

**Dear Language Arts Students,**

**One of the primary benefits of reading books is its ability to develop critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are crucial when it comes to making important day to day decisions. The more you read, the deeper your understanding becomes about what you're reading and its application. The purpose of this summer work is to help prepare you for your upcoming language arts class. This work will tap into your prior knowledge around the elements of fiction as well as sharpen your skills as a reader. Summer Work will be due on Friday, September 7, and will count as 3% of your first Trimester Grade. Summer work WILL NOT be accepted after September 12<sup>th</sup>. Paper copies can be brought to school next Fall or electronic copies can be submitted to : [8thGradeELA@timberlane.net](mailto:8thGradeELA@timberlane.net)**

**Have a great summer!**

## ELA Summer Assignment:

### Directions:

**Please choose one of the following options below based the novel you selected from the grade specific book list. The Book list is attached.**

**1. Keep a Journal in the Voice of a Character from the Book:** Choose a character from your novel. Follow the events of the novel and give your chosen character's impressions and reflections on those events. For example, a character might have been sad after the loss of a friend, but how would she write about that in a journal? What thoughts are racing through her mind? Who does she turn to for support? Is there any anger or frustration in her voice? Pick this project if you feel like the book's characters really came alive for you.

*Grade 6: 3 entries (include 2 elements of fiction: character//setting//plot//theme)*

*Grade 7: 4 entries (include 3 elements of fiction)*

*Grade 8: 4 entries (include all 4 elements of fiction)*

**2. Write A Summary:** Be sure to include important events (plot), major characters, the setting (time and place) and any themes you identified in the book. The last paragraph should be a review of the book: did you like it? Who would you recommend it to? What was your favorite part? Choose this project if you enjoy writing about what you've read.

*Grade 6: 3 paragraphs*

*Grade 7: 4 paragraphs*

*Grade 8: 5 paragraphs*

**3. Create a Film Poster for Your Book:** Imagine that your book has been made into a movie. How would you create a poster that shows something significant about the plot and/or theme of the story while simultaneously attracting a big audience? What famous actors would best play the roles? Who would direct it? **On the back of your poster, you should include a review of the book. This review should be at least one paragraph in length and highlight your favorite parts.** Pick this project if you think of yourself as a film buff or pop culture know-it-all.

*Grade 6: focus on the plot (events within the story) and characters*

*Grade 7: focus on the plot, characters, and setting*

*Grade 8: focus on character, setting, plot, and theme(s)*

**4. Make a Mini-Movie About Your Book:** If you're lucky enough to have advanced movie making software (like iMovie, for instance) on your computer, feel free to create a masterpiece. If not, don't worry. If you have Windows, chances are you have [Movie Maker](#) without even knowing about it. If it's your first time making a movie on the computer, think about

downloading [Microsoft's Photo Story](#). It's free and simple to use and has enough features (photo effects, neat transitions, the ability to add music) that you can create a pretty cool product. Choose this project if you dream about being the next Steven Spielberg or George Lucas.

*Grade 6: focus on the plot and characters*

*Grade 7: focus on the plot, characters, and setting*

*Grade 8: focus on character, setting, plot, and theme(s)*

**5. Give a Book Talk:** Here's your chance to hook your classmates and introduce them to a book you read this summer.

Prepare a 3-5 minute book talk. Be sure to include the following information: title, author, genre, hook (a short description of the book using sensory imagery), a few details about the setting, a 2-3 sentence plot summary, a few pieces of information about the main characters, and a conclusion (tell why others should read this book). You'll share your book talk in the first week of school in LA. Choose this project if public speaking is something you enjoy!

