

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to eighth grade reading! I hope that you will find this summer reading assignment both pleasant and enlightening. I feel that I have chosen books of high quality, and books varied enough to please every taste.

I hope that you will read everyday and love the books that I have chosen! Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,  
Kerri Pennington

### **Rising 8th Grade Summer Reading List**

You must read two books from the list below. For each book, record the title, the author's name, two complete sentences describing each main character (one for general description-physical and personality, and one for the character's significance to the novel), the central conflict, a five-step listing of the plot (1-starting action of problem, 2-rising action, 3-turning point, 4-falling action, and 5-resolution), a short reaction to the book (why you did or did not like it and your favorite or least favorite character and message. You must use MLA format and type each paper. I will collect your two papers on the first day of school. Good luck, and happy reading!

#### **RULES OF THE ROAD**

Joan Bauer

Sixteen-year-old Jenna gets a job driving the elderly owner of a chain of successful shoe stores from Chicago to Texas in order to confront her son who is trying to force her to retire. Along the way Jenna hones her talents as a saleswoman and finds the strength to face her alcoholic father.

#### **DOWNRIVER**

Will Hobbs

A contemporary adventure story of a group of students stranded in the Grand Canyon while white-water rafting.

#### **WITCH CHILD**

Celia Rees

In mid-1600's, young Mary Nuttall, reveals in her secret journal of the dangerous time where women were accused of being witches and died at the gallows. It is an engrossing story where readers encounter a "real" witch.

#### **HOPE WAS HERE**

Joan Bauer

Sixteen-year-old Hope and her aunt move to a small town in Wisconsin to join the "short, order dance" of life at the Welcome Stairways Diner. In the course of just a few months, Hope encounters issues as diverse as her customers: corruption in politics, a new love, serious illness and the meaning of family.

#### **THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE**

Stephen Crane

A young soldier comes of age under the stress of Civil War combat.

#### **THE GREAT GATSBY**

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Self-made, self invented millionaire Jay Gatsby pursues his lost love, Daisy, with a vengeance. Set against a backdrop of the Jazz age, 1920's America, this novel is extraordinarily beautiful.

#### **ENDER'S GAME**

Orson Scott Card

A science fiction story of an alien attack on earth and the world government's attempt to create military geniuses to win "the game."

## LOST HORIZON

James Hilton

A novel of fantasy in which four people are brought against their will to the mysterious land of Shangri-La, a place where no one grows old.

## THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

Ernest Hemingway

Santiago (the old man) struggles with the great marlin, with age, and with the threat of defeat.

## THE MOVES MAKE THE MAN

Bruce Brooks

Jerome is a bright young basketball player and the only black student in a newly-integrated middle school in North Carolina. He and Bix, a talented shortstop, become best friends, and at times, enemies.

## BULL RUN

Paul Fleischman

The story of the first great battle of the Civil War, told from the points of view of sixteen participants-young and old, black and white, male and female, Northern and Southern.

## OUT OF THE DUST

Karen Hesse

Fourteen-year-old Billie Jo trudges through the 1930 Oklahoma Dust Bowl after her mother dies and her father becomes distant and removed.

## A LONG WAY FROM CHICAGO

Richard Peck

This hilarious series of vignettes follows Joey and Mary Alice for seven summer trips to Grandma's, each one funnier and more surprising than the year before.

## WESTING GAME

Ellen Raskin

The mysterious death of eccentric millionaire Samuel W. Westing brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must uncover the circumstances of his death before they can claim their inheritance. Raskin weaves a twister-like plot and cleverly unravels for a satisfying and surprising ending.

**Your Name**

**8 Literature**

**Date**

**Title of Book**  
**Author's Name**

**Main Characters**

1. *1<sup>st</sup> main character (List main characters in order of importance)*
  - a. *general description-one complete sentence*
  - b. *significance to the novel-one complete sentence*
2. *2<sup>nd</sup> main character*
  - a. *general description*
  - b. *significance to the novel*
3. *3<sup>rd</sup> main character*
  - a. *general description*
  - b. *significance to the novel*

Continue this way until all main characters are listed

**Conflict**

*Explain in a brief paragraph the main conflict the protagonist faces throughout the novel.*

**Plot** (*Address each step in a complete sentence*)

**1. Starting Action:**

**2. Rising Action:**

**3. Climax:**

**4. Falling Action:**

**5. Resolution:**

**Reaction**

*In a brief paragraph, give your reaction to the novel. Address why you did or did not like it, your favorite/least favorite character and part, etc.*

**Theme**

*In a brief paragraph, address the book's major theme, or message. Explain why the author may have chosen this message.*