

**Braintree Middle Schools
Required Summer Reading
June 2010**

Information for Parents of Students Entering Grade 7

Readers turn to literature for a variety of reasons, perhaps to satisfy their curiosity about the world around them or maybe to find their own fantasies, fears and aspirations imaginatively set before them. They are eager, moreover, to read stories that can help them explore some of the larger issues of life --- past, present and future. Reading is an activity that enriches our lives in many ways.

Equally important, reading has been and will continue to be a significant factor in a child's academic success. Research shows that a child who excels in reading will excel in almost all academic areas while a child who is threatened or bored by reading will underachieve throughout his or her academic life. Acquiring the habit of reading for enjoyment may well separate tomorrow's leaders from their followers.

Reading, like any other skill, can best be improved through participation and practice. We hope parents will become active partners this summer in helping their children become better readers. Together children and parents should consider a reading plan that will allow each child to discover the joy of learning through reading for pleasure. We offer the following suggestions:

1. Parents and children should go to the library or a bookstore several times throughout the summer and browse together. Parents are encouraged to assist their children in making appropriate selections.
2. Regular reading time needs to be set aside on a daily or weekly schedule.
3. Parents should encourage their children to keep up with the written assignments while reading each book. These assignments should not be thought of as "homework" but as an opportunity to help children reflect on what they've read.
4. Parents and children should discuss books together.

All seventh graders are required to read a minimum of **two** books during the summer. (Of course, we hope that students will read many more books than the minimum.)

One book must be from the attached list, which has been compiled by seventh grade teachers.

The second book could be another selection from this list or a book approved by the student's parents.

Students must complete a written assignment for each book. They have a choice of two types of assignments - writing a response to one of a selection of prompts or taking notes by answering questions. These assignments are described in detail on the Summer Reading Assignment sheet. In September, the students will participate in a discussion in their English class of the books they read. They will be allowed to use their written assignments during the discussions. After the discussions, these assignments will be collected and kept by the teacher.

Summer 2010 – Incoming seventh graders should select at least one book from this list

Braintree Public Schools Required Summer Reading

Students Entering Grade 7

Fiction

Crash by Jerry Spinelli Seventh-grade football sensation Crash Coogan torments his nerdy neighbor, Penn Webb, until he realizes that Penn is actually to be admired.

It's Not Easy Being Bad by Cynthia Voigt Now that they're in seventh grade, Mikey and Margalo decide it's time to be popular—or, at least, time to be less unpopular. Mikey's first attempt to crack seventh-grade society ends, predictably, in disaster, but undaunted, the friends persevere.

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos Joey has ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and is trying to get a grip on his behavior. His life is a roller coaster ride with mishaps at home and at school.

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli The newest girl in school calls herself Stargirl, plays the ukulele, and attends the funerals of strangers. At first, everyone wants to be like her, but after a while the students just want her to be like everyone else.

Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick A stunning young adult novel by Rodman Philbrick that tells the heartwrenching story of two special ed boys who pair up to form a unique and empowering friendship. Two boys a slow learner stuck in the body of a teenage giant and a tiny Einstein in leg braces forge a unique friendship when they pair up to create one formidable human force.

Artemis Fowl by Eoin Colpher Twelve-year-old Artemis Fowl is the most ingenious criminal mastermind in history. With two trusty sidekicks in tow, he hatches a cunning plot to divest the fairyfolk of their pot of gold. (Amazon)

Nonfiction

Bull's Eye: A Photobiography of Annie Oakley by Susan Macy Annie Oakley used grace and grit to earn top billing in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. Historical photographs and quotes bring this American icon to life.

Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane by Russell Freedman
Freedman tells the fascinating story of how two self-taught bicycle mechanics solve the problems that had baffled generations of scientists and engineers.

Fantasy/Science Fiction

The Dark is Rising by Susan Cooper On his eleventh birthday, Will Stanton discovers that he is the last of the Old Ones, destined to seek the six magical signs that will enable the Old Ones to triumph over the evil forces of the Dark.

Note: If you like Joey Pigza, there is also Joey Pigza Loses Control. There are also other books in The Dark is Rising series. They include Over Sea, Under Stone, Greenwitch, The Grey King, and Silver on the Tree. Artemis Fowl is also the first in a series.