

READING (ALL GRADES)

- Read at least THREE books of your choice this summer.
- Keep a list of the titles and authors.

At the start of the school year, you will be asked to reference the books in your first writing assignment.

If you are looking for suggestions, look at the Summer Reading List below.

WRITING – 8th Grade

1. Read the following vignette from Sandra Cisneros' novella *The House on Mango Street*, titled "My Name."
2. This piece is from the perspective of a girl named Esperanza who is your age. Following Esperanza's example, please write your own vignette.
 - approximately 250 words
 - about your own name and your family's name
 - Include fun facts about yourself, like what has FASCINATED you this summer (music, film, food, insects, travel, etc.)
 - Be prepared to share your vignette in class as a way to begin to introduce yourselves to your new classmates

"My Name" from *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing.

It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horse woman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse--which is supposed to be bad luck if you're born female—but I think this is a Chinese lie because the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong.

My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry. Until my great-grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chandelier. That's the way he did it.

And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't want to inherit her place by the window.

At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a softer something, like silver, not quite as thick as sister's name Magdalena--which is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least can come home and become Nenny. But I am always Esperanza. I would like to baptize myself under a

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new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze the X will do.

SUMMER READING LIST

Title	Author	Themes	Grade Level 5.5-6.0	Grade Level 6.5 - 7.0	Grade Level 7.5 - 8.0	Grade Level 8.5 - 9.0	Grade Level 9.5 - up *Parental Guidance suggested	Parental Guidance Suggested
The Color of My Words	Lynn Joseph	poverty/ creativity/ writing/ dreams/ goals/ escape		X				
Wild Robot	Peter Brown	teamwork/ROBOT/ shipwreck/ island/ survival / tech/ / animals/ loyalty		X				
Mercy Suarez Changes Gears	Meg Medina	Private school / low income/ family/ friends/ grandpa's dementia	X					
Enchanted Air - Two Cultures, Two Wings	Margarita Engle	novel in verse/ MEMOIR/ Cuban American-2 families/ belonging/ fear/ hope	X					
Year of the Dog	Grace Lin	Chinese American family/ fitting in/ stories/ talents/ new friends	X					
The Invention of Hugo Cabaret	Brian Selznick	Mystery/ Paris/ orphan/ secrets/ toy booth/ train station		X				
The Benefits of Being an Octopus	Ann Braden	dysfunctional home life/ special teacher/ love / hope / healing		X				
The Great Pet Heist	Emily Ecton	Funny /apt building pets/ teamwork/ skill sets/ protection	X					

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The Season of Styx Malone	Kekla Magoon	summer mischief/ adventure/ brothers/ new kid/ funny/ peer pressure/ running away/ motorbike	X						
WISH	Barbara O'Connor	mom problems/ wishes/ dog/ fostering / love/ trust/ new home							
Code 7 - Cracking the Code for an EPIC Life	Bryan R Johnson	7 kids- each has a story/ parents/ expectations/ rules / \$/ games/ goals / determination	X						

The Lost Girl	Anne Ursu	identical twins/ magic/ mystery/ monsters/ female empowerment		X					
Song for a Whale	Lynne Kelly	Hearing impaired/ tech genius/ communication/ bonding/ lonely whale		X					
Who was Leonardo daVinci	Roberta Edwards	NON FICTION - artist /musician /scientist /inventor		X					
How to Look for a Lost Dog	Ann M. Martin	autism / service dog in school / overwhelmed dad/ fun uncle	X						
Reaching for the Moon	Katherine Johnson	autobiography - NASA / math / civil rights	X						
Front Desk	Kelly Yang	immigrant parents/ motel living / secrets/ hiding others/ courage/ kindness/ work after school		X					
Looking for Me .. In This Great Big Family	Betsy R. Rosenthal	huge family / immigrants/ religion / culture/ food / special teacher / middle child/ tragedy/ hope/ love / "American Dream"		X					
Lily to the Rescue (series #1)	W. Bruce Cameron	Funny/ rescue dog rescues other pets / crow/ human mom runs animal shelter	X						

