

Lake Zurich Middle School North

Summer Reading Assignment

(for students entering Grade 7 in 2011)

April 19 , 2011

Dear Students and Parents,

For the upcoming 2011-2012 school year, it is a **7th grade expectation that all 6th grade students read at least one book from the attached list during the summer prior to entering 7th grade.** We have chosen the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award 2012 Nominees as our book list for this summer.

We will evaluate the summer reading during the first two weeks of school. All students must have their book read prior to the first day of school. This early assessment provides a model of expectations for the student and a method for the teachers to share expectations for the year. Similarly, these novels provide a common literary experience when discussing classroom novels, enrich background knowledge, and generate points of comparison and analysis throughout the year.

Students may purchase books through the library by filling out the attached form.

Forms must be turned in to Mrs. Chaffee in the library no later than Friday, May 13, 2011.

Purchased books will be distributed to students before the last day of school in June. Books may be available in bookstores or at the public library. Purchase of a book is not required, but it may be helpful for your student to have his/her own copy in order to complete the assignment in the fall.

In addition, you will soon receive results from your child's MAP testing. On these results, you will find a Lexile Score which may assist you and your child in finding additional books this summer that are appropriate to his/her reading level. If you would like more information about Lexile Scores and how to use them in selecting appropriate reading material, please refer to www.lexile.com .

We hope to make this an enjoyable experience for all. Thank you in supporting us in this integral program to help keep our kids reading and learning all year long.

