

8th Grade Summer Reading Assignment 2021

As human beings we all have the right to see ourselves and our own cultures depicted in the books we read. At the same time, we have a great need to read books that connect us with people who are different than we are. We must have the opportunity to fall in love with protagonists with different ethnicities, religious backgrounds, cultural experiences and family stories. The following list of books introduce readers to protagonists who each seek to come to terms with what it means to be a human being within a dominant culture that defines them as “other.” Each of these books introduces us to a protagonist who finds his or her voice and speaks his or her truth. One of the most powerful things about excellent literature is its ability to help us widen our own circles of connection and empathy in a world that often discourages us from stepping outside of our comfort zones. Excellent literature helps us realize we are not alone while at the same time reminding us that ours is not the only story that matters.

Each incoming 8th grade student should read at least five books over the summer. **Pick at least two titles from the following list** about voice, race, culture and identity and then at least three others of your own choice.

A Mango Shaped Space: Wendy Maas
Almost American Girl: Robin Ha
Amal Unbound: Aisha Saeed
Audacity: Melanie Crowder
Dear Martin: Nic Stone
Enchanted Air: Margarita Engle
Fish in a Tree: Linda Hunt
Full Cicada Moon: Marilyn Hilton
Genesis Begins Again: Alicia Keyes
Ghost Boys: Jewell Parker Rhodes
Inside out and Back Again: Thanna Lai
Interpreter of Maladies: Jhumpa Lahiri
New Kid: Jerry Craft
Other Words for Home: Jasmine Warga
Persepolis: Mariane Satrapi
Piecing Me Together: Renee Watson
Punching the Air: Ibi Zobois
Red, White and Whole: Rajani LaRocca
Show me a Sign: Anne Claire LaZotte
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian: Sherman Alexie
The Nickel Boys: Colson Whitehead
There, There: Tommy Orange
When the Emperor Was Divine: Julie Otsuka

Please make a numbered list of all the books you read along with author names and page numbers and bring it in on the first day of school along with a photograph of you reading somewhere special.