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Eight Keys	Suzanne LaFluer	girl lost parents/ bully/ mystery/ key/ barn/ supportive relatives/ best friend		X				
Hidden Figures - Young Readers' Edition	Margot Lee Shetterly	NON FICTION - African American women mathematicians/ NASA / rocket/ Space Race/ civil rights/ women's rights				X		
Beverly Right Here	Kate DiCamillo	runaway teen / problems with mom / brave/ hard worker/ community/ support/ love / tolerance	X	X				
The Revolution	Sonia Manzano	Spanish Harlem/ Puerto Rican grandma/						

of Evelyn Serrano		secrets/ protests/ based on true events						
White Bird	R.J. Palacio	Julian's grandma's story: France/ Nazi invasion/ classmates/ hiding / survival /kids /kindness		X				
The Giver - graphic novel	Lois Lowry	Dystopian / conformity/ emotions/ contentment/ control / sibling/ love/ memory/ risk/ danger				X		
Free Lunch	Rex Ogle	NON FICTION - poor student / wealthy school / unemployment / hunger/ hope		X	X			
A Song Below Water	Bethany C Morrow	Fantasy / racism / sexism/ mythology / friendship				X	X	
Refugee	Alan Gratz	survival/ betrayal/ hope/ danger/ escape/ journey/ home		X			X	
Other Words for Home	Jasmine Warga	Syria/ revolution/ escape/ USA/ family divided/ new school / drama/ new friends/ freedom						X

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The Prettiest	Brigit Young	puberty/ competition/ jealousy/ flirting/ superficiality/ discomfort/ female empowerment/	X	X				
Becoming Briana	Terri Libenson	school activities/ bat mitzvah/ pressure/ responsibility/ coming of age/ friends/ family		X				
Hey Kiddo	Jarret J. Krosoczka	mom's addiction/ dad gone / kid artist / raised by grandparents/ loud house/ facing truth/ survival / success						
Be Prepared	Vera Brosgol	funny/ fitting in/ \$ issues/ Russian American / Russian sleep away camp/ "cool girl" drama	X	X		X	X	
Amari and the Night Brothers	B.B. Alston	evil magician/ supernatural talents/ missing brother/				X	X	

		fairies/ aliens/ secret training						
The List of Things That Will Not Change	Rebecca Stead	divorce/ stepsister/ 2 dads / mom / love / stability/ friendships		X				
Better Nate than Ever	TIm Federle	New to NYC to be on Broadway/ auditions/ acting/ singing/ dancing/ not giving up/ funny/ hopeful				X	X	
Flying Lessons and Other Stories	Ellen Oh	Short stories/ best authors/ kids/ life/ suceses/ failures/ art/ freindship/ sports/ love		X	X	X		
The Nigth Diary	Veera Hiranandani	India independence from Britain / Pakistan/ religions/ refugees/ family split / love/ hope /	X	X	X			
New Kid	Jerry Craft	Washington Heights NYC/ kid artist/ private school/ differences/ fitting in/ neighborhood	X	X	X			

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Genesis Begins Again	Alicia D. Williams	alcoholism/ eviction/ tough girl bullies/ loneliness/ strong mom / self esteem issues/ issues about race/ fitting in/ self acceptance			X	X		
It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime (Young Readers' Ed)	Trevor Noah	MEMOIR/ poverty/ violence/ determination/ love/ apartheid/ family/ strength/ spirit/ sadness/ humor	X	X				
Pet	Akwaeke Emezi	LGBTQ / child abuse/ fantasy / profanity/ truth/ police / gun control / oppression /revolution				X	X	
Ghost Boys	Jewell Parker Rhodes	young boys / different times in history / death/ ghosts / violence/ racism / hope / love / truth/ empathy/ judgement				X	X	
The Line Tender	Kate Allen	shark / death/ conservation / loss of	X	X	X			

		mom/ resilience/ protection/ best friends/ community/ love/ sea and Earth						
Maybe He Just Likes You	Barbara Dee	boys harrasing girl / discomfort/ adult's judgement/ speaking up/ trusting feelings/			X	X	X	
Will Grayson, Will Grayson	John Green & David Levithan	LGBTQ boys/ feelings/ high school drama / musical/ songwriting/ alternate voices/ confusion/ best friends/				X	X	
The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing	M.T. Anderson	pre-revolutionary Boston/ slavery / government experiments/ humanity/ patriotism/ justice/ liberty/ society						X