Sincerely,
The MSN 7th Grade Literature Teachers

Author	Title
Auch, M J	<p>One-Handed Catch</p> <p>What would life be like with only one hand? That's exactly what eleven-year-old Norm finds out when he loses his left hand in an accident at his family's store. It's July 4, 1946. World War II has ended, and life is getting back to normal. But for Norm, the pressing question now is whether he will ever be able to play baseball again, or be an artist. It's up to Norm to find the strength to get beyond this roadblock and move on with his life. Set against the quickening pace of life after wartime constraints, this inspiring novel is about an optimist who overcomes his misfortune with discipline and humor—and fulfills his dreams in ways no one could have expected.</p>
Broach, Elise	<p>Masterpiece</p> <p>Marvin lives with his family under the kitchen sink in the Pompadays' apartment. He is very much a beetle. James lives with his family in New York City. He is very much an eleven year-old boy. After James gets a pen and ink set for his birthday, Marvin surprises him by creating an elaborate miniature drawing. Then James ends up with all the credit, and is expected to do it again. Before they know it, the unlikely friends are caught up in an art heist that could lead them to a long-lost drawing by Albrecht Dürer. Of course, James can't go through with the plan without Marvin's help. But can a boy take a beetle to a museum and let him recreate a master work of art without anyone knowing about it? Even more important, can he bring the beetle safely back home?</p>
Burg, Ann E.	<p>All the Broken Pieces</p> <p>Matt Pin is haunted by his memories of Vietnam. He was born a bui doi, the dust of life, son of an American GI and Vietnamese mother during the Vietnam War. He has nightmares of falling bombs, land mines, and the awful secret he left behind in Vietnam. He was airlifted out of Vietnam at ten years old, leaving behind his mother and brother. Through the course of the book Matt is forced to come to terms with his with his horrifying past and his American present. Unsure if he can exist in both worlds, or if he even should, he comes face to face with the effects of the Vietnam War on American soil. (Written in verse format.)</p>
Carmichael, Clay	<p>Wild Things</p> <p>Eleven-year-old Zoë is a survivor. Her fiery independence has seen her through a series of adults who "don't stick," and she trusts no one, including Uncle Henry, who has just taken her in after the death of her neglectful mother. Henry is a renowned sculptor of what Zoë skeptically calls "wild things." Other wild things slip through Henry's North Carolina woods unnoticed until Zoë's arrival catapults them into the spotlight, with life-changing consequences for everyone. In her debut novel, Carmichael gives a familiar plot fresh new life in this touching story with a finely crafted sense of place. Zoë's first-person narration alternates with the observations of a feral tomcat who provides hints to the past, and an array of well-drawn eccentric characters add additional sparkle to the magic-touched story. Zoë's fierce, funny voice is compelling, whether she is describing tense standoffs or moments of rare vulnerability that go straight to the heart. Carmichael uses a sure, light touch to portray the gradual blooming of trust among the story's many wild things in this satisfying tale.</p>
Cody, Matthew	<p>Powerless</p> <p>When Daniel Corrigan and his family move to Noble's Green, he notices that some of the kids there seem rather odd. After one of them miraculously saves his life, they admit that they have superpowers, but that they come with a price. They will lose them, and all memory of ever having them, when they turn 13. Because Daniel is the only one without these talents who knows about them, it becomes clear that he must find out who or what is sapping his friends' unusual abilities. Eric, their leader, believes that the secret lies in a series of old comics about a superhero named Johnny Noble, but Daniel's investigation reveals a far more sinister and dangerous villain, and the children must somehow defeat this monster. This book is a loving tribute to comic books and superhero stories. It starts out slow, but gradually gains a momentum that leads to a genuinely affecting conclusion.</p>
Kelly, Jacqueline	<p>The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate</p> <p>A charming and inventive story of a child struggling to find her identity at the turn of the 20th century. As the only girl in an uppercrust Texas family of seven children, Calpurnia, 11, is expected to enter young womanhood with all its trappings of tight corsets, cookery, and handiwork. Unlike other girls her age, Callie is most content when observing and collecting scientific specimens with her grandfather. Bemoaning her lack of formal knowledge, he surreptitiously gives her a copy of <i>The Origin of Species</i> and Callie begins her exploration of the scientific method and evolution, eventually happening upon the possible discovery of a new plant species. Callie's mother, believing that a diet of Darwin, Dickens, and her grandfather's influence will make Callie dissatisfied with life, sets her on a path of cooking lessons, handiwork improvement, and an eventual debut into society. Callie's confusion and despair over her changing life will resonate with girls who feel different or are outsiders in their own society. Callie is a charming, inquisitive protagonist; a joyous, bright, and thoughtful creation. The conclusion encompasses bewilderment, excitement, and humor as the dawn of a new century approaches. Several scenes, including a younger brother's despair over his turkeys intended for the Thanksgiving table and Callie's heartache over receiving <i>The Science of Housewifery</i> as a Christmas gift, mix gentle humor and pathos to great effect.</p>
Clements, Andrew	<p>Extra Credit</p> <p>A forced pen-pal exchange turns into an opportunity for real communication between Illinois sixth-grader Abby Carson and Sadeed Bayat, the best English-language student in his Afghan village. When Abby's first letter arrives in Bahar-Lan, 11-year-old Sadeed is asked by the elders to compose his sister Amira's reply; it isn't proper for a boy and girl to correspond with one another. But soon Sadeed can't resist telling Abby that it is he who has been writing to her. The third-person narrative alternates points of view, allowing for inclusion of intriguing details of both lives. Never a scholar, Abby prefers the woods behind her family's farm and the climbing wall in her school; in the afternoons, Sadeed works in his father's grain shop. In spite of their differences, Abby and Sadeed connect through their imaginations, and their earlier readings of <i>Frog and Toad Are Friends</i>. They learn, as Abby reports, that "people are simple, but the stuff going on around them can get complicated." Full-page pencil illustrations throughout add to the book's appeal. Clements offers readers an engaging and realistic school story and provides an evenhanded comparison between a Midwestern girl's lifestyle and a culture currently in the news.</p>

