

8th Grade Advanced English Summer Reading –  
*The Hobbit, Little Women or The Hunger Games*

Welcome to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade! You will need to read **TWO** novels over the summer. This year you have a choice as to first, more challenging novel you will read over the summer - *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott or *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins. *The Hobbit* deals with magic and monsters, traps and treasures, and an extraordinary, though reluctant hero named Bilbo Baggins. *Little Women* deals with the growing up of four sisters. *The Hunger Games* deals with a futuristic America where a sixteen year old girl must fight to survive by making the right choices that “weigh survival against humanity and life against love.” You will also need to complete the other Summer Reading Assignment that all of the eighth graders are doing. This will be your second book. While this may seem like a lot, understand that you have been selected for Advanced English which means you can handle it. ☺

You will be required to complete a project and presentation on one book and take a test on the other. You may choose which book you use for each assignment. Presentations and the test will occur during the first week of school, so be prepared!

Project – Choose **one** of the following writing projects:

- *Book review*: Write an article for the school newspaper OR a letter to a friend critiquing your book. Your piece should include a brief summary of the plot, your opinion of the book and the reasons for that opinion. Your opinion must be supported by quotes and other specific details from the book.
- *Soundtrack*: If your book were turned into a movie, what would the soundtrack be? Make a tape or cd containing at least EIGHT songs in the order they would appear in the movie. Then write an explanation, telling where in the story each song would fit and why you chose that song. Your choices must be supported by quotes and specific details from both the song and the book.
- *Comic Strip*: Choose ONE dramatic or important scene from your book and turn it into a comic strip. Your comic strip must include at least EIGHT panels, each of which contains both artwork and dialog. Captions are also useful to set the scene. The comic strip must be in color on blank (not lined) paper. \*\* DO NOT CHOOSE THIS PROJECT IF ART IS NOT YOUR STRONG POINT.
- *Conduct an interview*: Conduct an “interview” with a major character from your book. Write at least twenty questions and answers pertaining to what happened in the book and why the character behaved as he/she did. Questions should be in a logical order, with the answer to one question often providing material for the next question. If you are not familiar with interviews, watch an interview program such as *60 Minutes* or *20/20* to get an idea what kinds of questions interviewers ask.
- *Change the ending*: How else could your book have ended? Summarize the plot (especially the conflict) of your book, including the ending. Then

write an alternate ending of at least FIVE PARAGRAPHS. Be sure to resolve the conflict in a different way and show how the change in resolution changes the outcome of the story. BE SURE TO WRITE THIS IN STORY FORM, INCLUDING DESCRIPTION, DIALOGUE, ETC.

- *PowerPoint*: Create a presentation of AT LEAST 12 slides that includes a title slide, setting, description of main character(s), plot summary (NO SPOILERS, PLEASE!), themes, and your opinion/reflections on the book. Be creative—include any pictures and/or sounds that are relevant to the presentation. DO NOT fill slides with text which has been copied and pasted from another source or even written by you. Each slide may contain NO MORE THAN 3-5 bullets (dots) and no more than 4 words per bullet.

All projects must address the topic completely. The projects may be hand written or typed, though we would definitely prefer typed.

Any type of plagiarism (using someone else's words **or ideas** without crediting the source) will result in a zero grade for the assignment.

If you have any questions over the summer, you may contact Mrs. Sooy at [melissa.sooy@millvillenj.gov](mailto:melissa.sooy@millvillenj.gov) or Mrs. Tymkiw at [judith.tymkiw@millvillenj.gov](mailto:judith.tymkiw@millvillenj.gov).

Have a great summer...happy reading...see you in September!!!

## Summer Reading List for Students Entering Eighth Grade – 2<sup>nd</sup> book choices for Advanced English

### AUTHORS

J.K. Rowling  
Sharon Draper (\*\*except *Tears of a Tiger*)  
Lois Duncan  
Paul Fleishman  
Jerry Spinelli  
Jane Yolen  
Maya Angelou  
Mitch Albom (i.e. *Five People You Meet in Heaven*)  
Christopher Paolini (i.e. *Eragon*)  
Veronica Roth ( *Divergent* series)  
Phillip Pullman (i.e. *The Golden Compass*)  
Richard Beck (i.e. *A Year Down Yonder*)  
Margaret Haddix (\*\*except *Among the Hidden*)  
Ray Bradbury (\*\*except *Dandelion Wine*)  
Walter Dean Myers  
Meg Cabot (i.e. *Princess Diaries*)  
Ann Brashears (i.e. *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*)  
Karen Cushman (i.e. *The Midwife's Apprentice*)  
Judy Blume (i.e. *Are You There God It's Me, Margaret and Tiger Eyes*)  
James Herriott (i.e. *All Things Bright and Beautiful*)  
Franklin Dixon (i.e. Hardy Boys series)  
Caroline Keene (i.e. Nancy Drew series)  
Neil Gaiman (i.e. *Anansi Boys*)  
Anne Schraff (i.e. Bluford High series)

### BOOKS

*Artemis Fowl* – Eoin Colfer

In order to free his father from the Russian Mafiya, Artemis must join forces with the fairy police and his familiar nemesis, Captain Holly Short.

