



BRENTWOOD ACADEMY

Summer Reading List 2024: 7th Grade Literature (Standard and Honors)

"Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man."
-Francis Bacon

A Rationale for Summer Reading

- To improve reading fluency
- To prepare for thoughtful discussion and writing beginning the first day of class
- To generate interest and pleasure in reading that enriches literary and philosophical experience
- To encourage a lifelong love of reading
- To use time not available during the school year to read classics that expand cultural literacy

Required Text

• *A Long Walk to Water*

Linda Sue Park

This novel is based on the true story of Salva, one of some 3,800 Sudanese "Lost Boys" airlifted to the United States beginning in the mid-1990s. Salva's life is told side-by-side with the story of Nya, a young girl who lives today in one of those villages.

Choice Text (Select TWO that you have not read previously.)

• *On the Edge of the Dark Sea of Darkness*

Andrew Peterson

"The Igiby children are gifted as all children are, loved well by a noble mother and ex-pirate grandfather. But they will need all their gifts and all that they love to survive the evil pursuit of the venomous Fangs of Dang, who have crossed the dark sea to rule the land with malice. On the Edge of the Dark Sea of Darkness presents a world of wonder with layers of meaning about life's true treasure and tangle of the beautiful and horrible, temporal and eternal, and good and bad."

• *An American Life*

Jimmy Gentry

An American Life chronicles a time that has all but disappeared, both in Franklin and small-town America. It tells about the life of Jimmy Gentry growing up in Franklin, TN, and his account of surviving World War II.

• *The Running Dream*

Wendelin Van Draanen

This is an award-winning and inspiring novel. Jessica thinks her life and high school dreams are over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? Follow Jessica's journey as she learns to dream bigger than ever before.

• *The Outsiders*

S. E. Hinton

No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends—true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on "greasers" like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect—until the night someone takes things too far.

• *Call of the Wild*

Jack London

The domesticated life of a powerful St. Bernard-Shepherd mix named Buck is quickly turned on end when he is stolen away from his master and put to work as a sled dog in Alaska. His once life of luxury turns into a life of survival and adaptation as he learns the ways of the wilderness. Set in the Klondike region of Canada during the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush, *The Call of the Wild* showcases the transformation of a canine as he learns to adapt to what life has given him, fair or not.

• *Warrior Dog*

Joe Laydon & Will Chesney

Two dozen Navy SEALs descended on Osama bin Laden's compound in May 2011. After the mission, only one name was made public: Cairo, a Belgian Malinois and military working dog. *Warrior Dog* is the story of Cairo and his handler, Will Chesney, a member of SEAL Team Six whose life would be irrevocably tied to Cairo's, specially adapted for young readers from Chesney and Joe Layden's *No Ordinary Dog*.

• *I Am Malala*

Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai was only ten years old when the Taliban took control of her region. They said music was a crime. They said women weren't allowed to go to the market. They said girls couldn't go to school. Raised in a once-peaceful area of Pakistan transformed by terrorism, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believes. So, she fought for her right to be educated. And on October 9, 2012, she nearly lost her life for the cause: She was shot point-blank while riding the bus on her way home from school. No one expected her to survive.

• *Counting By 7's*

Holly Goldberg Sloan

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is *not* a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.

• *Out of My Mind*

Sharon M. Draper

Eleven-year-old Melody is not like most people. She can't walk. She can't talk. She can't write. All because she has cerebral palsy. But she also has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but NO ONE knows it. Most people—her teachers, her doctors, her classmates—dismiss her as mentally challenged because she can't tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by her disability. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

• *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Honors only)

Mark Twain

This childhood classic relates a small-town boy's pranks and escapades with timeless humor and wisdom.

• *When You Reach Me* (Honors only)

Rebecca Stead

By sixth grade Miranda and her best friend Sal know how to navigate their New York City neighborhood. They know where it's safe to go, and they know whom to avoid—like the crazy guy on the corner.

• *Out of My Heart* (Honors only)

Sharon M. Draper

Melody, the huge-hearted heroine of *Out of My Mind*, is a year older, and a year braver. And now with her Medi-talker, she feels nothing's out of her reach, not even summer camp. There *must* be camps for differently abled kids like her, and she's going to sleuth one out. A place where she can trek through a forest, fly on a zip line, and even ride on a horse! A place where maybe she really can finally make a real friend, make her own decisions, and even do things on her own—the dream!

• *Rebecca* (Honors only)

Daphne Du Maurier

After reading one of the most famous first sentences in any novel, the reader is ushered into an isolated gray stone mansion on the windswept Cornish coast, as the second Mrs. Maxim de Winter recalls the chilling events that transpired as she began her new life as the young bride of a husband she barely knew.

General Instructions/Evaluations

1. We will use *A Long Walk to Water* as a springboard for our summer reading discussions about the archetypal hero.
2. The specific evaluation method(s) for summer reading will be discussed the first day of class.
3. Students should have both summer reading books with them the first day of class.
4. Although not required for summer reading, annotation (highlighting, margin notes, summaries) of the reading is a beneficial tool for comprehension and retention.
5. You are permitted to read along with an audiobook if that is helpful.

***Please remember the BA English Department policy:
Do not consult internet novel guides, any other electronic or printed summaries, or movies;
read and mark the texts themselves.***