

Incoming Eighth Grade Summer Reading

Niskayuna Middle Schools – 2011

Theme: Coming of Age: Exploring the World and Your Community

Dear students,

We are encouraging you to make your own decisions about your summer reading books this year. To help support that decision-making we have provided a short list you can choose from, or use to help decide what book may be appropriate for you. The book you choose to read should connect to the theme for 8th grade: **Coming of Age: Exploring the World and Your Community**. You may purchase your own copy of the book or obtain a copy from the local library. Two local bookstores, *Barnes & Noble* and *The Open Door Bookstore*, have been provided with this list.

When choosing a book for this summer reading work, please consider the following books for either as a choice or as a model for what may be appropriate.

Suggested book titles:

- *Ashes of Roses* – Mary Jane Auch
- *Freak the Mighty*- Rodman Philbrick
- *The House of the Scorpion* – Nancy Farmer
- *Hunger Games* - Suzanne Collins
- *Milkweed* – Jerry Spinelli

As you read, you will need to observe the different aspects (actions, events, decisions and themes) in your book. We ask students fill in the Connection Charts (both sides) for the book they chose to read. A strategy to support this work is to note your thinking (either in the book or on sticky notes) while you read. You will describe the importance of certain actions, events, decisions, and themes of the story with excerpts from the text to back up all of your observations.

Requirements:

1. Read closely.
2. Find excerpts as you read.
3. Fill out the Connection Chart with your description and excerpts.

We strongly encourage you to challenge yourself with your reading this summer. Try enriching your summer reading experience by selecting more than one book to enjoy. Enjoy your reading. We are looking forward to seeing you in eighth grade. The above assignment is also available on our district web pages at:

Van Antwerp: <http://www.nisk.k12.ny.us/va/summerreading/>

Iroquois: <http://www.niskayunaschools.org/iroquois/iroqmainpage.htm>

If you have any questions about this summer reading work, please contact Jean Winkler, ELA Director, K-8, at 377-2233, ext. 19746

Your Eighth Grade Teachers
Niskayuna Middle Schools

Name _____ Eighth Grade Summer Reading

Book Title _____ Author _____

I. Connection Chart

Directions: Choose a minimum of two excerpts from the text that illustrate important actions and events that occur in the story. Copy the excerpt with the author's name, page number on the left. If excerpt is overly long, you may include the beginning of the excerpt followed by an ellipsis (...). Describe why these events and actions are important on the right.
(Definition- **excerpt** - a section or passage taken from a longer work)

Character Actions: Excerpt from the text	Why these are important?
1.	1.
2.	2.
Plot Events: Excerpt from the text	Why these are important?
1.	1.
2.	2.

II. Decisions and Themes:

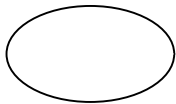
Directions: Choose at least **two** excerpts that illustrate decisions and two that illustrate themes. What did you learn about the character as a result of his/her decisions? Copy the excerpt with the author's name, page number on the left column. If excerpt is overly long, you may include the beginning of the excerpt followed by an ellipsis (...). Describe decision and personality traits on the right side. Copy the quote that reflects a theme in your book on the left. Describe the themes on the right. (Definition- **Theme**- the underlying idea or message about life or human nature contained in a literary work.)

Character Decisions: Excerpt from the text	Describe Decisions/Personality Traits:
1.	1.
2.	2.
Themes: Excerpt from the text	Describe the Theme:
1.	1.
2.	2.

III. Reader's Marks (Explanation): Good readers actively think while they read. With the right equipment, a pen or pencil, you can master all that you read. By making your thoughts visible you can: learn the basic facts, think beyond the passage, spot essential vocabulary, ask important questions, remember information, connect ideas, and gain confidence. You will see your ideas at work! Use the following “key” to mark your book (if you purchased your own copy) or use Post-it notes if you borrowed a copy from the library.

V

Use a V to spot vocabulary. Look up any unknown or interesting words.



Circle any excerpts or sections that “snag” you!



Underline the parts that you think are important. Details, dates, names, facts, definition.



Put a star in the margin of an unusual idea, a new thought, something you want to go back and take a second look at, or an interesting quote.

?

Put a question mark when you don't understand. Better yet, write your own question in the margin.

C

Put a C in the margin where you have a personal connection to the passage. It may relate to your own life, remind you of another idea, etc. Write that idea down. Or, it just might be a comment you would like to make.

!

Surprise! Put this symbol next to something that was a surprise or unexpected event.

P

Make a prediction! Write what you think will happen next.