

A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies.... The man who never reads lives only one.

-George R.R. Martin

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

We are writing to provide you with information regarding summer reading for John Adams Middle School rising 8th grade students. Summer reading is important for middle school students as it fosters a lifelong love of reading and helps students maintain the gains in reading comprehension that they have made during their 7th grade year. We have included a list of books and a small blurb about each one along a particular thematic unit: Teens who Overcome Adversity. Students need to choose ONE book for their reading pleasure.

We encourage students to choose new books to read rather than reread titles that they have read in the past. We encourage meaningful conversations between parents and their child in the selection of an appropriate book for maturity, reading, and interest levels. Please contact us if you need a copy of one of the books. Students should have the book completed prior to the first day of classes in order to start their 8th grade journey on a positive note. Thank you, and we are very excited to see you in August.

8th Grade English Teachers,
Ms. Patterson & Ms. Thayer

The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club (Lexile 970) by Phillip Hoose

A Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Honor Winner

At the outset of World War II, Denmark did not resist German occupation. Deeply ashamed of his nation's leaders, fifteen-year-old Knud Pedersen resolved with his brother and a handful of schoolmates to take action against the Nazis if the adults would not. Naming their secret club after the fiery British leader, the young patriots in the Churchill Club committed countless acts of sabotage, infuriating the Germans, who eventually had the boys tracked down and arrested. But their efforts were not in vain: the boys' exploits and eventual imprisonment helped spark a full-blown Danish resistance. Interweaving his own narrative with the recollections of Knud himself, *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler* is National Book Award winner Phillip Hoose's inspiring story of these young war heroes.

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice (Lexile 1000) by Phillip Hoose

On March 2, 1955, an impassioned teenager, fed up with the daily injustices of Jim Crow segregation, refused to give her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Instead of being celebrated as Rosa Parks would be just nine months later, fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin found herself shunned by her classmates and dismissed by community leaders. Undaunted, a year later she dared to challenge segregation again as a key plaintiff in *Browder v. Gayle*, the landmark case that struck down the segregation laws of Montgomery and swept away the legal underpinnings of the Jim Crow South.

Based on extensive interviews with Claudette Colvin and many others, Phillip Hoose presents the first in-depth account of an important yet largely unknown civil rights figure, skillfully weaving her dramatic story into the fabric of the historic Montgomery bus boycott and court case that would change the course of American history.

Claudette Colvin is the National Book Award Winner for Young People's Literature, a Newbery Honor Book, A YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults Finalist, and a Robert F. Sibert Honor Book

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates (Lexile 990) by Wes Moore

Two kids with the same name lived in the same decaying city. One went on to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated combat veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader. The other is serving a life sentence in prison. Here is the story of two boys and the journey of a generation.

In December 2000, the Baltimore Sun ran a small piece about Wes Moore, a local student who had just received a Rhodes Scholarship. The same paper also ran a series of articles about four young men who had allegedly killed a police officer in a spectacularly botched armed robbery. The police were still hunting for two of the suspects who had gone on the lam, a pair of brothers. One was named Wes Moore.

Wes just couldn't shake off the unsettling coincidence, or the inkling that the two shared much more than space in the same newspaper. After following the story of the robbery, the manhunt, and the trial to its conclusion, he wrote a letter to the other Wes, now a convicted murderer serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole. His letter tentatively asked the questions that had been haunting him: Who are you? How did this happen?

That letter led to a correspondence and relationship that have lasted for several years. Over dozens of letters and prison visits, Wes discovered that the other Wes had had a life not unlike his own: Both had grown up in similar neighborhoods and had had difficult childhoods, both were fatherless; they'd hung out on similar corners with similar crews, and both had run into trouble with the police. At each stage of their young lives they had come across similar moments of decision, yet their choices would lead them to astonishingly different destinies.

Told in alternating dramatic narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world.

***I am Malala (Lexile 1000) by Malala Yousafzai (Young Reader's edition)*
A MEMOIR BY THE YOUNGEST RECIPIENT OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE**

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

I AM MALALA is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons. *I AM MALALA* will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.

It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime – Young Reader's Edition (Lexile 780) by Trevor Noah

Trevor Noah, the funny guy who hosts The Daily Show, shares his remarkable story of growing up in South Africa, with a black South African mother and a white European father at a time when it was against the law for a mixed-race child like him to exist. But he did exist--and from the beginning, the often-misbehaved Trevor used his keen smarts and humor to navigate a harsh life under a racist government. This compelling memoir blends drama, comedy, and tragedy to depict the day-to-day trials that turned a boy into a young man. In a country where racism barred blacks from social, educational, and economic opportunity, Trevor surmounted staggering obstacles and created a promising future for himself, thanks to his mom's unwavering love and indomitable will. *It's Trevor Noah: Born A Crime* not only provides a fascinating and honest perspective on South Africa's racial history, but it will also astound and inspire young readers looking to improve their own lives.