



8th Grade English-Language Arts (ELA)
Sycamore Springs Middle School
2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

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Welcome to eighth grade English! We look forward to meeting all of you next year as we co-teach for on-level, PAP and GT tailoring instruction and learning for the needs of our students. In order to enrich all students' learning experiences, the curriculum encompasses the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking through comprehension and response, experience with multiple genres, author's purpose and craft, and inquiry and research. We strive for proficiency in authentic oral and written communication while improving critical thinking skills to navigate the evolving nature of language and literacy.

During the summer, please read at least one book related to WWII (nonfiction, narrative nonfiction or historical fiction) in order to help build background for our unit on the triumph of the human spirit when we read a play based on *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Parents and children should consult to meet individual interests and skill needs. Here are a few possibilities:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Lexile Reading Level</u>
<i>Milkweed</i>	Jerry Spinelli	<u>510L</u>
<i>Yellow Star</i>	Jennifer Roy	<u>710L</u>
<i>The Book Thief</i>	Markus Zusak	<u>730L</u>
<i>Prisoner B-3087</i>	Alan Gratz	<u>760L</u>
<i>Code Talker</i>	Joseph Bruchac	<u>910L</u>
<i>Unbroken</i>	Laura Hillenbrand	<u>1010L</u>

While reading, it is recommended that you annotate your novel for evidence of plot, character and/or theme development by underlining, highlighting or making notes. See the attached "bookmark" that you can print and use to remind you of notations to make while reading.

Please remember that we, too, have summer training and are on vacation and will not be checking email on a daily basis. We will respond to any questions as soon as we are able. Have a great summer, and we look forward to meeting you in August.

Clarify

- This seems to be about...
- The character... seems...
- The most important idea is...
- At first I thought ..., but now I think...because...

Evaluate

- This is like... because...
- This is important because...
- This is different from ... because ...
- I think the author wrote this because...
- This is an example of ... because...
- What the author is really trying to say is...
- This is important to the... because...
- I think the author used this technique to/because
- If..., then...
- I was surprised when..because...
- I don't understand why...
- I agree/disagree with...because...
- This made me think...
- I realized... because...
- This made me realize...

(These can help you add to your thinking in order to go beyond the required 5 sentence minimum.)

Connections

- This reminds me of ... because...
- _____ is similar to _____ because....
- This reminds me of a time in my life when ...

Predictions

- I think the next part will be about ... because...
- Based on..., I predict...