

# Strath Haven Middle School Rising 8th Grade

## Summer Reading Assignment

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**Reading Directions:** Rising eighth graders should try to maintain their reading lives over the summer months. We offer a list of books organized by genre that we recommend students explore and read with consideration of both student interest and reading level.

**Assignment Directions:** After completing the reading, please choose **one** of the following options:

<b>Option</b>	<b>General Directions</b> <i>* Please see each assignment sheet for specific instructions. *</i>
<b>Core</b>	After completing the book, write a one- to two-paragraph analysis answering the following:  <i>Identify an important decision made by the main character. How did this decision show what the protagonist finds important? Explain whether you agree or disagree with the main character's decision.</i>
<b>Enriched</b> (or those interested in Black Diamond)	After completing the book, write a one- to two-paragraph response answering the following:  <i>As the book ends, identify and analyze an important decision made by the protagonist. How does this decision display growth or change in the character?</i>

**Due Date:** Teachers will collect completed work during the first week of class.

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*To Our Rising Eighth Grade Students,*  
Happy reading and writing! We are so excited to share your last year of middle school with you!



*Sincerely,*  
Your Eighth Grade Language Arts Teachers

### READING LOG (optional)

*We encourage you to read all summer, and we provide recommendations of such selections. If you would like, you may use this log and share it with your teacher at the beginning of the school year. You may attach more paper if needed.*

TITLE	AUTHOR

# SHMS Rising Eighth Grade

## Summer Reading Book Choices

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**Reading Directions:** Rising eighth graders should try to maintain their reading lives over the summer months. We offer a list of books organized by genre that we recommend students explore and read with consideration of both student interest and reading level.

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In this document you will find two book lists:

- **List #1: Options for Required Reading for Students in Core LA**

While we still strongly suggest these texts, we understand there are plenty of other high-interest, high-quality texts that students may choose to read instead of those below. If students prefer to read a book not on this list, we encourage them to do so, and we will accept their work about that text.

- **List #2: Options Required Reading for Students in Enriched LA**

The second set of texts are options for summer reading work for students recommended for Enriched LA, or for those students recommended for Core LA and looking for a black diamond challenge. While we still strongly suggest these texts, we understand there are plenty of other high-interest, high-quality texts that students may choose to read instead of those below. If students prefer to read a book, not on this list, we encourage them to do so, and we will accept their work about that text.

*Please Note:* As children mature, book content does as well. It is recommended that parents/guardians review student book choices.

## Suggestions for choosing a summer reading book that is perfect for you!

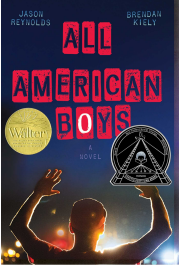
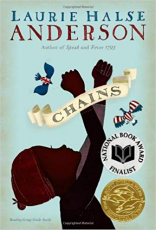

- ★ **Consider Genre** - Think about books you have enjoyed in the past. Is there a certain genre (see descriptions below) you enjoy reading the most? Would you like to read more books of that style? If so, start by looking at books offered in that genre.
- ★ **Consider Author** - Is there a certain author whose writing you have enjoyed? Are any of their other books on the list?
- ★ **Stay Open-Minded** - Is there a book that you might not usually select, but that someone has recommended or that has caught your attention? Try it! You may always switch if the book does not work for you.

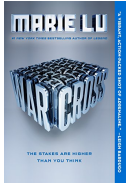


Genre Descriptions		
<p><b>ADVENTURE</b></p> <p><i>Danger. Risk. Excitement. In this wide ranging genre, you will find numerous opportunities to join characters on their great adventures. Follow along and keep the pages turning; you never know what is coming next!</i></p>	<p><b>Dystopian &amp; Science Fiction</b></p> <p><i>Take a trip to a futuristic, imagined world in which government control dictates the choices characters can make and the actions characters can take. Grim. Dark. Hopeless. Join characters on an adventure to find their voice, hope, and strength in worlds where silence is preferred.</i></p>	<p><b>Fantasy</b></p> <p><i>Looking to visit a universe myth and magic are accepted as the truth? You will venture out of our world to a new and magical location where adventure awaits. Join the characters on unpredictable journeys through unpredictable lands!</i></p>
<p><b>Historical Fiction/Drama</b></p> <p><i>Jump into the literary time machine and transport yourself to a historical setting. On your adventure, find authentic characters who are waiting to share their stories and show you a time a place distinct, but possibly connected to your current life.</i></p>	<p><b>Nonfiction</b></p> <p><i>Biographies, memoirs, research, history, science, current events, role models...</i></p> <p><i>Nonfiction offers opportunities for exploration into unlimited numbers of topics. Targeting a variety of interests and styles, nonfiction will leave you amazed, informed, and even more curious about your world.</i></p>	<p><b>Realistic Fiction</b></p> <p><i>Spend some time in your realistic fiction and maybe find a new friend. Or perhaps learn more about yourself through the realistic stories of characters. Or perhaps step into the characters' shoes and understand their perspectives, even though they differ from yours. Join the characters living through and learning from relatable experiences.</i></p>

## Rising Eighth Grade CORE Language Arts Options

Students recommended for Core LA may also select their book from the Enriched list for a black diamond challenge.