*Artemis Fowl: The Arctic Incident* – Eoin Colfer

Artemis Fowl had just returned to school when it's discovered that his father is still alive. Before life can return to normal, Artemis junior meets up once more with the fairy people.

***Daughter of Venice*** – D. Napoli

In 1592, Donata is a noble girl living in a palazzo on the Grand Canal. Donata, like all younger daughters, will be sent to a convent. Donata longs to be tutored like her brothers and to see the Venice she has glimpsed only on the map. She dresses as a boy and escapes the palazzo on the Grand Canal to see the world before she is shut away, and to try to find a way to escape her fate.

***Homeless Bird*** – G. Whelan

Married and promptly widowed at 13, Koly finds herself in the grim position of being cast out by a society that has no place for girls like her. With a seemingly hopeless future in India, this courageous and spirited young woman sets out to forge her own destiny.

***Hope Was Here*** – J. Bauer

Leaving the excitement of New York City to run a diner in rural Wisconsin, Hope doesn't expect to feel at home there, just as she doesn't expect to get caught up in town politics. What follows is Hope meets politics, corruption, and her past head on in this funny laugh-out-loud story about honor, trust and serving up your very best.

***Nory Ryan's Song*** – Patricia

Nory Ryan's family has lived on Maidin Bay on the west coast of Ireland for generations, raising a pig and a few chickens, planting potatoes, getting by. Times are never easy on Maidin Bay, and this year a terrible blight attacks the potatoes. No crop means starvation. Twelve-year-old Nory must summon the courage and ingenuity to find food, to find hope, to find a way to help her family survive.

***Phoenix Rising*** – K. Hess

The accident at Cookshire changed Nyle's life, but not in the way she expected...Nyle and her grandmother live peacefully on their farm - until the night of the accident at the Cookshire nuclear power plant.

***Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind*** – S. Staples

Set in Pakistan, Shabanu and her sister are to marry brothers as soon as they all come of age. But she will eventually lose her betrothed and be promised to a wealthy landowner to settle a feud. The richness and tragedy of a whole culture are reflected in the fate of this girl's family.

***Skellig*** – D. Almond

Moving to a new fixer-upper home, Michael finds Skellig. Is the creature dying in Michael's garage a man, a bird, an angel, or all three? And what is his connection to Michael's baby sister, who's in the hospital with a heart problem?

***Terpin*** – T. Seidler

Terpin Taft is an easygoing, popular boy who is happy to tell people what they want to hear, even if it means stretching the truth a bit. Until the day he meets a stranger on a train and tells the man a consoling lie. The results are so disastrous that Terpin resolves never again to speak or act except by the truth in his heart.

***The Folk Keeper*** – F. Billingsley

As Folk Keeper at the Rhysbridge Home, Corinna feeds the fierce, dark-dwelling cave Folk; keeps them from souring the milk, killing the chickens, and venting their anger on the neighborhood; and writes it all down in her Folk Record. Since only boys are Folk Keepers, she has disguised herself as a boy, Corin, and it is a boy and a Folk Keeper she intends to stay. Yet there comes a moment when someone else knows the truth.

***Fever 1793*** – Laurie Halse Anderson

In August 1793 fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook is ambitious, adventurous, and sick to death of listening to her mother. Mattie has plans of her own. She wants to turn the Cook Coffeeshouse into the finest business in Philadelphia, the capital of the new United States, but the waterfront is abuzz with reports of disease. "Fever" spreads from the docks and creeps toward Mattie's home, threatening everything she holds dear.

***Acquaintance with Darkness*** – Ann Rinaldi

Chaos reigns in Washington, D.C. after President Lincoln's assassination, but for fourteen-year-old Emily Pigbush, the Union's turmoil is nothing compared to her own struggle. Sent to live with Uncle Valentine after her mother's untimely death, Emily realizes that her best friend's mother was one of John Wilkes Booth's accomplices. Even worse, she suspects that her uncle is breaking the law.

***The Wish*** – G. Levine

When granted her wish to be the most popular girl in school, Wilma, an eighth grader, forgets that she will graduate in three weeks and her popularity will vanish.

