

Rising 7th and 8th grade

Matthew J. Kuss Middle School
Summer Reading 2009

Below is a list of suggested titles, but you may read any **two** age-appropriate chapter book you choose. F = fiction NF = non-fiction

Abrahams, Peter. **DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE: AN ECHO FALLS MYSTERY.** Ingrid lands the starring role in *Alice in Wonderland* while becoming caught up in the murder investigation of an eccentric neighbor. Also, **BEHIND THE CURTAIN.** (F)

Alcott, Louisa M. **LITTLE WOMEN.** The March family endures trials and tribulations while their father is involved in the Civil War. (F)

Armstrong, Jennifer. **SHIPWRECK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD.** During a 1914 Antarctic expedition, the waters freeze and crush Shackleton's ship, the *Endurance*, forcing his crew to make a long, perilous journey across the ice to find rescue. (NF)

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. **HITLER YOUTH: GROWING UP IN HITLER'S SHADOW.** A look at the youth organizations Hitler founded and used to meet his social and military ends. (NF)

Bausum, Ann. **FREEDOM RIDERS: JOHN LEWIS AND JIM ZWERG ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT.** The 1960's saw courageous young people, black and white, risking great personal danger as they participated in the freedom rides during the Civil Rights Movement. (NF)

Bridges, Ruby. **THROUGH MY EYES.** Ruby Bridges tells the moving story of her year in first grade at the all-white William Frantz Public School in New Orleans in 1960. (NF)

Anderson, Laurie Halse. **FEVER 1793.** Against the backdrop of 1793 Yellow Fever outbreak in Philadelphia, fourteen-year-old Matilda struggles to keep herself and those she loves alive. (F)

Bloor, Edward. **TANGERINE.** Twelve-year-old Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness, and is able to discover a haunting truth when his family moves to Tangerine, Florida. (F)

Fleischman, John. **PHINEAS GAGE.** This is the gruesome, true account of an accident that happened to a railroad foreman in Vermont in 1848. A 13-pound iron rod shot through his brain. He survived but became a textbook case in brain science. (NF)

Brontë, Charlotte. **JANE EYRE.** In early 19th century England, an orphaned young woman accepts employment as a governess and soon finds herself in love with her employer, who has a terrible secret. (F)

Gore, Albert. **AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH: THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL WARMING.** Gore examines the climate crisis of the planet, describes what world governments are doing, and offers reasons for serious consideration of the problems. (NF)

Choldenko, Gennifer. **AL CAPONE DOES MY SHIRTS.** In 1935, Moose Flanagan and his family move to Alcatraz Island where his father has found work. He must balance the responsibilities of caring for his autistic sister while coping with the free spirited warden's daughter in the prison housing such notorious criminals as Al Capone. (F)

Jackson, Donna M. **ER VETS: LIFE IN AN ANIMAL EMERGENCY ROOM.** Pet lovers will enjoy this real-life look into the daily world of veterinarians. (NF)

Cummings, Priscilla. **RED KAYAK.** Brady knows that his friends are responsible for a mean prank that results in an accidental tragedy. Plagued by this guilty secret, Brady struggles with the truth and its consequences. (F)

Mah, Adeline Yen. **CHINESE CINDERELLA: THE TRUE STORY OF AN UNWANTED DAUGHTER.** Chinese Cinderella is the perfect title for Adeline Yen Mah's memoir of her childhood growing up in China during the 1940s as she endures life ruled by a cruel stepmother. (NF)

Draper, Sharon. **DOUBLE DUTCH.** Three eighth grade friends cope with problems while preparing for the International Double Dutch jump rope competition. (F)

Murphy, Jim. **AMERICAN PLAGUE.** Drawing on firsthand accounts, medical and non-medical, Murphy re-creates the fear and panic of the yellow fever epidemic that hit the nation's capital more than 200 years ago, the social conditions that caused the disease to spread, and the arguments about causes and cures. (NF)

Elliott, Laura. **UNDER A WAR-TORN SKY.** Take a look at Nazi-occupied Europe through the eyes and experiences of Henry Forester, a young flier shot down during World War II. (F)

Farmer, Nancy. **HOUSE OF THE SCORPION.** Matt is the young clone of El Patron, the 140-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire located between Mexico and the United States. (F)

Feinstein, John. **LAST SHOT: A FINAL FOUR MYSTERY.** Stevie and Susan Carol win a sports writing contest and have a chance to cover the NCAA Final Four games. When these teenage journalists discover a scheme to fix the games, they go undercover to stop the plot. Also, **VANISHING ACT** and **COVER-UP.** (F)

Roberts, David and Jeremy Leslie. **PICK ME UP: STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW.** This book is filled with facts, pictures and intriguing trivia. It is an interesting alternative to the *Guinness Book of World Records* books. (NF)

