

# MISS WALCZYK'S

## 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE SUMMER READING LIST

\*NOTE: (YA) = YOUNG ADULT TITLE FOR MORE MATURE READERS

As a guide for choosing, keep in mind that the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Lexile band is 1010L-1185L. A Lexile measure helps to ensure students stay within their comfort zones while still challenging themselves when it comes to reading comprehension.

- Students are to pick **one** book from the following list to read over the summer *and* complete a project over the book. They will present these projects to their classmates when we return to school.

### *Project:*

For their projects, students are to pick out **five** objects and put them into a \*brown paper bag. These objects must all represent aspects of the book, whether figuratively or literally. There should be an object representing each of these five categories:

1. Main Character- Pick an object that represents the main character in some way. This could be an object that represents the character's emotions, actions, physical description, etc.
2. Setting- Pick an object that represents the setting of the story. Some stories may have several different settings. In that case, pick an object that represents at least one of them (be able to explain how that setting is represented by your object).
3. Conflict- Pick an object that represents the main conflict presented at the beginning of the book, whether it's an internal conflict (the main character having an inner struggle) or an external conflict (the main character having a struggle with outside forces).
4. Rising Action- Pick an object that represents a rising action (something occurring in the book that propels the action and further adds to the conflict). Don't pick anything that comes after the climax (that would be a spoiler)!
5. Figurative Meaning- Pick an object that figuratively represents some aspect of the book. (For example, you may have a character in the book who wants to lose weight, so you bring in an elephant that would figuratively represent how that character views himself or herself.)

During the presentation, these objects should be pulled out in the order of a plot diagram (for instance, the object that represents a rising action shouldn't be pulled out before the object representing the setting). A detailed explanation of *why* these objects were picked and *how* they represent each category is expected in order to receive full credit. Be creative! Try to pick objects you think other people reading the same book wouldn't think of. *Extra credit will be awarded if all five objects are figurative (and still cover the first four categories).* All objects MUST be school appropriate.

\*Alternative Options to the Brown Paper Bag: tote bag, grocery bag (as long as items can't be seen), box, etc.



**Hoge, Robert**

***Ugly***

(NF): 890L (208 pages)

Robert Hoge was born with a giant tumour on his forehead, severely distorted facial features and legs that were twisted and useless. His mother refused to look at her son, let alone bring him home. But home he went, to a life that, against the odds, was filled with joy, optimism and boyhood naughtiness. Home for the Hoges was a bayside suburb of Brisbane. Robert's parents, Mary and Vince, knew that his life would be difficult, but they were determined to give him a typical Australian childhood. So along with the regular, gruelling and often dangerous operations that made medical history and gradually improved Robert's life, there were bad haircuts, visits to the local pool, school camps and dreams of summer sports. *Ugly* is Robert's account of his life, from the time of his birth to the arrival of his own daughter. It is a story of how the love and support of his family helped him to overcome incredible hardships. It is also the story of an extraordinary person living an ordinary life, which is perhaps his greatest achievement of all.

**Hopkinson, Deborah**

***The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy***

***Called Eel*** (F): 660L (226 pages)

Eel has troubles of his own: As an orphan and a "mudlark", he spends day after day in the filthy river Thames, searching for bits of things to sell. He's being hunted by Fisheye Bill Tyler, one of the nastiest men in London. And he's got a secret that costs him four precious shillings a week to keep safe. But even for Eel, things aren't so bad, until that fateful August day in 1854 when the Great Trouble begins. The day the deadly cholera—the "blue death"—comes to Broad Street. Everyone believes that cholera is spread through poisonous air. But one man, Dr. John Snow, has a different theory. As the epidemic surges, it's up to Eel and his best friend, Florrie, to help the doctor prove it—before the entire neighborhood is wiped out...

**Key, Watt**

***Terror at Bottle Creek***

(F): 650L (208 pages)

When his dad disappears, thirteen-year-old Cort is caught in the battle against a Gulf Coast hurricane. Cort's father is a local expert on hunting and swamp lore in lower Alabama and has been teaching his son everything he knows. But when a deadly Category 3 storm makes landfall, Cort must unexpectedly put all his skills—and bravery—to the test. One catastrophe seems to lead to another, leaving Cort and two neighbor girls to face the storm as best they can. Amid miles of storm-thrashed wetlands filled with dangerous, desperate wild animals, it's up to Cort to win—or lose—the fight for their lives.

**Lupica, Mike**

***Travel Team***

(F): 930L (274 pages)

Danny Walker may be the smallest kid on the basketball court, but no one has a bigger love of the game. Or a better sense of how to hit the open player with the perfect pass. Then the local travel team—the same travel team Danny's dad, Richie Walker, led to the national championship on ESPN when he was a kid—cuts Danny because of his size. But Danny isn't about to give up on basketball. It turns out that he's not the only kid who was cut for the wrong reasons. Now Danny and his dad are about to give all the castoffs a second chance and prove that you can't measure heart.

