

7th Grade Summer Reading List

Required Reading:

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne

During World War II, a young boy named Bruno and his family leave Berlin to take up residence near the concentration camp where his father has just become commandant. Unhappy and lonely, he wanders out behind his house one day and finds Shmuel, a Jewish boy of his age. Though the barbed-wire fence of the camp separates them, the boys begin a forbidden friendship, oblivious to the real nature of their surroundings.

Required Assignment:

Student will write a five paragraph essay that discusses the setting, main conflict, a brief description of all major characters, and the theme. All topics must have text evidence from the book to support your analysis. Essays should begin with an introduction and end with a conclusion. A suggested format looks like this:

Para. 1 – Intro

Para. 2 – Setting and Conflict

Para. 3 – Description of characters

Para. 4 – Explanation of theme

Para. 5 - Conclusion

Essay must be at least one page in length. The deadline will be the second Friday of the school year, so don't procrastinate!

Additionally, please pick one of the following optional books:

***Seabiscuit: An American Legend* by Laura Hillenbrand**

Seabiscuit was one of the most electrifying and popular attractions in sports history and the single biggest newsmaker in the world in 1938, receiving more coverage than FDR, Hitler, or Mussolini. But his success was a surprise to the racing establishment, which had written off the crooked-legged racehorse with the sad tail. Three men changed Seabiscuit's fortunes: Charles Howard was a onetime bicycle repairman who introduced the automobile to the western United States and became an overnight millionaire. When he needed a trainer for his new racehorses, he hired Tom Smith, a mysterious mustang breaker from the Colorado plains. Smith urged Howard to buy Seabiscuit for a bargain-basement price, then hired as his jockey Red Pollard, a failed boxer who was blind in one eye, half-crippled, and prone to quoting passages from Ralph Waldo Emerson. Over four years, these unlikely partners survived a phenomenal run of bad fortune, conspiracy, and severe injury to transform Seabiscuit into a horse-racing victor.

***Serafina and the Black Cloak* by Robert Beatty**

Serafina has never had a reason to disobey her pa and venture beyond the grounds of the Biltmore estate. There's plenty to explore in her grand home, although she must take care to never be seen. None of the rich folk upstairs know that Serafina exists; she and her pa, the estate's maintenance man, have secretly lived in the basement for as long as Serafina can remember. But when children at the estate start disappearing, only Serafina knows who the culprit is: a terrifying man in a black cloak who stalks Biltmore's corridors at night. Following her own harrowing escape, Serafina risks everything by joining forces with Braeden Vanderbilt, the young nephew of the Biltmore's owners. Braeden and Serafina must uncover the Man in the Black Cloak's true identity before all of the children vanish one by one.

Serafina's hunt leads her into the very forest that she has been taught to fear. There she discovers a forgotten legacy of magic, one that is bound to her own identity. In order to save the children of Biltmore, Serafina must seek the answers that will unlock the puzzle of her past.