



June 2009

Dear Future Eighth Grade Student,

Over the summer we would like to encourage you to read as many books as you have the time and interest to read. Reading is a wonderful way to escape a hot, humid summer afternoon and to travel anywhere a good author can take you.

**ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS:** For summer reading:

1. You are required to read **AT LEAST TWO BOOKS**; one must be from the list below and the other is your choice. (See websites on page 4 for suggested titles)
2. A total of **four** different responses are required. You must choose and write **two literature responses for each book** from “Literature Response Ideas.” Do not choose the same responses for each book. These assignments will count as quiz grades.
3. You must fill in the log sheet and be sure to have a parent/guardian sign the log sheet as well.

TITLE	AUTHOR	Interest level
<u>A Boy at War</u>	Harry Mazer	5-8
<u>A Walk to Remember</u>	Nicholas Sparks	YA
<u>Arthur (book 1) The Seeing Stone</u>	Kevin Crossley-Holland	5-8
<u>Dangerous Skies</u>	Suzanne Staples	5-8
<u>Esperanza Rising</u>	Pam Munoz Ryan	5-8
<u>Finding Moon</u> (1 <sup>st</sup> in a series)	Tony Hillerman	YA
<u>*Go Ask Alice</u>	Anonymous	YA
<u>Lord of the Nutcracker Men</u>	Iain Lawrence	5-8
<u>Lost Years of Merlin</u>	T.A. Barron	5-8
<u>“Net Force” (series)</u>	Tom Clancy	YA
<u>Shabanu, Daughter of the Wind</u>	Suzanne Staples	YA
<u>Shades of Simon Gray</u>	Joynce McDonald	YA
<u>Stop Pretending</u>	Sonya Sones	5-8
<u>Surviving the Applewhites</u>	Stephanie Tolin	5-8
<u>The Golden Compass</u> (1 <sup>st</sup> in a trilogy)	Pullman	5-8
<u>The Greatest: Muhammad Ali or Another Book by</u> Walter Dean Myers		5-8
<u>The Not-So-Star-Spangled Life of Sunita Sen</u>	Mitali Perkins	5-8
<u>True North</u> (A novel of the underground railroad)	Kathryn Lasky	YA

*\*This is a contemporary piece and deals with the topic of drug abuse. If parents have a concern with such a topic, please review the book first and possibly direct your student to read other options.*

When you return in September, your literature responses will be collected and evaluated. We look forward to meeting you and sharing our summer reading experiences.

Sincerely,

Your Eighth Grade Teachers

# Literature Response Ideas

## Grade 8

1. **The Book and I:** Sometimes a book makes you remember a time when something happened to you in the same way it happened to a character you're reading about. Select a character who has had a problem similar to one you have had. In one paragraph, explain the problem and tell how the character solved it. In a second paragraph, restate the problem and then tell how you solved it. Be sure to add details that tell who, what, when, where, how, and why.
2. **Characters:** Select one character that intrigues you, and think of three adjectives (qualities) that reveal his or her personality. For each of these qualities write a paragraph using examples that support your points.
3. **Feelings:** Sometimes a book may be funny, sad, scary, serious, exciting, etc. Choose a feeling or emotion you experienced when you were reading the book. Then in a paragraph for each, tell about at least three places in the book where the author made you feel that emotion. (Be sure to include the page number where each of these occurred.) Explain what was happening and why the event affected you emotionally. To make your response even more detailed, copy some sentences from the book to support what you're sharing. (Remember: The pieces you select from the story must have quotes around them!)
4. **Compare/Contrast:** A reader can tell how two things are alike and/or different. Some ideas to compare or contrast are: two characters; two books; yourself and a character; a book and a movie; a character from one book and a character from another book. Give at least three examples of any two things that share similarities and differences. Be sure to cite the book by using direct quotes and corresponding page numbers.
5. **Everyone's a Critic:** Having read a book, readers will often be critical of some part and wish the author had written it differently. Select a part/section of a book you read and tell what the author wrote, explain why you felt it should be changed, and then share how you would have written it. (Be sure to cite the title and author and to use quotes from the book to prove your points.)
6. **Suspense:** Authors create suspense so readers will keep turning the pages and find out what will happen next. Give at least three examples, using direct quotations with corresponding page numbers, of three suspenseful parts of the book and explain why it was suspenseful.
7. **It Seems Real:** Many books mirror real life situations. How does the author make the fictional story seem possible and realistic regardless of the story's setting? Give five examples and cite the title and author, using direct quotations with corresponding page numbers, to support your conclusions.
8. **\*\*People Change:** Characters change throughout a story. Choose a main character and write about how the character changed and what events affected that change. Cite the title and the author and then support your answer by using direct quotations and corresponding page numbers.
9. **\*\*Endings:** Do you ever think about what happens to the characters of the story after it ends? Pretend you are one of the characters from the story and write a letter explaining how events in the story have affected you during the five years since the story's end.

