

**Summer Reading List—Grade 8
2010**

As a candidate for Eighth grade English next fall, you are required to read during the summer. A required text will be part of how we begin the 2010 school year. There are two parts to the following summer reading list.

The number in parentheses indicates the degree of difficulty of each book. The numbers mean:

1. a book slightly easier than 8th grade level
 2. a book typical of the reading ability of a 8th grader
 3. a book slightly higher than 8th grade level
 4. a difficult book – You should be a good reader with the persistence to finish a lengthy book.
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A. All students are required to read:

Jake, Reinvented by Gordon Korman (2)

How does a brilliant but nerdy guy attract the girl of his dreams? Jake has changed his image by joining the football team, throwing beer bashes for the in-crowd, and hiding all evidence of his geek life. For a while, it seems like the act is working—his heart throb, Didi, is cheating on her boyfriend to be with the now ultra-cool Jake. Then, his newly constructed world falls apart.

B. You may select any book from the following list or you may choose your own book to read.

You are not required to take notes on your second book but be ready to talk about it in class in September.

1. **The Contender** by Robert Lipsyte (1)

Alfred Brooks, a seventeen year old Harlem boy, struggles to make the right decisions. He's a high school drop-out, working at a grocery store. As his best friend is drifting behind a haze of drugs and violence, Alfred tries to pursue boxing. He wants to be a champion—and not just in the arena.

2. **Cut** by Patricia McCormick (1)

Callie is a girl struggling with serious teenage issues. She's been placed in a treatment center, but wants nothing to do with the other girls residing in the center with her. They all have their own problems. Callie doesn't even want to speak—until she finally can't take it any longer.

3. **The ABC Murders** by Agatha Christie (2)

The story begins with Poirot receiving a taunting letter promising a crime in Andover on a given day; sure enough, a murder occurs there, and more letters follow. It soon becomes clear that the criminal is working his way through the alphabet.

4. **No Promises in the Wind** by Irene Hunt (2)

In 1932, America was in the depths of a deep depression. A job, food, a place to sleep, and shoes without holes were, for millions of people, nothing more than dreams. The protagonist, fifteen year old Josh, leaves home because of conflicts with his father. He has to make his own way through a country of angry, frightened people.

5. **Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter** by Adeline Yen Mah (2)

This memoir recounts the story of a young girl named Adeline Yen Mah who yearns for the love and support of her family. Because her mother died during childbirth, her family considers her to be bad luck. When Adeline's father remarries, Adeline is forced to live with her stepmother's disdain, while she watches as her half-brother and half-sister are continually spoiled. Despite her many talents, Adeline is often ignored by the other members of her family. This memoir tells the story of a girl who desperately wants an opportunity to follow her dreams.

6. **What I Saw And How I Lied** by Judy Blundell (2)

Evie must accept her step father's rush to expand his business fortune right after WWII, her mother's promiscuity and a summer crush ending in a trial for murder.

7. **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** (any book in the series) by Douglass Adams (3)

Hapless hero Arthur Dent travels the galaxy with his intrepid pal Ford Prefect, getting into amusing messes and generally wreaking hilarious havoc. Dent is grabbed from Earth moments before a cosmic construction team obliterates the planet to build a freeway.

8. **Ender's Game** by Orson Scott Card (3)

Ender Wiggins is a very bright young boy with a powerful skill. One of a group of children bred to be military geniuses and save the Earth from an inevitable attack by aliens; Ender becomes unbeatable in war games and seems ready to lead Earth to victory.

9. **State of Fear** by Michael Crichton (4)

Perceived threats of environmental disaster are the underlying impetus for this novel. At the center of the conspiracy is Nick Drake, head of a radical environmentalist group. Outraged that a significant source of funding has been closed by the donors, Drake sets out on a murderous course that is designed to not only do away with his detractors and enemies but also to create a profound state of fear about global warming among the public.

10. **Rebecca** by Daphne Du Maurier (4)

In this novel of mystery and passion, Maxim de Winter and his frightened new wife try to live with the haunting legacy of Maxim's first wife.

11. **Marjorie Morningstar** by Herman Wouk (4)

Marjorie rebels against the confining middle-class values of her industrious American-Jewish family and tries to find her own way in the New York social world.

12. **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Literary Society** by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows (4)

Juliet Ashton is a writer living in London just after World War II. While searching for the subject of a new book, she receives a letter from Charles Lamb, a man who found her name written on the inside of a book he found in a used book store. Throughout her correspondence with Charles, Juliet learns about a secret literary society that he and some of his neighbors created as an alibi when they were discovered breaking curfew during the German occupation of Guernsey Island. Juliet's desire to learn all she can about this eccentric group of people leads her on an adventure that she will never forget.