

Thomas W. Pyle Middle School

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Mr. Michael J. Zarchin, Principal

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Dear Incoming Seventh Grader:

We look forward to seeing you in our classes next year. In order for you to maintain and strengthen your basic language skills, we urge you to read and write as much as you can during your months away from school.

The ability to read is crucial to an individual's success in school and on the job. Reading is a life-long skill that a person needs to succeed not only as a student but also as a worker and a citizen. Perhaps even more importantly, reading opens the world to a person through periodicals, textbooks, and literature.

Research strongly suggests that reading, like most skills, improves with practice and decreases when we don't engage in it for even a short time. Therefore, consistent with our commitment to prepare all students for success during school and after graduation, we continue to expect all students to read during the summer.

To be better prepared for 7th grade English class, please read at least **two books from the attached list**. In addition, read **at least two books of your own choice**. Come to school with the titles and authors of these selections. The curriculum begins with a unit called "Identity." Subsequent units include "A Sense of Place," "Voices from the Past," and "Imagination." You will notice that a number of the books are set in the Middle Ages while others take place during the 1940s. The Renaissance and the World War II era are both time periods studied during 7th grade.

Your Assignment

Read two of the books on the attached list. Once you have finished each book, follow the "**Notetaking Guide**" to help you think about each book and to remember the details when you come to class in August. You will use these notes to participate in class discussions and complete an assignment in your English class during the first grading period. Also bring the titles and authors **of at least two free-choice books that you read**. Keep a record on the list on the back of this letter. Bring the notes and list to school with you.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Zarchin
Principal

Celia Harper
English Resource Teacher

Melissa Griffith
Reading Specialist

Pyle Summer Reading for Incoming 7th Graders

Your Assignment

Read **two** of the books listed below. As you read, use the following **Notetaking Guide** to help you remember important aspects of each of your novels. Bring your notes to class the first day of school. They will help you to participate in class discussions and to answer an essay question, which is part of Unit 1, "Identity."

Notetaking Guide

1. List the main characters, the roles they play in the novel, and their personality traits.
 - a) How has one character changed from the beginning of the novel to the end?
 - b) What has one character learned about himself/herself or about others through his/her experiences in the novel?
2. List and briefly describe the major settings of the novel in chronological order.
3. Identify at least five important or memorable scenes. Include a few specific notes about each.

Pyle's Reading List

The following books are available at Pyle and can be signed out **June 8 -12**. Parent volunteers or Pyle staff will assist you at various times, before, during, and after the school day in Rm. 209. Please listen to the school announcements for the specific time.

Adam of the Road by Elizabeth Janet Gray (1030L)
...and Now Miguel by Joseph Krumgold (780L)
Behind the Bedroom Wall by Laura E. Williams (660L)
Belle Prater's Boy by Ruth White (760L)
A Boy At War by Harry Mazer (530L)
Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis (950L)
Catherine Called Birdy by Karen Cushman (1170L)
Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court by Mark Twain (1080L)
Crispin: The Cross of Lead by Avi (780L)
Freak the Mighty (also titled *The Mighty*) by Rodman Philbrick (1000L)
The Hunchback of Notre Dame by Victor Hugo (1340L)
The Midwife's Apprentice by Karen Cushman (1240L)
My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George (810L)
The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton (750L)
Redwall by Brian Jacques (800L)
Secret Garden by Francis Hodgson Burnett (970L)
The Strange Adventures of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by R. L. Stevenson (1040L)
The Sword in the Stone by T.H. White (1120L)
Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls (700L)

At local libraries:

Absolutely Normal Chaos by Sharon Creech (900L)
All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot (990L)
The First Woman Doctor by Rachel Baker (1120L)
Good Night, Maman by Norma Fox Mazer (510L)
Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelan (800L)

Lily's Crossing by Patricia Reilly Giff (720L)

Red Scarf Girl by Ji-Li Jiang (780L)

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli (590L)

Tusk and Stone by Malcolm Bosse (950L)

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne (1030L)

Explanation of Lexile Scores:

Lexile scores are one way to match readers to books that they can read independently. When choosing a book, however, readers must also consider their interests. If the topic of the book is something that the reader knows a lot about, he or she can often enjoy a book at a higher lexile. If the topic of the book is new to the reader or is very complicated, it is better to choose a book at or below the reader's lexile level.

Students' individual lexile scores can be found on the Map-R report. Your English or reading teacher can provide this information and answer any questions that you have. More information is available at www.lexile.com.