- Cochrane, Mick** **The Girl Who Threw Butterflies**
 Cochrane (Sport) revisits the baseball diamond in this unhurried novel about a girl with a mean knuckleball ("Molly loved watching one of her knuckleballs in flight, but what she felt was not self-admiration at all, just simple curiosity. What was this one going to do?"). Dealing with her father's death in a car accident six months prior and her mother's subsequent zombie-like disinterest in life, Molly hopes that playing on the eighth-grade boys' baseball team will keep her connected to her dad. Molly is bolstered by her free-spirited friend, Celia (who steals every scene she's in), and Lonnie, a kindhearted, artistically inclined catcher. Cochrane offers poignant flashbacks of father-daughter bonding, realistic mother-daughter squabbling and some nail-biting moments on the pitcher's mound, but some readers may find the story's pace sluggish. Still, Cochrane's honest, quiet prose should find fans, as Molly finally pitches a winning game, earns the respect of her teammates and symbolically "lets go" of her need to understand her dad's death.
- Lin, Grace** **Where the Mountain Meets the Moon**
 Living in the shadow of the Fruitless Mountain, Minli and her parents spend their days working in the rice fields, barely growing enough to feed themselves. Every night, Minli's father tells her stories about the Jade Dragon that keeps the mountain bare, the greedy and mean Magistrate Tiger, and the Old Man of the Moon who holds everyone's destiny. Determined to change her family's fortune, Minli sets out to find the Old Man of the Moon, urged on by a talking goldfish who gives her clues to complete her journey. Along the way she makes new friends including a flightless dragon and an orphan and proves her resourcefulness when she tricks a group of greedy monkeys and gets help from a king. Interwoven with Minli's quest are tales told by her father and by those she meets on the way. While these tales are original to Lin, many characters, settings, and themes are taken from traditional Chinese folklore.
- Magoon, Kekla** **The Rock and the River**
 Sam Childs, 13, is growing up in Chicago in 1968. His father is a civil rights activist, and the boy has been involved in peaceful demonstrations with his family. When he and his girlfriend, Maxie, witness the brutal beating of a friend at the hands of the police, his world begins to change dramatically. His 17-year-old brother brings a gun home and hides it in their shared room. Next thing Sam knows, Stick has run away from home and is involved with the Black Panther Party, whose philosophy his dad does not share. The brutality of the beating has wrought a change in Sam as well, and the good works he sees the Panthers doing in his neighborhood make him question his dad's opinion. The characters are well drawn and the complexities of the relationships between Roland Childs and his two sons are moving. The episodes of violence are graphic, but necessary to move the plot forward. While the image of the Black Panther Party is somewhat idealized, this is an important book about a historical reality that has not been dealt with in juvenile fiction.
- Mass, Wendy** **Every Soul a Star**
 The lives of three young people intersect and transform against the backdrop of a total solar eclipse. Homeschooled Ally has grown up at the remote Moon Shadow Campground, which her family runs. An eclipse, which can be viewed only from this site, is approaching, and ahead of it come Bree, an aspiring model obsessed with popularity, and Jack, a reclusive artist and avid sci-fi reader. Ally's sheltered world is about to open up as she discovers that her parents plan to cede management of the campground to Bree's parents after the event. Neither Ally nor Bree is excited about the prospect, but as the teens interact they come to terms with the changes they face. Meanwhile, introverted Jack finds himself making friends and becoming a leader. As they go their separate ways, all three approach the future with a newfound balance between their internal and their external lives. The astronomical details are fascinating and lyrically incorporated into the narrative.
- O'Connor, Barbara** **Greetings from Nowhere**
 Aggie isn't expecting visitors at the Sleepy Time Motel in the Great Smoky Mountains. Since her husband died, she is all alone with her cat, Ugly, and keeping up with the bills and repairs has become next to impossible. The pool is empty, the garden is overgrown, and not a soul has come to stay in nearly three months. When she reluctantly places a For Sale ad in the newspaper, Aggie doesn't know that Kirby and his mom will need a room when their car breaks down on the way to Kirby's new reform school. Or that Loretta and her parents will arrive in her dad's plumbing company van on a trip meant to honor the memory of Loretta's birth mother. Or that Clyde Dover will answer the For Sale ad in such a hurry and move in with his daughter, Willow, looking for a brand-new life to replace the one that was fractured when Willow's mom left. Perhaps the biggest surprise of all is that Aggie and her guests find just the friends they need at the shabby motel in the middle of nowhere.
- Parry, Rosanne** **Heart of a Shepherd**
 In Parry's debut novel, 11-year-old Brother (his given name is Ignatius: "Guess they ran out of all the good saints by the time they got to me") helps manage his family's Oregon ranch. With his father in Iraq, his four older brothers at school or in the military, and his mother painting abroad, caring for family's livestock falls to Brother, his grandparents and some hired help. Though he is eager to prove to his siblings, grandparents and most importantly, his father, that he can handle it, Brother nonetheless struggles with the rigors of the job, his father's and brothers' absence and the stress of war ("I could never do it... I could never take those salutes and the 'yes, sirs' and then take moms and dads into danger"). Slowly, Brother fills the shoes of his elders and realizes his own calling when he is literally tested by fire.
- Paulsen, Gary** **Woods Runner**
 Steering his narrative through an unsentimentalized and deglorified depiction of the American Revolution, Paulsen's latest work of historical fiction provides a stark glimpse of just how awful the war really was for those who suffered through it. Though his parents are city folk trying to hack out a life on the frontier in Pennsylvania, 13-year-old Samuel is entirely at home in the woodland wilderness that surrounds their little settlement. Soon after word arrives of the uprising in Concord and Lexington, Samuel returns home from a jaunt in the forest to find his home burned down, the neighbors slaughtered, and his parents missing. Samuel tracks his captured parents through the countryside to British-held New York, encountering scalping bands of Iroquois, pillaging squads of mercenary Hessians, and a few hardy, helpful rebels along the way. Paulsen alternates chapters of Samuel's story with historical notes that illuminate the sobering realities of the Revolution and add some context not found in most history books. Paulsen's rewarding and fast-paced novel offers an honest assessment of heroism writ both small and large.