**Norris, Shana**

***Troy High***

(F): 720L (263 pages)

Narrated by Cassie, a shy outsider who fears that an epic high school rivalry is about to go up in flames, the story follows the Trojans and Spartans as they declare war on the football field. After the beautiful Elena—who used to be the captain of the Spartan cheerleaders—transfers to Troy High and falls madly in love with Cassie's brother Perry, the Spartans vow that the annual homecoming game will never be forgotten.

**Patterson, James**                      ***Witch & Wizard***                      (F): 710L (314 pages)

This is the astonishing testimonial of Wisty and Whit Allgood, a sister and brother who were torn from their family in the middle of the night, slammed into prison, and accused of being a witch and a wizard. Thousands of young people have been kidnapped; some have been accused; many others remain missing. Their fate is unknown, and the worst is feared—for the ruling regime will stop at nothing to suppress life and liberty, music and books, art and magic...and the pursuit of being a normal teenager. (Book 1 of the Witch & Wizard series)

**Perera, Anna**                      ***Guantanamo Boy***                      (F): 900L (288 pages)

Innocent until proven guilty? Not here you're not. Robbed of his childhood, this is one boy's fictional experience of the supposed war on terror. Khalid, a fifteen-year-old Muslim boy from England, is abducted from Pakistan while on holiday with his family. He is taken to Guantanamo Bay and held without charge, where his hopes and dreams are crushed under the cruelest of circumstances. An innocent denied his freedom at a time when most boys are finding theirs, Khalid tries and fails to understand what's happening to him.

**Philbrick, Rodman**                      ***Freak the Mighty***                      (F): 1000L (160 pages)

This is the story of an unlikely friendship between Freak (Kevin) and Max, two eighth grade students who appear to have nothing in common. Freak has a little body but a big brain; Max has a body that seems to be growing faster than his mind. Together they form Freak the Mighty.

**Ryan, Carrie**                      ***The Forest of Hands and Teeth***                      (F): 900L (308 pages)

In Mary's world there are simple truths. The Sisterhood always knows best. The Guardians will protect and serve. The Unconsecrated will never relent. And you must always mind the fence that surrounds the village; the fence that protects the village from the Forest of Hands and Teeth. But, slowly, Mary's truths are failing her. She's learning things she never wanted to know about the Sisterhood and its secrets, and the Guardians and their power, and about the Unconsecrated and their relentlessness. When the fence is breached and her world is thrown into chaos, she must choose between her village and her future—between the one she loves and the one who loves her. And she must face the truth about the Forest of Hands and Teeth. Could there be life outside a world surrounded in so much death?

**Scott, Elizabeth**                      ***Living Dead Girl*** (YA)                      (F): 870L (170 pages)

When Alice was ten, Ray took her away from her family, her friends -- her life. She learned to give up all power, to endure all pain. She waited for the nightmare to be over. Now Alice is fifteen and Ray still has her, but he speaks more and more of her death. He does not know it is what she longs for. She does not know he has something more terrifying than death in mind for her. This is Alice's story. It is one you have never heard, and one you will never, ever forget.

**Shulman, Polly**                      ***The Grimm Legacy***                      (F): 600L (325 pages)

Elizabeth has a new job at an unusual library—a lending library of objects, not books. In a secret room in the basement lies the Grimm Collection. That's where the librarians lock away powerful items straight out of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales: seven-league boots, a table that produces a feast at the blink of an eye, Snow White's stepmother's sinister mirror that talks in riddles. When the magical objects start to disappear, Elizabeth embarks on a dangerous quest to catch the thief before she can be accused of the crime—or captured by the thief.

**Smith, Alexander Gordon**      *Lockdown: Escape from Furnace* (YA)      (F): 1010L (304 pages)  
Furnace Penitentiary: the world's most secure prison for young offenders, buried a mile beneath the Earth's surface. A place of pure evil with walls soaked in blood. Murderous gangs and vicious guards rule the darkness. Horrific creatures steal people away in the dead of night. And the impossible —escape— is the only hope.

**Stone, Nic**      *Dear Martin*      (F): 720L (224 pages)  
Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out. Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

**Wolf, Joan M.**      *Someone Named Eva*      (F): 820L (200 pages)  
“Remember who you are, Milada.”  
Milada's grandmother says these words on the night the Nazi soldiers come to their home in Czechoslovakia. But what do they mean? She is Milada, who lives with her mama and papa, her brother and sister, and her beloved Babichka. Milada with the sun-kissed hair, eleven years old, fastest runner in her school. How could she ever forget? Then the Nazis send Milada to a Lebensborn center in Poland, and Milada quickly discovers that holding on to her true identity will be the greatest struggle of her young life.

\*\*My favorite places to buy cheap books are [www.thriftbooks.com](http://www.thriftbooks.com) (free shipping on orders over \$10!) and McKay Used Bookstore in Nashville.