



Manhattan School for Children

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Susan Rappaport
Principal

Dear “Soon-to-be Eighth Graders,”

Welcome to the eighth grade! In order to stay in reading shape during the summer months, you are assigned to read at least three (3) books. You may choose from the list below or use this list as a guide to help you find other books that would interest you. It’s your choice. After you read each book, you will need to do a project based on that book. You will be asked to share two (2) favorite projects with your teachers and classmates in the Fall.

Some reading project ideas include (but are not limited to):

- a response to literature following the format you learned in 7th grade
- a poster, painting or drawing (illustrating important events, settings & characters)
- a labeled story board (illustrating important events, settings & characters)
- a sequel to the story
- a series of diary or journal entries “written” by a character in the book

This summer each student is also being asked to visit a museum or art gallery, or to attend a concert or play and write a response to this experience. These responses will also be shared with your teacher and classmates in the Fall. Your response should include the name of the art institution that was visited, the name of the work of art (painting, sculpture, play, musical piece), and the name of the artist, playwright or composer. Each response should be at least one page and include a description of the work of art. Tell us why you chose this piece, together with your connections to this art work and questions you would like to ask the artist if you could.

Eighth Grade Reading list

Anderson, Laurie Halse, Fever, and 1793

Bakker, Robert, Raptor Red

Cormier, Robert, The Chocolate War

Delany, Sarah & Elizabeth, Having Our Say

Fleischman, Paul, Bull Run

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, Running Out of Time and Just Ella

Hautman, Peter, Hole in the Sky

Holt, Kimberly Wills, My Louisiana Sky

Johnson, Angela, Heaven

Hinton, S.E., The Outsiders and Rumble Fish

Junger, Sebastian, The Perfect Storm

Kinsella, W. P., Shoeless Joe

Konigsburg, E.L., Silent to the Bone (or other novels by this author)

Krakauer, Jon, Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster

Myers, Walter Dean, Monster and Ali--The Greatest (or others by this author)

Paton, Alan, Cry, the Beloved Country

Paulson, Gary, Soldier's Heart (or other novels by this author)

Sachar, Louis, Holes

Spinelli, Jerry, Crash (or any novel by this author)

Woodson, Jaqueline, From the Notebook of Melanin Sun and I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This...

Eighth graders who are considering auditioning for High School drama programs should also read and become familiar with plays whose main characters are close to their age. This will help you to choose monologues for auditions. (Generally, High Schools want to see one serious and one comic monologue. Both monologues should be modern; no classics, like Shakespeare!) The Drama Book Store on 40th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues is a good resource, as is the Drama section of the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center. You'll find many anthologies with scenes and monologues for young student actors. Some script ideas include:

Jules Feiffer, Feiffer's People (comic)

Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun (serious)

Tom Jones & Harvey Schmidt, The Fantastics (comic)

Arthur Lawrence, West Side Story (serious)

George Kaufmann & Moss Hart, Stage Door and You Can't Take it With You (comic)

Arthur Miller, The Crucible and Death of a Salesman (serious)

Louis Peterson, Take a Giant Step (serious)

Peter Schaeffer, Amadeus and Equus (serious)

Neil Simon, Brighton Beach Memoirs, Biloxi Blues, and The Good Doctor (comic)

Joseph Stein, Enter Laughing (comic)

John Steinbeck, Of Mice and Men (serious)

Thornton Wilder, Our Town (comic / serious)

Tennessee Williams, The Glass Menagerie (serious)

August Wilson, Fences (serious)