

Tewksbury Public Schools

John W. Wynn Middle School
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Celebrating Excellence

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"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island...and best of all, you can enjoy these riches every day of your life." –Walt Disney

June, 2018

Dear Parents:

Attached please find the Wynn Middle School **eighth grade** summer reading list and nonfiction reading journal assignment. Teachers expect each student to read a minimum of **one book** over the summer. The list is comprised of nonfiction books that are appropriate for your child's age and grade level. Please contact your child's English teacher or guidance counselor before **June 22** if you believe he or she will need to be directed to an accommodated version or alternate book. Books should be available at the town library as well as local bookstores.

The nonfiction reading journals will be due upon return to school in late August. The final date for passing in reports will be **Tuesday, September 4, 2018**. The assignment your child completes will be used in class as a tool to learn how to develop his or her responses to literature, and a project will be completed in class. This project will be the first grade in this subject for the school year.

The ability to read is crucial to an individual's success in school and on the job. Reading is a life-long skill that opens doors and experiences to children. The English Department recommends you help your child discover books of interest, as avid readers make skilled writers and critical thinkers. We would like to say thank you in advance for your support of this program. Remember, **one book by September 4th**. Your child's teachers look forward to discussing the adventures experienced through reading upon return to school. Enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,

John Weir
Wynn Middle School Principal

Teachers of the
English Language Arts Department

Attachment

Tewksbury Public Schools

This document is intended for informational purposes only. It is not to be used for legal or financial purposes. For more information, please contact the appropriate department.

8th Grade Summer Nonfiction Reading Options

Choose one of the following books:



Irena's Children by Tilar Mazzeo

In 1942, one young social worker, Irena Sendler, was granted access to the Warsaw ghetto as a public health specialist. While there, she reached out to the trapped Jewish families, going from door to door and asking the parents to trust her with their young children. She started smuggling them out of the walled district, convincing her friends and neighbors to hide them. Driven to extreme measures and with the help of a network of local tradesmen, ghetto residents, and her star-crossed lover in the Jewish resistance, Irena ultimately smuggled thousands of children past the Nazis. She made dangerous trips through the city's sewers, hid children in coffins, snuck them under overcoats at checkpoints, and slipped them through secret passages in abandoned buildings.

https://www.amazon.com/Irenas-Children-Extraordinary-Warsaw-Ghetto/dp/1476778507/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493404259&sr=1-1&keywords=irenas+children



Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton, Rick Bundschuh, Shery Berk

In this moving personal account of faith and fortitude, internationally ranked surfer Bethany Hamilton tells how she survived a shark attack that cost her arm—but not her spirit.

They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing—not even the loss of her arm—could come between her and the waves? That Halloween morning in Kauai, Hawaii, Bethany responded to the shark's stealth attack with the calm of a girl with God on her side. Pushing pain and panic aside, she began to paddle with one arm, focusing on a single thought: "Get to the beach...." And when the first thing Bethany wanted to know after surgery was "When can I surf again?" it became clear that her spirit and determination were part of a greater story—a tale of courage and faith that this soft-spoken girl would come to share with the world.

<https://www.amazon.com/Soul-Surfer-Story-Family-Fighting/dp/1416503463>



She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall by Misty Bernall

In this memoir about Cassie Bernall, a victim of the Columbine High School shooting, her mother tells the story of the problems her daughter struggled with as a teenager and how she turned her life around prior to the tragedy.



*Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet out of Idaho** by Jon Katz

Jesse and Eric were geeks: suspicious of authority figures, proud of their status as outsiders, fervent in their belief in the positive power of technology. High school had been an unbearable experience and their small-town Idaho families had been torn apart by hard times. On the fringe of society, they had almost no social lives and little to look forward to. They spent every spare cent on their computers and every spare moment online. Nobody ever spoke of them, much less for them.

But then they met Jon Katz, a roving journalist who suggested that, in the age of geek impresario Bill Gates, Jesse and Eric had marketable skills that could get them out of Idaho and pave the way to a better life. So they bravely set out to conquer Chicago—geek style.