Flake, Sharon. **THE SKIN I'M IN.** Thirteen-year-old Maleeka, an excellent student who is choosing the wrong friends, meets a new teacher who helps her discover who she is and what she believes. (F)

Uusma, Bea. **THE MAN WHO WENT TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE MOON: THE STORY OF APOLLO 11 ASTRONAUT MICHAEL COLLINS.** This is the story of Michael Collins who maneuvered through space while the first man walked on the moon. It includes scrapbook-style photos, notes and seldom-mentioned details. (NF)

George, Jean Craighead. **MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN.** A boy builds a treehouse in the mountains and learns to survive on his own. (F)

Giff, Patricia Reilly. **PICTURES OF HOLLIS WOODS.** A troubled twelve-year-old orphan, staying with an elderly artist who needs her, remembers the only other time she was happy in a foster home, with a family that truly seemed to care about her. (F)

Woodford, Chris. **COOL STUFF AND HOW IT WORKS.** Computer-generated images explain how many devices and processes of modern technology work, covering such inventions as HDTV, game consoles, robot cars, helicopters, space probes, oil rigs, mass dampers, biometric id's, and tsunami alert systems. (NF)

Wulffson, Don. **THE KID WHO INVENTED THE POPSICLE.** Brief, factual stories of how various familiar things were invented, many by accident, make for an informative read. Also, **THE KID WHO INVENTED THE TRAMPOLINE.** (NF)

Johnson, Angela. **BIRD.** Bird is a runaway. Ethan is adjusting to a heart transplant. Jay mourns his brother's death. The fate of these three characters intertwines as each works through life's difficulties. (F)

Kinney, Jeff. **DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: GREG HEFFLEY'S JOURNAL.** This novel in cartoons is the story of Greg's first year in middle school. His mom makes him keep a diary, and he records his hilarious experiences with family, friends, and school. Also, **DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: RODRICK RULES.** (F)

Meyer, Stephenie. **TWILIGHT.** Bella leaves Phoenix to live with her father in Forks, Washington, where she meets and falls for Edward, a boy who isn't totally human. (F)

Mikaelson, Ben. **TOUCHING SPIRIT BEAR.** Cole, in order to avoid going to prison, agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the Native American Circle Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island. (F)

Paolini, Christopher. **ERAGON.** The fate of an Empire rests in the hands of Eragon, a fifteen-year-old boy who finds a mysterious stone that brings a dragon hatchling. With an ancient sword and an old storyteller for guidance, he is thrust into a world of destiny, magic and power. Also, **ELDEST.** (F)

Peck, Richard. **THE TEACHER'S FUNERAL.** After the death of their teacher, old Miss Myrt Arbuckle, Russell and his younger brother attempt to sabotage their older sister, Tansy, the new teacher in this rural Indiana one- room schoolhouse. (F)

Pullman, Phillip. **THE GOLDEN COMPASS.**

This fantasy relates Lyra's adventures while preventing her best friend and other kidnapped children from becoming victims of experiments in the Far North. Also, **THE SUBTLE KNIFE** and **THE AMBER SPYGLASS.** (F)

Ryan, Pam Munoz. **ESPERANZA RISING.** After her father is murdered, Esperanza Ortega is forced to flee her beloved El Rancho de las Rosas in Mexico to a migrant camp in California. (F)

Selznick, Brian. **THE INVENTION OF HUGO CABRET**. When twelve-year-old Hugo, an orphan living and repairing clocks within the walls of a Paris train station in 1931, meets a mysterious toy seller and his goddaughter, his undercover life and his biggest secret are jeopardized. This is the winner of the 2008 Caldecott Medal. (F)

Stevenson, Robert Louis. **TREASURE ISLAND**. An innkeeper and his son find a map on the body of a deceased guest. The map promises a pirate's fortune and many adventures follow. (F)

Taylor, Mildred D. **ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY**. The story of an African-American family living in Mississippi and how they faced prejudice and discrimination during the Depression of the 1930s. Prequel is **THE LAND**, and the sequel is **LET THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN**. (F)

Woodson, Jacqueline. **HUSH**. Toswiah Green, now Evie, will never be the same. After her policeman father testifies in a murder case, she and her family must enter the witness protection program. (F)

Spinelli, Jerry. **STARGIRL**. Sixteen-year-old Leo tells the story of Stargirl Caraway, the free spirit who enrolls at Mica High School, not exactly the "hotbed of non-conformity." Also, **LOVE, STARGIRL**. (F)

Shusterman, Neal. **THE SCHWA WAS HERE**. Schwa isn't an obscure sound, but an average kid who seems to appear and disappear without being noticed. In an accidental friendship, he meets Antsy Bonano, who wants to take advantage of his ability to be nearly invisible, and Lexie, who cannot see. (F)