*Grade 6: focus on the plot and characters*

*Grade 7: focus on the plot, characters, and setting*

*Grade 8: focus on character, setting, plot, and theme(s)*

All projects must include:

- Your full name
- Novel title
- Novel author

Project due date: Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup>

Grading: **This assignment is worth 3% of your Trimester 1 grade.**

	100	85	75	65
Effort and Content Knowledge	Significant effort shown  Content knowledge shows depth of understanding	Some effort shown  Content knowledge shows understanding	Little effort shown  Content knowledge shows partial understanding	No effort shown  Content knowledge not shown
Other Requirements	Submitted on time  Editing is flawless or near-flawless  Work is complete	Submitted on time  Editing is accurate in most areas  Work is mostly complete	Submitted late but made up within 1 week  Editing needs improvement  Somewhat complete	Submitted more than a week late  Editing needs significant improvement  Half or less of assignment is complete

# Grade 8 Summer Reading

## Quick Picks

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Overview</u>
<b><i>Take Me to the River</i></b>	<b>Will Hobbs</b>  <b>184 Pages</b>  <b>Adventure Fiction</b>	Fourteen-year-old Dylan Sands has come all the way to the Big Bend on the Texas-Mexico border to paddle the fabled Rio Grande with his cousin Rio. As the boys are packing their raft and canoe for ten days in the canyons, six Black Hawk helicopters appear overhead and race across the river into Mexico. The Army warns them that a hurricane is approaching the coast. Convincing themselves that their chances of running into a storm are slim, Dylan and Rio launch onto the wildest and most remote waters in the Southwest. Downriver, a man appears with a seven-year-old boy, begging for help . . . and the storm is upon them. Danger, suspense, and the ever-looming troubles in Mexico drive this white-knuckle adventure forward at a breakneck pace.
<b><i>Quarterback Season</i></b>	<b>Fred Bowen</b> <b>132 Pages</b>  <b>Sports Fiction</b>	As a school assignment, eighth-grader Matt Monroe keeps a journal about his team's football.
<b><i>Don't You Dare Read This Mrs. Dunphrey</i></b>	<b>Margaret Peterson Haddix</b>  <b>125 Pages</b>  <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	Tish Bonner is required to keep a journal for sophomore English class but is allowed to mark those entries she wants unread. Once satisfied that her teacher is sincere about not snooping, Tish begins a private narrative of her difficult life. Her writing is intelligent, independent, slangy, sarcastic--and troubled. Tish is an underachieving "big hair girl," who cracks gum in class and works after school because her mother, severely depressed, is barely able to pay the bills. When her abusive father returns after a two-year absence, Tish records many family crises, ending with an account of the abandonment of herself and her little brother by both parents. At first determined not to ask for outside help, Tish finally makes the difficult decision to ask her teacher to read the entire journal. A brief, gritty documentary novel.
<b><i>Good Dog</i></b>	<b>Dan Gemeinhardt</b>  <b>290 Pages</b>	"Brodie was a good dog and good dogs go to heaven. Except Brodie can't move on. Not just yet. As wonderful as his glimpse of the afterlife is, he can't forget the boy he left behind. The boy he loved, and who loved him in return. The boy who's still in danger. So Brodie breaks the rules of heaven. He returns to Earth as a spirit. With the help of two other lost souls -- lovable pitbull Tuck and surly housecat Patsy -- he is determined to find his boy and to save him. Even if it costs him paradise. Even if he loses his eternal soul. Because it's what a good dog would do."
<b><i>Rules</i></b>	<b>Cynthia Lord</b>  <b>200 Pages</b> <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	Frustrated at life with an autistic brother, twelve-year-old Catherine longs for a normal existence but her world is further complicated by a friendship with a young paraplegic.
<b><i>Roller Girl</i></b>	<b>Victoria Jamieson</b>  <b>Graphic Novel</b>	A graphic novel adventure about a girl who discovers roller derby right as she and her best friend are growing apart"

