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Hey there new 8th graders,

Summer is finally here!

Sunny days, hanging with your friends, and NO SCHOOL!

Well, even though there may not be any school, you don't want your mind to get lazy; so here is your 8th grade summer reading list. This year's list has a wide range of books that I think you will enjoy. There are a total of 10 books to choose from - they include science fiction, mystery, historical fiction, non-fiction, social and family issues and even one graphic novel.

This year's reading assignment is going to be a little different than last year. There are two parts to this year's assignment:

A) You will need to select one book from the list and respond to the four questions below. Here is what I'm going to be looking for:

- 1. Each response needs to be at least 4 sentences long and be in a well thought-out paragraph. I will know if you are answering the question without reading the book.**
- 2. Each paragraph needs to have proper grammar, spelling, and must make sense.**
- 3. DO NOT COPY FROM FRIENDS.**

B) The first day back there will be a test on the book you read. Yes, that does mean there will be 10 different tests. Each test will only have one question from the book. It won't be a difficult question but it will show me whether you read the book.

Combined, the writing assignment and the test will count towards your first marking period of 8th grade. The writing assignment will be 75% and the test will be 25%. Let's start 8th grade strong by having everyone earning a 100% on this assignment.

During the summer, I will still have my remind app going so if you run into challenges, let me know and I will help you. You are never alone, I'll always be there to help you!

Have a wonderful and restful summer and I will see you all in September.

Mr. Blair

Name _____

Book Read _____

Writing Assignment:

After you read your book, respond to the following questions. Each response should be at least a4 sentences long and form a thoughtful and detailed paragraph. Be prepared to turn in these responses. If you need additional space for your responses, please write them on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to this organizer.

Question	Written Response
1. Why did you select this book at first? What interested you and continued to hold your attention?	
2. To which parts of the book did you have a strong emotional reaction? Why?	
3. What were the best scenes in this book? Why?	
4. What connections do you see between this book and your life, or to the world around you?	

Unwind

By Neal Shusterman

(Adventure/Suspense/Sci-fi/Fiction)

In America after the Second Civil War, the Pro-Choice and Pro-Life armies came to an agreement: The Bill of Life states that human life may not be touched from the moment of conception until a child reaches the age of thirteen. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, however, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called "unwinding." Unwinding ensures that the child's life doesn't technically end by transplanting all the organs in the child's body to various recipients. Now a common and accepted practice in society, troublesome or unwanted teens are able to easily be unwound.

With breathtaking suspense, this book follows three teens who all become runaway Unwinds: Connor, a rebel whose parents have ordered his unwinding; Risa, a ward of the state who is to be unwound due to cost-cutting; and Lev, his parents tenth child whose unwinding has been planned since birth as a religious tithing. As their paths intersect, their lives hang in the balance.

Ready Player One

By Ernest Cline

(Adventure/Suspense/Sci-fi/Fiction)

In the year 2045, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines—puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them.

But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win—and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.

Fish in a Tree

By Lynda Hunt

(Friendship/Social Skills/Life/Fiction)

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her - and to everyone - than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass

By Meg Medina

(Social/Family Issues/Fiction)

"Yaqui Delgado wants to kick your ass." That's what some girl tells Piddy Sanchez one morning before school. Too bad Piddy doesn't even know who Yaqui Delgado is, let alone what she's done to make her angry. All Piddy knows is that Yaqui hates her - and she better watch her back because Yaqui isn't kidding around. At first Piddy just focuses on trying to find out more about the father she's never met and how to balance honors courses with her weekend job at the neighborhood hair salon. But as the harassment escalates, avoiding Yaqui and her gang starts to take over Piddy's life. Is there any way for Piddy to survive without closing herself off and running away from her problems?

The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B

By Teresa Toten

(Social/Family Issues/Fiction)

Adam Spencer Ross is almost 15, and he's got his hands full confronting the everyday problems that come with having divorced parents and a stepsibling. Add to that his obsessive-compulsive disorder and it's just about impossible for him to imagine ever falling in love. Adam's life changes, however, the instant he meets Robyn Plummer: He is hopelessly, desperately drawn to her. But is it possible to have a normal relationship when your life is anything but?

Filled with moments of deep emotion and unexpected humor, *The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B* explores the complexities of living with OCD and offers the prospect of hope, happiness, and healing.

The Living

By Matt de la Pena

(Adventure/Suspense/Fiction)

Shy takes the summer job to make some money. A few months on a luxury cruise liner - how bad can it be? Bikinis, free food, maybe even a girl or two...there's always going to be a fresh crop of passengers, after all. He'll rake in the tips and be able to help his mom with the bills.

But then an earthquake more massive than any ever recorded hits California, and Shy's life is changed forever. The earthquake is only the beginning. Twenty-four hours and a catastrophic chain of events later, Shy is lost at sea, fighting to survive - and stuck with her.

She's blond and she's rich, and never in her life would she have dreamed she'd be adrift in the Pacific Ocean, surrounded by death and completely dependent on a guy like Shy.

And Shy hasn't even faced the worst yet.

When My Name was Keoko

By Linda Sue Park

(Historical Fiction)

Korean Sun-hee and her brother, Tae-yul, must study Japanese language and culture in school. The symbols of their beloved Korea - like its flag and the rose of Sharon tree - can never be displayed or mentioned in public. When the emperor of Japan decrees that all Koreans must take Japanese names, Sun-hee and Tae-yul become Keoko and Nobuo. But as World War II explodes all around them, Sun-hee and Tae-yul wage their own war to stay true to their family, their country, and themselves.

Escape from Camp 14: One Man's Remarkable Odyssey from North Korea to Freedom in the West

By Blaine Harden

(Non-fiction)

The shocking story of one of the few people born in a North Korean political prison to have escaped and survived.

North Korea is isolated and hungry, bankrupt and belligerent. It is also armed with nuclear weapons. Between 150,000 and 200,000 people are being held in its political prison camps, which have existed twice as long as Stalin's Soviet gulags and twelve times as long as the Nazi concentration camps. Very few born and raised in these camps have escaped - but Shin Dong-hyuk did.

In *Escape from Camp 14*, acclaimed journalist Blaine Harden tells the story of Shin Dong-hyuk and, through the lens of Shin's life, unlocks the secrets of the world's most repressive totalitarian state. Shin knew nothing of civilized existence: he saw his mother as a competitor for food, guards raised him to be a snitch, and he witnessed the execution of his own family. Through Harden's harrowing narrative of Shin's life and remarkable escape, he offers an unequalled inside account of one of the world's darkest nations and a riveting tale of endurance, courage, and survival.

Monster

By Walter Dean Myers

(Mystery/Thriller/Social Issues/Fiction)

This New York Times bestselling novel from acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers tells the story of Steve Harmon, a teenage boy in juvenile detention and on trial. Presented as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives.

Anya's Ghost

By Vera Brosgol

(Self-Esteem/Fiction/Graphic Novel)

Anya could really use a friend. But her new BFF isn't kidding about the "forever" part . . .

Of all the things Anya expected to find at the bottom of an old well, a new friend was not one of them. Especially not a new friend who's been dead for a century.

Falling down a well is bad enough, but Anya's normal life might actually be worse. She's embarrassed by her family, self-conscious about her body, and she's pretty much given up on fitting in at school. A new friend—even a ghost—is just what she needs.

Or so she thinks.

Spooky, sardonic, and secretly sincere, *Anya's Ghost* is a wonderfully entertaining debut graphic novel from author/artist Vera Brosgol.