<https://www.amazon.com/Geeks-Lost-Boys-Internet-Idaho/dp/0767906993>



Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter by Adeline Yen Mah

After her mother died giving birth to her, Adeline was rejected by her siblings, her father, and her stepmother. She finds escape through a play-writing contest and education at an English university.



***Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer**

A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. The storm, which claimed five lives and left countless more--including Krakauer's--in guilt-ridden disarray, would also provide the impetus for *Into Thin Air*, Krakauer's epic account of the

May 1996 disaster.

https://www.amazon.com/Into-Thin-Air-Personal-Disaster/dp/0385494785/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493404406&sr=1-1&keywords=into+thin+air



***Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin**

Author and photographer Susan Kuklin met and interviewed six transgender or gender-neutral young adults and used her considerable skills to represent them thoughtfully and respectfully before, during, and after their personal acknowledgment of gender preference. Portraits, family photographs, and candid images grace the pages, augmenting the emotional and physical journey each youth has taken. Each honest discussion and disclosure, whether joyful or heartbreaking, is completely different from the other because of family dynamics, living situations, gender, and the transition these teens make in recognition of their true selves.

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18166920-beyond-magenta>



***Eleven Seconds* by Travis Roy**

"In this heartfelt testament to the power of love and the strength of the human spirit, Travis Roy, who suffered a devastating injury eleven seconds into his first college hockey game, reveals how he has managed to cope after the accident and, with the help of family and friends, overcome tremendous barriers to begin a new life."-[Goodreads](#)



***Throw Like a Girl* by Jennie Finch**

"The evidence is overwhelming: sports help girls grow into strong women. Both scientific studies and anecdotal evidence confirm that athletic girls not only grow up to be healthier; they learn teamwork, gain inner confidence, and grow into society's leaders. Sports help preteen and teenage girls make the right choices in a society that is sending them incredibly mixed messages about who they are supposed to be. Yet no one is speaking directly to these girls. Jennie fills the role of girlfriend, big sister, team captain, and mentor. A smart, credible, and accomplished voice from an athlete who is strong and feminine, fiercely competitive, and fashionably cool, Jennie is someone young women will listen to and take to heart. Jennie's message: Believe in yourself. Go for it, girls."-[Goodreads](#)



***When the Game Stands Tall* by Neil Hayes**

By 2002, The Streak--a historic 13-year run of consecutive wins by the Spartans, a high-school football team from Concord, California, that couldn't be beat--was still going strong. In this revised edition of "When the Game Stands Tall," author Neil Hayes, who had unrestricted access to the De La Salle team, writes from the inside about the games, the players, and their visionary coach, Bob Ladouceur, who managed to amass the highest winning percentage in football history (.995) through standing for something greater than winning. The book, which also features interviews with major sports figures like Bill Walsh and John Gruden, is a revealing portrait of the coach who believed above all in instilling basic life skills where winning is not the goal, but merely the byproduct of playing the game."-[Goodreads](#)



***My Life in Dog Years*, Gary Paulsen**

For animal lovers, Gary Paulsen (author of *Hatchet* and *Woodson*) tells the story of his life through his dog companions. Each chapter presents a different dog and the significance of the dog in his life.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Part I:

Each of these books focuses on an individual who overcomes a challenging circumstance.

Please answer the following questions related to this theme in paragraph form (5-6 sentences).

1. Describe the individual's challenging circumstance.

2. Explain how the individual overcomes his/her challenge.

3. How does the individual grow as a result of overcoming his/her challenge?

4. In what ways can you relate to this individual or the circumstance that he/she overcomes?

Part II:

Each student should keep a journal of important excerpts, quotes and events as he/she reads through each chapter. Include at least 2-3 excerpts/quotes per chapter/ scene. Please follow the format that we have included to keep a detailed journal. A minimum of 20 quotes should be included.

Quotation	Pg #	Why do I find this quote interesting or important?

Quotation

Pg #

Why do I find this quote interesting or important?

Quotation

Pg #

Why do I find this quote interesting or important?

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