***A Girl from Yamhill*** – Beverly Cleary

This book follows the popular children's author from her childhood years in Oregon through high school and into young adulthood. It highlights her family life and her growing interest in writing.

***My Own Two Feet*** – Beverly Cleary

This book, a sequel to *A Girl From Yamhill*, chronicles the life of Beverly Cleary from her college years to the publication of her first book

***The Seeing Stone*** – Crossley Holland

It is 1199 and young Arthur de Caldicot is waiting impatiently to grow up and become a knight. One day his father's friend Merlin gives him a shining piece of obsidian **and** his life becomes entwined with that of his namesake, the Arthur whose story he sees unfold in the stone.

***The Samurai's Tale*** – E. Haugaard

In turbulent sixteenth-century Japan, orphaned Taro is taken in by a general serving the great warlord Takeda Shingen. Taro grows up to become a samurai fighting for the enemies of his dead family.

***Getting Near To Baby*** – A. Coulombis

After their baby sister dies, Willa Jo and Little Sister's family falls apart. Their mother sinks deep into an unshakable depression, so the two older girls are sent to live with their strict Aunt Patty and her husband. Since Little Sister refuses to talk, Willa Jo has to try and make things right in their new home, but she can't stop missing her mother or the life the four of them had before Baby died.

***Winter Town***—Stephen Edmond

Every winter, straight-laced, Ivy League bound Evan looks forward to a visit from Lucy, a childhood pal who moved away after her parent's divorce. But when Lucy arrives this year, she's changed. The former "girl next door" now has chopped dyed black hair, a nose stud, and a scowl. But Evan knows that somewhere beneath the Goth, "Old Lucy" still exists, and he's determined to find her... even if it means angering her.

***After Tupac and D Foster***—Jacqueline Woodson

“Everyone’s got a purpose and it’s just that they gotta figure out what it is and then go have it. ”That’s what D says anyway. D Foster is the girl who shows up on their block one day at the end of summer. She says she got off the bus in Queens because she liked the way the trees looked. That’s the type of girl she is. She’s also a roamer, roaming all over the place. Neeka and the unnamed narrator learn very quickly that D has something they don’t have, something they’re jealous for --- freedom.

***Jacob Have I Loved***—Katherine Paterson

The novel follows the story of the Bradshaws, a family who depends on the father, Truitt Bradshaw, and his crabbing/fishing business on his boat, the *Portia Sue*. Truitt's two daughters, Sara Louise and Caroline, are twins, and Caroline has always been the favorite. She is prettier and more talented, and better at receiving more attention not only from their parents but also from others in the community. The book traces Louise's attempts to free herself from Caroline's shadow, even as she grows into adulthood.

***Never Trust a Dead Man***—Vivian Vande Velde

Selwyn is brokenhearted when the beautiful Anora chooses to marry the awful-but-rich Farold. It’s bad enough when Farold beats him up in front of the villagers, but nothing prepares him for when Farold is found murdered. All accusing fingers point to Selwyn, who is promptly sealed in a burial cave with Farold’s corpse. But they’re not alone in the cave

***Was Superman a Spy?***—Brian Cronin

*Was Superman a Spy?* is a book based on a weekly column called "Comic Book Urban Legends Revealed" that appears over at **Comic Book Resources** every Friday morning. Each column, Brian Cronin answers three reader questions about something that they maybe heard this one time from a friend. Cronin determines whether the rumor is true or false, and then explains the history behind the rumor.

***The Day They Came to Arrest the Book***—Nat Hentoff

Who would have believed that *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn* could cause the worst crisis in the history of George Mason High School? Certainly not Barney Roth, editor of the school paper. But when a small but vocal group of students and parents decide that the book is racist, sexist, and immoral--and should be removed from reading lists and the school library--Barney takes matters into his own hands. When the Huck Finn issue comes up for a hearing, Barney decides to print his story about previous censorship efforts at school. He's sure that investigative reporting and publicity can help the cause. But is he too late to turn the tide of censorship?

***The Zookeeper's Wife***—Diane Ackerman

When Germany invaded Poland, Stuka bombers devastated Warsaw—and the city's zoo along with it. With most of their animals dead, zookeepers Jan and Antonina Zabinski began smuggling Jews into empty cages. Another dozen "guests" hid inside the Zabinskis' villa, emerging after dark for dinner, socializing, and, during rare moments of calm, piano concerts. Jan, active in the Polish resistance, kept ammunition buried in the elephant enclosure and stashed explosives in the animal hospital. Meanwhile, Antonina kept her unusual household afloat, caring for both its human and its animal inhabitants—otters, a badger, hyena pups, lynxes.