Book Title & Author	Description	Genre & Notes
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>All American Boys</i> Brendan Kiely &amp; Jason Reynolds</p> 	<p>A bag of chips. That's all sixteen-year-old Rashad is looking for at the corner bodega. What he finds instead is a cop, Paul Galluzzo, who mistakes Rashad for a shoplifter and mistakes Rashad's pleadings that he's stolen nothing for belligerence as refusal to stay still as ordered. But how can you stay still when someone is pounding your face into the concrete pavement? There were witnesses: Quinn Collins—a basketball player and Rashad's classmate who has been raised by Paul since his own father died—and a video camera. Soon the beating is all over the news and Paul is threatened with accusations of prejudice and racial brutality. Quinn refuses to believe that the man who has basically been his savior could possibly be guilty. Simmering tensions threaten to explode as Rashad and Quinn are forced to face decisions and consequences they had never considered before.</p>	<p><i>Realistic Fiction</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Chains</i> Laurie Halse Anderson</p> 	<p>As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom.</p>	<p><b>Historical Fiction/Drama Series Book!</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Six Crimson Cranes</i> Elizabeth Lim</p> 	<p>Shiori, the only princess of Kiata, has forbidden magic running through her veins. Normally she conceals it well, but on the morning of her wedding, Shiori loses control.</p> <p>Raikama, her stepmother, has dark magic of her own, and she banishes the young princess, turning her brothers into cranes, and warning Shiori that she must speak of it to no one: for with every word that escapes her lips, one of her brothers will die.</p> <p>Penniless, voiceless, and alone, Shiori searches for her brothers, and, on her journey, uncovers a conspiracy to overtake the throne—a conspiracy more twisted and deceitful, more cunning and complex, than even Raikama's betrayal. Only Shiori can set the kingdom to rights, but to do so she must place her trust in the very boy she fought so hard <i>not</i> to marry. And she must embrace the magic she's been taught all her life to contain—no matter what it costs her.</p>	<p><i>Fantasy Series Book!</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Warcross</i> Marie Lu</p>	<p>For the millions who log in every day, Warcross isn't just a game—it's a way of life. The obsession started ten years ago and its fan base</p>	<p><i>Fantasy</i></p>






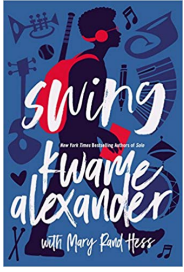
now spans the globe, some eager to escape from reality and others hoping to make a profit. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down Warcross players who bet on the game illegally. But the bounty-hunting world is a competitive one, and survival has not been easy. To make some quick cash, Emika takes a risk and hacks into the opening game of the international Warcross Championships—only to accidentally glitch herself into the action and become an overnight sensation.

**Series Book!**

### Rising Eighth Grade CORE Language Arts Options

Students recommended for Core LA may also select their book from the Enriched list for a black diamond challenge.

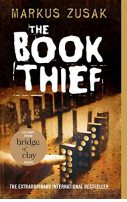
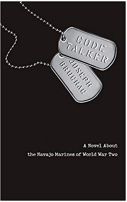

Book Title & Author	Description	Genre & Notes
<p><i>March</i> John Lewis &amp; Andrew Aydin</p> 	<p>Congressman John Lewis one of the key figures of the civil rights movement. His commitment to justice has taken him from an Alabama sharecropper's farm to the halls of Congress, from a segregated schoolroom to the 1963 March on Washington, and from receiving beatings from state troopers to receiving the Medal of Freedom from the first African-American president. <i>March</i> is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Now, his own comics bring those days to life for a new audience, testifying to a movement whose echoes will be heard for generations.</p>	<p><b>Nonfiction</b> Graphic Novel Series Book!</p>
<p><i>Red Kayak</i> Priscilla Cummings</p> 	<p>Brady loves life on the Chesapeake Bay with his friends J.T. and Digger. But rich families are moving into the area, and while Brady befriends some of them, like the DiAngelos, his parents and friends are bitter about the changes. Tragedy strikes when the DiAngelos' kayak overturns in the bay, and Brady wonders if it was more than an accident. Soon, Brady discovers the terrible truth, and it will change the lives of those he loves forever.</p>	<p><b>ADVENTURE</b></p>
<p><i>Ruins of Gorlan</i> John Flanagan</p> 	<p>They have always scared him in the past—the Rangers, with their dark cloaks and shadowy ways. The villagers believe the Rangers practice magic that makes them invisible to ordinary people. And now 15-year-old Will, always small for his age, has been chosen as a Ranger's apprentice. What he doesn't yet realize is that the Rangers are the protectors of the kingdom. Highly trained in the skills of battle and surveillance, they fight the battles before the battles reach the people. And as Will is about to learn, there is a large battle brewing.</p>	<p><b>Fantasy</b> Series Book!</p>
<p><i>Swing</i> Kwame Alexander</p>	<p>Best friends Walt and Noah decide to use their voices to grow more good in the world, but first they've got to find cool. Noah soon finds himself navigating the worlds of jazz and batting cages. Status quo seems inevitable until Noah stumbles on a stash of old love letters. Each page contains the words he's always wanted to say to Sam, and he begins secretly creating artwork using the lines that speak his heart. When his private artwork becomes public, Noah has a</p>	<p><b>Realistic Fiction</b> Written in Verse</p>