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Look Both Ways	Jason Reynolds	middle school kids / 10 short stories / 1 day / originals/problems/pain/ joy/ fun/ needs/ gross teen humor/ "weirdness"/ wonder			X	X		
The Running Dream	Wendelin Van Draanen	athlete/ competition/ car accident/ death/ injury/determination/ hope/ friends/ fundraising/ inspiration/ teamwork					X	X
BOMB	Steve Sheinkin	NON FICTION - the race to build and steal the world's most dangerous weapon					X	X
The Wisdom of Wolves	Jim and Jaime Dutcher	NON FICTION curiosity /compassion/ wild wolfpacks/ value system/ connections b/t human & animal world/ family					X	
No Summit out of Sight	Jordan Romero	NON FICTION - youngest to ever climb the tallest mountains / 7 continents / Mt. Everest at 13 yrs old/ frustration/ triumph				X	X	
Beastly Brains	Nancy Castaldo	NON FICTION - animals "talk", think,	X	X	X			

		and feel/ photos/ examples						
Roses and Radicals	Susan Zimet & Todd Hasak-Lowy	NON FICTION - seventy years of fighting for women's right to vote/ The women who made it happen	X	X				
Phinneas Gage	John Fleischman	NON FICTION - construction accident/ hole in the head/ survival but changed personality/ studied by scientists			X	X	X	

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In the Shadow of Liberty	Kenneth C. Davis	NON FICTION - slaves owned by 4 presidents/ slavery and the founding of America				X	X	
Girl Code	Andrea Gonzalez	NON FICTION - gaming/ going viral / 2 tech start up teens create a game / fame/ social issues/ anxiety / self worth			X	X		
Dragon Hoops	Gene Luen Yang	basketball / courage/ teachers/ coaches/ California/ kids change adults				X	X	
Older than Dirt	Don Brown & Michael Perfit	NON FICTION - wild changes of Earth / comic format / Big Bang and present day	X	X	X			
Code Talker	Joseph Bruchac	- Marines / WWII / Navajo teen / messages in code/ based on true story/ prejudice / war/ patriotism/ bravery/ integrity			X	X	X	
Primates	Jim Ottaviani	NON FICTION - graphic novel format /human-primate behavior/ Goodall, Fossey,Galdikas/ science nudity		X	X			
The Eagle Huntress	Aisholpan Nurgaiv	NON FICTION - Mongolia / first girl to win hunt with her trained eagle/ supportive dad/ determination /survival/ power	X	X	X			
Spooked!	Gail Jarrow	NON FICTION - 1938 radio broadcast/ Americans believed martians had invaded Earth/ fake news			X	X	X	
Undefeated	Steve Sheinkin	NON FICTION - football/ Jim Thorpe/ boarding schools/ Native American culture/ football history/rules / plays			X	X	X	

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The Girl Who Owned a City (graphic novel)	O.T. Nelson & Joelle Jones	PARENT approval ***no adults/ virus/ kids run wild/ gangs/ hunger/ girl hero/ protection/ safety/ secret/ hiding		X	X	X		
Everthing Sad is Untrue	Daniel Nayeri	MEMOIR - strong mom / Persian- Iran/ refugee / middle school / myths/ tornadoes/ "gross" teen humor/ family/ religion				X	X	X
Nala's World	Dean Nicholson and Gary Jenkins	MEMOIR - photos / youtube star/ man bikes around the world with his rescued BFF - Nala, the cat				X	X	