<b><i>Lumberjane: Beware the Kitten Holy</i></b>	<b>Noelle Stevenson &amp; Grace Ellis</b>  Graphic Novel	"At Miss Quinzella Thiskwin Penniquiquil Thistle Crumpet's Camp for Hardcore Lady-types, things are not what they seem. Three-eyed foxes, secret caves, anagrams. Luckily, Jo, April, Mal, Molly, and Ripley are five bad, butt-kicking best pals determined to have an awesome summer together...and they're not going to let a magical quest or an array of supernatural critters get in their way! The mystery keeps getting bigger, and it all begins here"
<b><i>Peanut</i></b>	<b>Halliday, Ayun</b>  Graphic Novel	Nervous about starting her sophomore year at a new high school, Sadie decides to make herself more interesting by claiming to be allergic to peanuts, but her lie quickly spirals out of control.
<b><i>Sisters</i></b>	<b>Raina Telgemeier</b>  Graphic Novel	The author relates, in graphic form, her experiences after she injured her two front teeth and had to have surgeries and wear embarrassing braces and headgear, all while also dealing with the trials and tribulations of middle school.

## Intermediate

<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Author</u></b>	<b><u>Overview</u></b>
<b><i>Refugee</i></b>	<b>Alan Gratz</b>  <b>338 Pages Historical Fiction</b>	"Although separated by continents and decades, Josef, a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany; Isabel, a Cuban girl trying to escape the riots and unrest plaguing her country in 1994; and Mahmoud, a Syrian boy in 2015 whose homeland is torn apart by violence and destruction, embark on harrowing journeys in search of refuge, discovering shocking connections that tie their stories together"
<b><i>Code of Honor</i></b>	<b>Alan Gratz</b>  <b>278 Pages</b>  <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	When Iranian-American Kamran Smith learns that his big brother, Darius, has been labelled a terrorist, he sets out to piece together the codes and clues that will save his brother's life and his country from a deadly terrorist attack.
<b><i>One Crazy Summer</i></b>	<b>Rita Williams-Garcia</b>  <b>208 Pages Historical Fiction</b>	In the summer of 1968, after traveling from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to spend a month with the mother they barely know, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters arrive to a cold welcome as they discover that their mother, a dedicated poet and printer, is resentful of the intrusion of their visit and wants them to attend a nearby Black Panther summer camp.
<b><i>Saving Sky</i></b>	<b>Diane Stanley</b>  <b>199 Pages</b>	The country is at war, terrorists strike at random, widespread rationing is in effect, and the power grid is down. But thirteen-year-old Sky Brightman is remarkably untouched by it all. She lives off the grid on sixty acres of rural New Mexico ranch land with chores to do and horses to ride and no television or internet to bring disturbing news into her family's adobe house. Sky's schoolmates think she's a little weird.  Then a string of mysterious arrests begins, and her new friend, Kareem, becomes a target. Sky is finally forced to confront the world in all its complexity. Summoning her considerable courage and ingenuity, she takes a stand against injustice. With humor, hope, and fierce determination, she proves that even a child can change the world.

	<b>Realistic Fiction</b>	
<b><i>Goodbye Stranger</i></b>	<b>Rebecca Stead</b>  <b>289 Pages</b>  <b>Realistic Fiction (Multiple Perspectives)</b>	3 interwoven stories explore the complicated friendships in adolescence. Bridge finds increasing confidence as she navigates her 7th-grade year, while, in unsent letters to his absent grandfather, classmate Sherm expresses grief and anger over changes in his family. And an unnamed, older girl in a second-person narrative spends a single miserable day avoiding school for reasons that are revealed at the turning point.
<b><i>Legend</i></b>	<b>Marie Lu</b>  <b>305 Pages</b>  <b>Dystopian Fiction</b> 1st in a Series of 3	In a dark future, when North America has split into two warring nations, fifteen-year-olds Day, a famous criminal, and prodigy June, the brilliant soldier hired to capture him, discover that they have a common enemy. Full of nonstop action, suspense, and romance, this novel is sure to move readers as much as it thrills.
<b><i>Ghost Boys</i></b>	<b>Jewell Parker Rhodes</b>  <b>224 Pages</b> <b>Fantasy Fiction</b>	A heartbreaking and powerful story about a black boy killed by a police officer, drawing connections through history, from award-winning author Jewell Parker Rhodes. Only the living can make the world better. Live and make it better.
<b><i>Shark Girl</i></b>	<b>Kelly Bingham</b>  <b>276 Pages</b> <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	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 her plans for the future.
<b><i>Soar</i></b>	<b>Cynthia Bauer</b>  <b>296 Pages</b> <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	Sports, friendship, tragedy, and a love connection are all wrapped up in one heartwarming, page-turning story. Jeremiah lives and breathes baseball and wants nothing more than to be a professional player, but when he learns that he suffers from a severe heart condition, his dreams are put on hold. Soon after, he and his single father move to a town that is something of a baseball capital, but the entire community has been shaken by the death of a beloved school baseball player—and a town scandal that is revealed in the aftermath.
<b><i>The Great Wide Sea</i></b>	<b>Herlong</b>  <b>283 Pages</b> <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	Still mourning the death of their mother, three brothers go with their father on an extended sailing trip off the Florida Keys and have a harrowing adventure at sea.