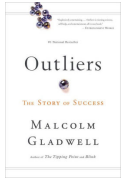
decision to make: continue his life in the dugout and lose the girl forever, or take a swing and speak out? At the same time, numerous American flags are being left around town. While some think it's a harmless prank and others see it as a form of peaceful protest. As the personal and social tensions increase around them, Noah and Walt must decide what is really true when it comes to love, friendship, sacrifice, and fate.

## Rising Eighth Grade ENRICHED Language Arts Options

Students recommended for Enriched LA **must** choose a book from this list for their required reading.

Book Title & Author	Description	Genre & Notes
<p><i>The Book Thief</i> Markus Zusak</p> 	<p>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.</p>	<p><b>Historical Fiction/Drama</b></p>
<p><i>Code Talker</i> Joseph Bruchac</p> 	<p>Throughout World War II, in the conflict fought against Japan, Navajo code talkers were a crucial part of the U.S. effort, sending messages back and forth in an unbreakable code that used their native language. They braved some of the heaviest fighting of the war, and with their code, they saved countless American lives. Yet their story remained classified for more than twenty years.</p>	<p><b>Historical Fiction/Drama</b></p>
<p><i>Just Mercy</i> Bryan Stevenson</p> 	<p>Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.</p>	<p><b>Nonfiction</b></p>

**Outliers**  
Malcolm Gladwell

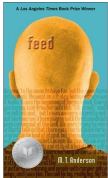

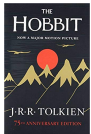


In *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell takes readers on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? He suggests that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to things like their culture, their family, their generation, and the experiences of their upbringing. He explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, what made the Beatles the greatest rock band, and more.

**Nonfiction**

**Rising Eighth Grade ENRICHED Language Arts Options**

Students recommended for Enriched LA **must** choose a book from this list for their required reading.

Book Title & Author	Description	Genre & Notes
<p><b>Feed</b> M.T. Anderson</p> 	<p>For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon — a chance to party during spring break. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its ever-present ability to categorize human thoughts and desires.</p>	<p><b>Dystopian &amp; Science Fiction</b></p>
<p><b>The Poet X</b></p> 	<p>Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking. But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook—especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about. With Mami’s determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school’s slam poetry club, she doesn’t know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out. But she still can’t stop thinking about performing her poems. Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent.</p>	<p><i>Realistic Fiction</i></p>
<p><b>The Hobbit</b> J.R.R. Tolkien</p> 	<p>Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit who enjoys an unambitious life, rarely traveling farther than his pantry or cellar. But his contentment is disturbed when the wizard Gandalf and a company of dwarves arrive on his doorstep to whisk him away on an adventure. They have launched a plot to raid the treasure hoard guarded by Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. Bilbo reluctantly joins their quest, unaware that on his journey to the Lonely Mountain he will encounter both a magic ring and a frightening creature known as Gollum.</p>	<p><b>Fantasy</b></p>



*The Impossible  
Knife of Memory*

Laurie Halse Anderson



For the past five years, Hayley Kincaid and her father, Andy, have been on the road, never staying long in one place as he struggles to escape the demons that have tortured him since his return from Iraq. Now they are back in the town where he grew up so Hayley can attend school. Perhaps, for the first time, Hayley can have a normal life, put aside her own painful memories, even have a relationship with Finn, the hot guy who obviously likes her but is hiding secrets of his own. Will being back home help Andy's PTSD, or will his terrible memories drag him to the edge of hell, and drugs push him over?

*Realistic Fiction*

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

**Rising 8th Grade**  
**Black Diamond Assignment**

**Required for students in Enriched LA or taking Black Diamond.**

**Directions:** After completing the book, write a one- to two- paragraph analysis answering the following:

- As the book ends, identify and analyze an important decision made by the protagonist. How does this decision display growth or change in the character?

**Reminder:** Be sure to include **all** parts of a strong analysis paragraph: (1) Topic Sentence, (2) Background Information, (3) Direct Text Evidence with Proper Citation, (4) Analysis, (5) Synthesis/Conclusion.

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

**Rising 8th Grade  
Core Assignment**

**Suggested only for students recommended for Enriched LA or taking Black Diamond.**

**Directions:** After completing the book, write a one- to two- paragraph analysis answering the following:

- Identify an important decision made by the main character. How did this decision show what the protagonist finds important? Explain whether you agree or disagree with the main character’s decision.

**Reminder:** Be sure to include **all** parts of a strong analysis paragraph: (1) Topic Sentence, (2) Background Information, (3) Direct Text Evidence with Proper Citation, (4) Analysis, (5) Synthesis.

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