Philbrick,
Rodman

The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg

Philbrick (*Freak the Mighty*) offers rip-roaring adventure in this Civil War–era novel featuring a mistreated orphan who doesn't let truth stand in the way of spinning a good yarn. When his guardian, Uncle Squinton—the meanest man in the entire state of Maine—sells off Homer P. Figg's older brother, Harold, to take a rich man's son's place in the Union army, Homer can't just stand around doing nothing. Determined to alert the authorities (and his brother) that Harold is too young to be a soldier, the plucky narrator traces the path of the regiment. He faces many dangers, including an abduction or two, and being robbed and thrown in with the pigs, and joining the Caravan of Miracles before landing smack in the middle of the Battle of Gettysburg, where he reunites with his brother and more or less drives the Confederates away. The book wouldn't be nearly as much fun without Homer's tall tales, but there are serious moments, too, and the horror of war and injustice of slavery ring clearly above the din of playful exaggerations.

Prineas,
Sarah

The Magic Thief

Conn, a pickpocket on the streets of Twilight, one day picks the pocket of a powerful wizard and steals his locus magicalicus, the center of his power. It should kill Conn, but it doesn't. Nevery, the wizard, has just returned after a 22-year exile, to try to save the town from the leaching of its magic, upon which so much, including its economy, depends. Curious about the boy, Nevery takes him on as an assistant and then an apprentice. Although it is the wizard's job to stem the tide of the disappearing magic, he seems unable to do so. Conn believes he knows the answer, but his enemies are closing in. Prineas has created an appealing cast of characters, which she carefully reveals through their actions. The story is told primarily by Conn, and is interspersed with cryptic journal entries by Nevery, which offer a tantalizing counterpoint to the protagonist's viewpoint. The book is long, but the large print and appealing drawings will encourage younger readers. Fantasy and adventure lovers alike will groan when they get to the tantalizingly mischievous ending, and are likely to hound you until the sequel arrives.

Scieszka,
Jon

Knucklehead: Tall Tales & Mostly True Stories about Growing Up Scieszka

Just try to keep kids away from this collection. Inspired book design makes the volume look like an old-school comic. The front cover features an elementary-aged Scieszka popping up out of a military tank, surrounded by explosions and bombers, while the back advertises a "Treasure Chest of Fun" and displays chapter titles and excerpts along with nostalgic graphics. Scieszka answers the oft-asked question, "Where do you get your ideas?" with a slew of childhood anecdotes and his family's escapades that have given him plenty of material from which to draw. Born in 1954, the second of six brothers, he writes about Catholic and military schools, buying gifts, chores, and hand-me-downs—all familiar experiences related with a specific Scieszka twist. His mother, a nurse, insisted that her sons use proper terms for anatomy ("rectum" rather than "butt") and bodily functions ("urinate" rather than "pee"), making way for several laugh-out-loud moments. Some stories are just amiably funny, such as wearing recycled Halloween costumes, while others help readers understand more about how the author developed his unique sense of humor. Family photographs and other period illustrations appear throughout. Entertaining and fast-moving, silly and sweet, this homage to family life is not to be missed.