\*\*only to be done at the END of a book

### Note:

*This assignment, the log sheet, and a brief description of each book on this list can be found at both Chelmsford public libraries, at your middle school, and listed on the website at:*

[http://www.chelmsford.k12.ma.us/middle/summerread\\_09.htm](http://www.chelmsford.k12.ma.us/middle/summerread_09.htm)

Newbery Medal Home Page

<http://www.ala.org/ala/alscawardsscholarships/literaryawds/newberymedal/newberymedal.htm>

2009 Notable Children's Books (scroll down to *Middle Readers* section)

<http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/childrensnotable/notablebooklist/currentnotable.htm>

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**GRADE 8**  
**SUMMER READING LOG**

**Directions:**

Your responses will be evaluated. You should respond thoroughly to each of your chosen response ideas. A guideline to follow for length is a full page or approximately 150 words per response. You will be handing in a total of 4 literature responses and this sheet in September. Remember to take pride in your work! Use final form: ink, cursive on white paper or you may type



**BOOK #1:**

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Pages \_\_\_\_\_

Check the one(s) that apply:

One of the best books I've read  It was an easy read

I would NOT recommend it to anyone  It was a difficult read



**BOOK #2:**

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Pages \_\_\_\_\_

Check the one(s) that apply:

One of the best books I've read  It was an easy read

I would NOT recommend it to anyone  It was a difficult read



My son/daughter has read these books over the summer and we had book discussions about them in our home.

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Book Descriptions - Grade 8**

### **A Boy at War**

While fishing with his friends off Honolulu on December 7, 1941, teenaged Adam is caught in the midst of the Japanese attack and through the chaos of the subsequent days tries to find his father, a naval officer who was serving on the U.S.S. Arizona when the bombs fell.

### **A Walk to Remember**

When a twist of fate makes Jamie Sullivan his date at the homecoming dance, Landon Carter never dreamed they would fall in love, but as he comes to realize his true feelings for Jamie, he learns of a terrible secret that will take his love away from him forever. (I already y added this)

### **Arthur (book 1) The Seeing Stone**

In late twelfth-century England, a thirteen-year-old boy named Arthur recounts how Merlin gives him a magical seeing stone which shows him images of the legendary King Arthur, the events of whose life seem to have many parallels to his own.

### **Dangerous Skies**

"Frances Foster books." Hypocrisy and prejudice twist events in such a way as to implicate two children, one from a prominent white family and the other an African-American, in a murder.

### **Esperanza Rising**

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.

### **Finding Moon (1<sup>st</sup> in a series)**

Moon Mathias embarks on a journey of personal discovery when he goes to the Republic of Vietnam during the last days of the war to find a niece whose existence he has just discovered.

### **\*Go Ask Alice**

Based on the diary of a fifteen-year-old drug user chronicling her struggle to escape the pull of the drug world.

### **Lord of the Nutcracker Men**

An English boy during World War I comes to believe that the battles he enacts with his toy soldiers control the war his father is fighting on the front.

### **Lost Years of Merlin**

A young boy who has no identity or memory of his past washes ashore on the coast of Wales and finds his true name after a series of fantastic adventures.

### **"Net Force" (series)**

A series of 19 titles describing how in the year 2010, Congress creates Net force, an Fbl agency designed to regulate and maintain the computers that are the new superpowers.

### **Shabanu, Daughter of the Wind**

Eleven-year old Shabanu, the daughter of a nomad in the Cholistan Desert of present-day Pakistan, is pledged in marriage to an older man whose money will bring prestige to the family, and must either accept the decision, as is the custom, or risk the consequences of defying her father's wishes.

### **Shades of Simon Gray**

Seventeen-year-old Simon lies in a coma, finding his space and time overlapping with that of a man who was lynched over 200 years ago, while a member of the cheating ring he has been helping wonders if their actions have caused the plagues assaulting their New Jersey town.

### **Stop Pretending**

A younger sister has a difficult time adjusting to life after her older sister has a mental breakdown.

### **Surviving the Applewhites**

Jake, a budding juvenile delinquent, is sent for home schooling to the arty and eccentric Applewhite family's Creative Academy, where he discovers talents and interests he never knew he had.

### **The Golden Compass (1<sup>st</sup> in a trilogy)**

Accompanied by her daemon, Lyra Belacqua sets out to prevent her best friend and other kidnapped children from becoming the subject of gruesome experiments in the Far North.

### **The Greatest: Muhammad Ali**

An illustrated biography of boxing great Muhammad Ali that addresses his politics, his fight against Parkinson's disease, and boxing's dangers.

### **The Not-So-Star-Spangled Life of Sunita Sen**

The arrival of her grandparents from India causes thirteen-year-old Sunita to resent her Indian heritage and to be embarrassed by the differences she feels between herself and her friends in California.

### **True North (A novel of the underground railroad)**

Includes bibliographical references (p. 265-266). Because of the strong influence which her grandfather, an abolitionist, has in her life, fourteen-year-old Lucy assists a fugitive slave girl in her escape.