

Roselle Park Middle School

Summer Reading List/Requirements

Students Entering 7th Grade

2011

Our summer reading curriculum offers students a diverse list of titles to choose from. All students entering 7th grade must read **one** of the books listed below. Although we encourage students to read more than one novel, they will not be awarded extra credit for additional novels. Students are required to complete a Double Entry Journal and one project. **Grades for the assignments will account for 15% of the first marking period grade.** The Double Entry Journal and the Project Assessments (see attached forms) are due by **Monday, September 12, 2011**. The titles on the list were chosen because they have proven to be of “high interest” to readers. Parents/guardians are advised to become involved with their son or daughter’s choice of reading.

Those who will be entering Grade 7, will choose one of the following titles to read:

City of Ember by Jeanne Duprau

Ember, a 241-year-old, ruined domed city surrounded by a dark unknown, was built to ensure that humans would continue to exist on Earth, and the instructions for getting out have been lost and forgotten. On Assignment Day, 12-year-olds leave school and receive their lifetime job assignments. Lina Mayfleet becomes a messenger, and her friend Doon Harrow ends up in the Pipeworks beneath the city, where the failing electric generator has been ineffectually patched together. Both Lina and Doon are convinced that their survival means finding a way out of the city, and after Lina discovers pieces of the instructions, she and Doon work together to interpret the fragmented document. Life in this post holocaust city is well limned--the frequent blackouts, the food shortage, the public panic, the search for answers, and the actions of the powerful, who are taking selfish advantage of the situation. Readers will relate to Lina and Doon's resourcefulness and courage in the face of ominous odds.

Ask Me No Questions by Marina Budhas

What is it like to be an illegal alien in New York now? In a moving first-person, present-tense narrative, Nadira, 14, relates how her family left Bangladesh, came to the U. S. on a tourist visa, and stayed long after the visa expired ("Everyone does it. You buy a fake social security number for a few hundred dollars and then you can work."). Their illegal status is discovered, however, following 9/11, when immigration regulations are tightened. When the family hurriedly seeks asylum in Canada, they are turned back, and Nadira's father, Abba, is detained because his passport is no longer valid. The secrets are dramatic ("Go to school. Never let anyone know. Never."), and so are the family dynamics, especially Nadira's furious envy of her gifted older sister, Aisha. But Aisha breaks down, and Nadira must take over the struggle to get Abba out of detention and prevent the family's deportation. The teen voice is wonderfully immediate, revealing Nadira's mixed-up feelings as well as the diversity in her family and in the Muslim community. There's also a real drama that builds to a tense climax: Did Abba give funds to a political organization? Where has the money gone? Will Immigration hear his appeal? The answer is a surprise that grows organically from the family's story. Readers will feel the heartbreak, prejudice, kindness, and fear. Add this to the titles in "New Immigration Materials" in the August 2005 issue's Spotlight on Immigration.

Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick

Selznick's "novel in words and pictures," an intriguing mystery set in 1930s Paris about an orphan, a salvaged clockwork invention, and a celebrated filmmaker, resuscitates an anemic genre--the illustrated novel--and takes it to a whole new level. The result is somewhat similar to a graphic novel, but experiencing its mix of silvery pencil drawings and narrative interludes is ultimately more akin to watching a silent film. Indeed, movies and the wonder they inspire, "like seeing dreams in the middle of the day," are central to the story, and Selznick expresses an obvious passion for cinema in ways both visual (successive pictures, set against black frames as if projected on a darkened screen, mimic slow zooms and dramatic cuts) and thematic (the convoluted plot involves director Georges M'eli'es, particularly his fanciful 1902 masterpiece, *A Trip to the Moon*0 .) This hybrid creation, which also includes movie stills and archival photographs, is surprising and often lovely, but the orphan's story is overshadowed by the book's artistic and historical concerns (the heady extent of which are revealed in concluding notes about Selznick's inspirations, from the Lumière brothers to Francois Truffaut). Nonetheless, bookmaking this ambitious demands and deserves attention--which it will surely receive from children attracted by a novel in which a complex narrative is equally advanced by things both read and seen.

Heat by Mike Lupica

Michael Arroyo is a 13-year-old Cuban American who lives in the shadow of Yankee Stadium. Yes, he is a Little League ballplayer, and, yes, he has a dream: to pitch in the Little League World Series. To do so, his South Bronx All-Stars will need to beat the best the greater New York area has to offer in the regional championship, to be played in--you guessed it--Yankee Stadium. This setup sounds like yet another *Rocky* meets *Bad News Bears* tearjerker: the immigrants from the Bronx take on the white-bread rich kids from the suburbs. It is that (with some notable twists), but it's much more, too. Michael and his brother, 17-year-old Carlos, have a problem: their beloved father is dead, and the boys are hoping to avoid a foster home by pretending Papi is visiting a sick relative in Miami. Lupica wrings plenty of genuine emotion from the melodramatic frame story, but he sidesteps the slough of social significance by building characters who speak for themselves, not the author, and by enlivening the story with a teen version of street humor. The dialogue crackles, and the rich cast of supporting characters--especially Michael's battery mate, catcher and raconteur Manny--nearly steals the show. Top-notch entertainment in the Carl Hiaasen mold.

NONFICTION

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey

Being a teenager is both wonderful and challenging. In *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, author Sean Covey applies the timeless principles of the 7 Habits to teens and the tough issues and life-changing decisions they face. Covey provides a step-by-step guide to help teens improve self-image, build friendships, resist peer pressure, achieve their goals, and much more. In addition, this book is stuffed with great ideas and incredible stories about real teens from all over the world.