

GRADE 8 SUMMER LITERATURE ASSIGNMENTS

1. *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare

This is a great play to begin our study of Shakespeare. Read the whole play and complete the following activities. You are being given a numbered book from school, and you will need to bring that back to school with you and return it this fall. To help support your understanding of the play, feel free to read **No Fear Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice** or go to Spark Notes to reinforce your understanding of the plot, characters, and key themes.

- a. Keep a "vocabulary log" of the words you do not understand even after reviewing the definitions in the book. Your log will likely be lengthy, because the spoken language during Shakespeare's time was different and he used sophisticated vocabulary. Please write the definitions for **at least 10** of the words in your log.
- b. Create a cartoon, timeline, image map, or plot journey to summarize the plot and key themes.

2. *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

Symbolism is when objects/characters/places/things in a story represent an idea. A common example of symbolism is light and dark -- light represents good and dark represents bad. This symbol is seen in *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate Dicamillo. The castle upstairs is a world full of light where good things happen; the dungeon, full of sadness and misery, is dark. The symbol of light and dark is also seen in the Disney movie *The Lion King*. Scar, the villain, lives in the Elephant Graveyard, a place that is dark and full of shadows. Mufasa and Simba, the heroes, live on Pride Rock where the sun always shines. When Scar takes over Pride Rock, the land become dark and shadowy, but when Simba defeats Scar, the light from the sun returns.

Write an **outline** for a five paragraph essay that briefly describes the plot of *A Wrinkle in Time*, explains the symbol of light and dark (what does light represent? what does dark represent?), and provides examples of where the symbol of light and dark is present in *A Wrinkle in Time*. Your outline should be in a traditional format.

Tip: While you're reading, use stickies or write down every time Madeleine L'Engle talks about something being "dark/shadow" or "light/sun/star/bright." This will help you find examples quickly when you're writing your outline.

3. **Soundtrack Assignment**

Read a book you haven't read before and create a soundtrack for that book. You will present your soundtrack to the class when school starts in the fall. Create a slide presentation to explain your soundtrack. Your presentation must include a 6-10 sentence summary of the book, the 8 (school appropriate) songs you chose, and 3-4 sentences (for each song) describing the scene and how the song fits that particular moment. **Remember to include the song title and artist for each song.** If you are able, you may choose to create a CD or playlist to share, or you can embed links to the songs in your presentation.

You may choose any book to read, but your book must be approved by me before you can use it on this project. I check my e-mail once a week during the summer, so I would recommend asking for approval sooner rather than later. Below are some pre-approved suggestions (if you choose one of these, you do **not** need to e-mail me for approval).

Orbiting Jupiter by Gary Schmidt

We Were Liars by E. Lockhart

Cinder by Marissa Meyer

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien (do **not** read an abridged version)

Popular by Maya van Wagenen

Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson (do **not** read an abridged version)

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (do **not** read an abridged version)

North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell

Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds

Redwall by Brian Jacques (do **not** read an abridged version)

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis

Eon by Alison Goodman

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery (do **not** read an abridged version)

Watership Down by Richard Adams (do **not** read an abridged version)

Countdown by Deborah Wiles

Wringer by Jerry Spinelli

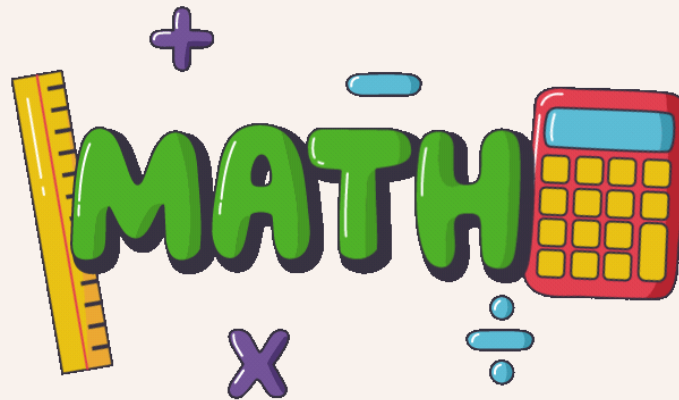
It Ain't So Awful, Falafel by Firoozeh Dumas

Esperanza Rising by Pam Munez Ryan

Refugee by Alan Gratz

The Summer I Saved the World...in 65 Days by Michele Weber Hurwitz

SUMMER 2023



TO: BSS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Math Summer Assignments

Math 8th Grade

Complete Math workbooks (including
yellow page brain aerobics) that
were sent home in the backpacks.

Have a great summer,

Ms. Cassella and Mr. Najarro

MS Math Teachers