moon closer to earth, Miranda, a high school sophomore, takes shelter with her family.

Told in a year's worth of journal entries, *Life as We Knew It* chronicles the human struggle to hold on to the most important resource of all—hope—in an increasingly desperate and unfamiliar world. As August turns dark and wintry in northeastern Pennsylvania, Miranda, her two brothers, and their mother retreat to the unexpected safe haven of their sunroom, where they subsist on stockpiled food and limited water in the warmth of a wood-burning stove.

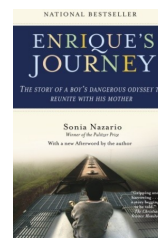


EQ:How do people become agents of change?



I Beat the Odds by Michael Oher
Michael Oher is the young man at the center of the true story depicted in "The Blind Side" movie (and book) that swept up awards and accolades. Though the odds were heavily stacked against him, Michael

had a burning desire deep within his soul to break out of the Memphis inner-city ghetto and into a world of opportunity. This is the first time he shares his account of his story in his own words, revealing his thoughts and feelings with details that only he knows, and offering his point of view on how anyone can achieve a better life.



Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario

A true story from award-winning journalist Sonia Nazario recounting the odyssey of a Honduran boy who braves hardship and peril to reach his mother in the United States.

In this astonishing true story, award-winning journalist Sonia Nazario recounts the unforgettable odyssey of a Honduran boy who braves unimaginable hardship and peril to reach his mother in the United States. When Enrique is five years old, his mother, Lourdes, too poor to feed her children, leaves Honduras to work in the United States. The move allows her to send money back home to Enrique so he can eat better and go to school past the third grade. It is an epic journey, one thousands of immigrant children make each year to find their mothers in the United States.