Smith,
Roland

Peak

In this high-altitude adventure, 14-year-old Peak Marcello's passion for climbing is clearly in the genes, but when he is arrested for scaling tall buildings, his mom and stepdad make a deal with the judge to ship him out of the country to live with her ex-husband and squelch the media attention that might inspire "Spider Boy" copycats. The teen's father, Josh, and his Himalayan expedition company are preparing teams to climb Mount Everest and suddenly Peak is faced with the possibility of becoming the youngest climber to reach the summit. Excited about the adventure, he learns that Josh may have less-than-fatherly motives involving publicity and financial gain for his company, at the expense of his paying customers. Peak is handed off to his father's head Sherpa for training and altitude acclimation with a Nepalese boy his own age, named Sun-jo. At the same time, a media crew gathers at base camp to witness the climb, and an overzealous Chinese police captain doggedly searches for passport violations and underage climbers. Facts about Mount Everest, base camps, and the dangers of climbing are plentiful, depicting an international culture made up of individuals who are often self-absorbed and indifferent to the Tibetan Sherpas, who risk their lives for them.

Smith, Sherri
L.

Flygirl

Readers first meet 18-year-old Ida Mae Jones, a Louisiana girl who longs to be a pilot, in December 1941, on the eve of America's entrance into World War II. She is pretty and smart, but she has two huge strikes against her. She is black in an America where racism holds sway, and a competent pilot in an America in which she is denied her license because she is a woman. Smith explores these two significant topics and does a wonderful job of melding the two themes in one novel. Ida Mae is a likable character who is torn by the need to pass for white and fake a license in order to fulfill her dream. Readers learn a great deal about what it must have been like to be African American in the South during this period, as well as about the Women Airforce Service Pilots, WASP, a civilian group that performed jobs that freed male pilots for other things. The women's close friendships and the danger, excitement, and tragedy of their experience create a thrilling, but little-known story that begs to be told.

Westerfeld,
Scott

Leviathan

This is World War I as never seen before. The story begins the same: on June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife are assassinated, triggering a sequence of alliances that plunges the world into war. But that is where the similarity ends. This global conflict is between the Clankers, who put their faith in machines, and the Darwinists, whose technology is based on the development of new species. After the assassination of his parents, Prince Aleksandar's people turn on him. Accompanied by a small group of loyal servants, the young Clanker flees Austria in a Cyklop Stormwalker, a war machine that walks on two legs. Meanwhile, as Deryn Sharp trains to be an airman with the British Air Service, she prays that no one will discover that she is a girl. She serves on the *Leviathan*, a massive biological airship that resembles an enormous flying whale and functions as a self-contained ecosystem. When it crashes in Switzerland, the two teens cross paths, and suddenly the line between enemy and ally is no longer clearly defined. The ending leaves plenty of room for a sequel, and that's a good thing because readers will be begging for more. Enhanced by Thompson's intricate black-and-white illustrations, Westerfeld's brilliantly constructed imaginary world will capture readers from the first page. Full of nonstop action, this steampunk adventure is sure to become a classic.

Book Order Form

7th Grade Summer **Reading 2011** (for students entering 7th grade in August 2011)

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2012 Nominee List)

ORDERING DEADLINE: Friday, May 13, 2011

Author	Title	Cost	Quantity
Auch, M J	One-Handed Catch (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Broach, Elise	Masterpiece (7.99 list)	7.00	_____
Burg, Ann E.	All the Broken Pieces (hardcover only—16.99 list)	13.00	_____
Carmichael, Clay	Wild Things (hardcover only—18.95 list)	15.00	_____
Clements, Andrew	Extra Credit (5.99 list)	5.00	_____
Cochrane, Mick	The Girl Who Threw Butterflies (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Cody, Matthew	Powerless (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Kelly, Jacqueline	The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate (7.99 list)	7.00	_____
Lin, Grace	Where the Mountain Meets the Moon (7.99 list)	7.00	_____
Magoon, Kekla	The Rock and the River (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Mass, Wendy	Every Soul a Star (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
O'Connor, Barbara	Greetings from Nowhere (hardcover only—16.99 list)	13.00	_____
Parry, Rosanne	Heart of a Shepherd (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Paulsen, Gary	Woods Runner (7.99 list)	7.00	_____
Philbrick, Rodman	The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Prineas, Sarah	The Magic Thief (6.99 list)	6.00	_____
Scieszka, Jon	Knucklehead: Tall Tales & Mostly True Stories about Growing Up Scieszka (12.99 list)	11.00	_____
Smith, Roland	Peak (6.95 list)	6.00	_____
Smith, Sherri L.	Flygirl (7.99 list)	7.00	_____
Westerfeld, Scott	Leviathan (9.99 list)	9.00	_____

TOTAL _____

NAME _____

Lit Teacher _____ Period _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____ cash check

Make checks payable to LZ Middle School North