<b><i>Dumplin</i></b>	<b>Murphy, Julie</b>  <b>375 Pages</b> <b>Realistic Fiction</b>	Sixteen-year-old Willowdean wants to prove to everyone in her small Texas town that she is more than just a fat girl, so, while grappling with her feelings for a co-worker who is clearly attracted to her, Will and some other misfits prepare to compete in the beauty pageant her mother runs.
<b><i>Small as an Elephant</i></b>	<b>Jennifer Richard Jacsonson</b>  <b>275 Pages</b> <b>REalistic Fiction</b>	Abandoned by his mother in an Acadia National Park campground, Jack tries to make his way back to Boston before anyone figures out what is going on, with only a small toy elephant for company.

## Accelerated

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Overview</u>
<b><i>The Book Thief</i></b>	<b>Markus Zusak</b>  <b>352 Pages</b>  <b>Historical Fiction</b>	It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still.  Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist--books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.
<b><i>The Hired Girl</i></b>	<b>Laura Schlitz</b>  <b>387 Pages</b>  <b>Historical Fiction</b>	14 year old Joan Skraggs, just like the heroines in her beloved novels, yearns for real life and true love. But what hope is there for adventure, beauty, or art on a hardscrabble farm in Pennsylvania where the work never ends? Over the summer of 1911, Joan pours her heart out into her diary as she seeks a new, better life for herself--because maybe, just maybe, a hired girl cleaning and cooking for six dollars a week can become what a farm girl could only dream of--a woman with a future.
<b><i>Monster</i></b>	<b>Walter Dean Myers</b>  <b>281 Pages</b>  <b>Realistic Fiction (Screenplay Format)</b>	Young, black 16-year-old Steve Harmon, an amateur filmmaker, is on trial for the murder of a Harlem drugstore owner and could face the death penalty. Steve copes by writing a movie script based on his trial. But despite his efforts, reality is blurred until he can no longer tell who he is or what the truth is.
<b><i>Ready Player One</i></b>	<b>Ernest Cline</b>  <b>374 Pages</b>	In the year 2044, Wade Watts, like the rest of humanity, chooses to escape reality and spends his waking hours in the limitless, utopian virtual world of the OASIS, but when Wade stumbles upon the first of the fiendish puzzles set up by OASIS creator James Halliday he finds he must compete with thousands of others--including those willing to commit murder--in order to claim a prize of massive fortune.



	<b>Science Fiction</b>	
<b><i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i></b>	<b>Harper Lee</b> <b>323 Pages</b> <b>Historical Fiction</b>	<p>The unforgettable novel of a childhood in a sleepy Southern town and the crisis of conscience that rocked it, <i>To Kill A Mockingbird</i> became both an instant bestseller and a critical success when it was first published in 1960. It went on to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1961 and was later made into an Academy Award-winning film, also a classic.</p> <p>Compassionate, dramatic, and deeply moving, <i>To Kill A Mockingbird</i> takes readers to the roots of human behavior - to innocence and experience, kindness and cruelty, love and hatred, humor and pathos.</p>