Ambrose, Stephen E. **THE GOOD FIGHT: HOW WWII WAS WON**. Ambrose presents a concise, readable chronicle of WWII through amazing photographs and research. (NF)

Borden, Louise. **THE JOURNEY THAT SAVED CURIOUS GEORGE**. This beautifully illustrated picture book tells the story of Margaret and H.A. Rey and their escape from Paris during WWII. (NF)

Burns, Loree Griffin. **TRACKING TRASH: FLOTSAM, JETSAM, AND THE SCIENCE OF OCEAN MOTION**. This book describes the work of a man who tracks trash as it travels great distances by way of ocean currents. (NF)

Caputo, Philip. **10,000 DAYS OF THUNDER: A HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR**. This is a straightforward overview with pictures of the Vietnam War. (NF)

Bingham, Kelly L. **SHARK GIRL**. After a shark attack causes the amputation of her right arm, fifteen-year-old Jane, an aspiring artist, struggles to come to terms with her loss and the changes it imposes on her day to day life and future plans. (F)

Bloor, Edward. **TAKEN**. In the year 2035, kidnapping is a major growth industry. Charity lives a life of privilege in a secure, gated community with full time security. But when security breaks down and she is kidnapped, she knows the rules: do not try to escape, do not panic, and wait for your parents to deliver the ransom. But things go tragically wrong. (F)

Davis, Sampson; George Jenkins and Rameck Hunt. **WE BEAT THE STREET: HOW A FRIENDSHIP PACT LED TO SUCCESS**. The thoughts and stories are shared from the childhoods, teen years and young adult lives of three men who made a high school pledge to each other to stay safe from drugs, gangs and crime, and work to become doctors – a goal they have achieved. (NF)

Summer Reading for Rising 7th and 8th Graders

We hope you had a wonderful year at Kuss Middle School! To ensure you maintain the literacy skills you have been working on during the school year, Kuss Middle School requires each rising 7th grade student to read **at least two** books.

While reading, you should use the seven habits of proficient readers to better understand and engage with the text.

Habit	Reader's Mind Set	Conversation Starter
1. Activate Schema Make Connections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-to-Self • Text-to-Text • Text-to-World 	I need to think about what I already know and how it is connected to what I am reading.	"That reminds me of...."
2. Create Images/Visualizing Use all five senses and emotions	I need to use my senses to help me understand what I am reading.	"These words make me ---see, hear, taste, smell, and/or feel (physically or emotionally)..."
3. Asking Questions	I need to pay attention to the questions in my head when I am reading.	"I wonder-who, what, where, when, why, how...." "I wonder why the author.."
4. Determine Importance	I need to recognize what is important and what is not important when I read.	"I think this is important because..."
5. Make Inferences	I need to notice meaning that may not be directly stated in the text.	"Even though it doesn't say it in the text, I think...because..."
6. Synthesize Move beyond summarizing and retelling to construct meaning.	I need to think about how all the ideas and pieces fit together, including those that are in the text and those that are in my head, to help me come to an understanding of the whole text.	"I think this is the big idea because..." "I've come to understand that...because..."
7. Monitor for Meaning	I need to understand that reading must make sense, and I need to do something when reading doesn't make sense.	"I am confused by..." "I think I get it now because..."

Upon completion of **each** book, students are required to write a **Literary Letter** to a friend, parent, or teacher (use the attached form as a guide, but write or type the letter) **OR** design an **8 ½ x 11 inch poster**.

Poster Requirements:

- Title and author
- Includes details from the book that give others a thorough understanding of the plot, setting, and main characters
- An image that represents some aspect of plot, setting, or theme and an explanation of why you chose the image
- An image of the main character and five words that indicate his/her character traits (personality).
- A quote from the book and an explanation of why you chose the quote.

The literary letter and poster are your FIRST GRADED ASSIGNMENTS in 7th and 8th grade.

Literary Letter

(date)

Dear _____,

Paragraph 1: Give some background information about the book. What is the title? Who is the author? To what genre (type of book) does it belong?

Paragraph 2: Provide a summary of the book in which you reveal the main setting, major characters, major events, and/or main conflict. Help the reader get the general idea of the book. Do not give away the ending!

Paragraph 3: Explain how you used **at least** one of the **seven habits**. Provide **at least** one **quote** from the book that helped you to use the habit. Describe how the quote helped you use the habit. Explain how it helped you understand or enjoy the story.

Paragraph 4: Explain to whom you would recommend this book and why AND/OR explain a major theme you recognized in the book and provide examples from the text that show the theme.

Paragraph 5: Wrap up your letter and say goodbye.

Sincerely,

(Write your signature.)