

# Roselle Park Middle School

## Summer Reading List/Requirements

### Students Entering 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### 2011

Our summer reading curriculum offers students a diverse list of titles to choose from.

**\*LAL** students entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade must read **one** of the books listed below, complete a Double Entry Journal and one project on that book.

**\*\*LAL Honors** students entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to read a total of **two** books, **one choice and one required novel**. Honors students must complete a Double Entry Journal on **both** books and will be given a **multiple choice/essay test** the first week of school on the **required novel**. Honors students are **not** required to do a project on either book.

Although we encourage students to read more than one novel, they will not be awarded extra credit for additional novels. **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.

**Grade 8 students will choose one of the following titles to read:**  
**Honors students: See Required Read following optional titles.**

**Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment** Fourteen-year-old Max (short for Maximum Ride) leads an usual group of children, escapees from an institution that designed them by "grafting avian DNA onto human genes. Yup, these kids have wings. When Angel, the smallest of the group, is kidnapped by mutants and taken back to the "school," Max and her family determine to get her back--no matter what. Patterson occasionally forgets his audience here, as evidenced by his sardonic tone and such glib adult asides as "they found their prey: moi,"but he's picked a comfortable formula (orphans protecting one another and making a home together), which he's cushioned with an abundance of slaving beasts, childhood heartaches, and unresolved issues--all in preparation for the sequel in 2006, in which Max will, presumably, assume the role she's been assigned here: savior of the world.

**Colibri by Ann Cameron** Twelve-year-old Rosa remembers only a few things about the home she shared with her loving parents in a Mayan village before she was kidnapped at the age of four. Since then, she has traveled with Uncle, an abusive con artist. After being convinced by a fortune-teller that Rosa will make him rich, Uncle embarks on an obsessive treasure hunt, forcing Rosa to join in his scams for food and money. Rosa hates Uncle's dishonesty and anger, and she feels trapped. Then Uncle consults another fortune-teller, a kind, wise woman who gives Rosa the courage to escape. Uncle remains a dark, mortal threat, though, and his search for riches coincides with Rosa's search for identity. The taut, chilling suspense and search for riches will keep readers flying through the pages. But it's Cameron's beautiful language and Rosa's larger identity quest that make this novel extraordinary. Her poetic words evoke Guatemalan towns and lush forests where the earth smells "as if it were singing."Rosa narrates in a voice that sometimes seems to belong to an older, wiser self, but readers will be deeply moved by her intense yearning for security, love, and integrity and her sense of a spiritual world that is felt but never fully known.

**Airborn by Kenneth Oppel** In a breathtaking opening sequence, cabin boy Matt Cruse on the airship Aurora spies a hot-air balloon slowly sinking in the night sky, its pilot unconscious in the gondola. Within minutes Matt is harnessed and swinging four hundred feet above the ocean for a daring midair rescue. Though Matt saves balloonist Benjamin Molloy, the elderly man dies the following day after mumbling some cryptic words about "beautiful creatures." A year later, Molloy's granddaughter Kate travels on the Aurora hoping to learn more about the strange winged mammals the balloonist wrote about in his journal. "Cloud cats"--magnificent creatures that live solely in the air--are among several fanciful elements in this novel, which is set in an alternate Edwardian-styled past that's both familiar (wireless radios, Lumiere projectors) and exotic (giant "hydrium"-filled airships traverse the "Pacifucus" and "Atlanticus" oceans). Matt is a wonderfully enthusiastic narrator whose passion for flight is evident on every page, and he's well matched by the strong-willed, intellectually curious Kate. Their adventures in this fast-paced, buoyant novel have a sweeping, cinematic feel as pirates attack the Aurora, the vessel is shipwrecked, and Matt and Kate escape imprisonment just in time to dispatch the bad guys, save the Aurora and its passengers, and, of course, fall in love.

**The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho** This simple, yet eloquent parable celebrates the richness of the human spirit. A young Spanish shepherd seeking his destiny travels to Egypt where he learns many lessons, particularly from a wise old alchemist. The real alchemy here, however, is the transmuting of youthful idealism into mature wisdom. The blending of conventional ideas with an exotic setting makes old truths seem new again. This shepherd takes the advice Hamlet did not heed, learning to trust his heart and commune with it as a treasured friend. Enjoyable and easy to read, this timeless fantasy validates the aspirations and dreams of youth.

**The Pact by Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, Rameck Hung** They grew up on the streets of Newark, facing city life's temptations, pitfalls, even jail. But one day these three young men made a pact. They promised each other they would all become doctors, and stick it out together through the long, difficult journey to attain that dream. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins and Rameck Hung are not only friends to this day—they are all doctors. This is a story about the power of friendship, of joining forces and beating the odds. A story about changing your life, and the lives of those you love most...together.

### **\*\*\*Required Read for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors- (no projects)**

**The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien** Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit, becomes a thief for a band of dwarves and soon finds himself in the midst of a war with the evil goblins and wargs, and forced to make a decision between the call of duty and the pull of the simple life.