

Winthrop Middle School

Mrs. Dunn

Mr. Toulouse

Dear Future Eighth Graders:

You will soon be on summer break. Everyone at Winthrop Middle School hopes that you have a safe and happy vacation. We do, however, expect that you keep working on your literacy skills and return in September ready to go to work.

Every year each student is required to read **two books** over the summer. One book is a required title and the second is one of the options from the list below.

1. It is recommended that every child read A Very Large Expanse of Sea by Tahereh Mafi. Each student has received a copy. If you feel this subject matter is not appropriate for your child at this time, select 2 books from the enclosed list and complete the assigned prompts for one of the two books.
 - a. Required assignment: Choose 10 prompts from the list of 25 prompts provided. Prompt number 1 is required. You may choose the other 9 you want to answer.
 - b. For each prompt, you must answer the question in a well-developed paragraph (8-10 sentences minimum). For at least 5 of your responses, you must include a properly cited quote from the novel to help support your answer. We have provided an example of a properly cited quote for you to reference if you need it. This can be found at the top of the prompts.
2. All students must then choose **one** of the titles listed below to read. *You will be using the second book to complete an in-class project during the first week of school.*

*These two assignments will be the first assignments you complete for trimester 1 in September. Reading these two books and completing the two assignments is an enjoyable and easy way to start off the year strong.

The following are your options for the book of choice:

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen

Carl Hiaasen (Basket Case, etc.) plunges readers right into the middle of an ecological mystery, made up of endangered miniature owls, the Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House scheduled to be built over their burrows, and the owls' unlikely allies--three middle school kids determined to beat the screwed-up adult system

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

"Speak up for yourself--we want to know what you have to say." From the first moment of her freshman year at Merryweather High, Melinda knows this is a big fat lie, part of the nonsense of high school. She is friendless, outcast, because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so now nobody will talk to her, let alone listen to her. As time passes, she becomes increasingly isolated and practically stops talking altogether. Only her art class offers any solace, and it is through her work on an art project that she is finally able to face what really happened at that terrible party: she was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. In Laurie Halse Anderson's powerful novel, an utterly believable heroine with a bitterly ironic voice delivers a blow to the hypocritical world of high school. She speaks for many disenfranchised teenagers while demonstrating the importance of speaking up for oneself.

The Hobbit by JRR Tolkien

Bilbo Baggins was a hobbit who wanted to be left alone in quiet comfort. But the wizard Gandalf came along with a band of homeless dwarves. Soon Bilbo was drawn into their quest, facing evil orcs, savage wolves, giant spiders, and worse unknown dangers.

Slam! by Walter Dean Myers

For 16-year-old Sam, life is about to get extremely complicated. He and his girlfriend—make that ex-girlfriend—Alicia have gotten themselves into a bit of trouble. Sam is suddenly forced to grow up and struggle with the familiar fears and inclinations that haunt us all.

Whirligig by Paul Fleischman

Sixteen-year-old Brent Bishop is sent on an unusual journey of repentance--building wind toys across the land--after he inadvertently causes the death of a young woman.

Uglies by Scott Westerfield

Just before their sixteenth birthdays, when they will be transformed into beauties whose only job is to have a great time, Tally's best friend runs away and Tally must find her and turn her in, or never become pretty at all.

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the forest, Xan, is kind and gentle. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster named Glerk and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon, Fyrian. Xan rescues the abandoned children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this enmagicked girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own. To keep young Luna safe from her own unwieldy power, Xan locks her magic deep inside her. When Luna approaches her thirteenth birthday, her magic begins to emerge on schedule--but Xan is far away. Meanwhile, a young man from the Protectorate is determined to free his people by killing the witch. Soon, it is up to Luna to protect those who have protected her--even if it means the end of the loving, safe world she's always known.

Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo

Once, in a house on Egypt Street, there lived a china rabbit named Edward Tulane. The rabbit was very pleased with himself, and for good reason: he was owned by a girl named Abilene, who adored him completely. And then, one day, he was lost. . . . Kate DiCamillo takes us on an extraordinary journey, from the depths of the ocean to the net of a fisherman, from the bedside of an ailing child to the bustling streets of Memphis. Along the way, we are shown a miracle — that even a heart of the most breakable kind can learn to love, to lose, and to love again. Featuring black-and-white illustrations and a refreshed cover by Bagram Ibatoulline.

Required Reading Writing Prompts

Directions: You **MUST** answer number 1. Then **choose 9** from the remaining 24 prompts to answer in a well-developed paragraph. (8-10 sentences minimum)

★ ***For 5 of your 10 prompt responses you MUST include properly cited textual evidence to support your points. You must also explain how the textual evidence proves your point.***

Remember, textual evidence is any line from the novel, not just spoken lines. Notice in the examples where the punctuation is. These examples are from your required summer reading book.

Example 1:

"My brother still seemed skeptical, but he didn't push it. I could feel him begin to pull away, to lose interest in the conversation, and it made me suddenly anxious" (105).

Example 2:

"'Wow,' I said. I almost whispered the word. He'd described in a single sentence something I'd often dreamed about. 'Must be nice to live in the same place for so long'" (93).

1. **Using this novel, answer the following: This story helps me understand the problem of _____ better because (fill in the blank and then explain).**
2. Describe the tone of the novel and explain how the tone impacts the story.
3. Could this novel help influence change in our society? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?
4. If you could give the main character in your book some advice, what would you tell him or her? Write a letter to the main character giving them advice on the conflict they experience in the novel.
5. Define a theme present in the novel and describe how the author develops that theme throughout the novel.
6. Define the conflict of the novel. Is it internal or external? If it is external, be more specific (man v. man, man v. society, man v. nature). How does the author develop this conflict? How does this conflict impact the story and its theme?
7. How does the setting (time and place) impact the novel? Why is the setting of this particular novel so important?
8. The climax of the story is the high point, when all the action comes together. Sometimes at this point, a resolution can become clear. What events lead up to the climax of the novel? What happens during the climax of the novel? And how does the story change after the climax?
9. What did you learn from reading this novel?
10. Why do you think the author wrote this book? In other words, what is the author's purpose? What does she hope to accomplish with this novel?
11. Is the narrator reliable? In other words, do you trust her? Why or why? How does a story told by a reliable narrator differ from a story told by an unreliable narrator?
12. What questions did you have while reading this novel? Were they answered by the end of the novel?
13. Choose a passage from the novel that you consider particularly well-written or inspiring. Tell me what it is about that passage that moves you or makes you want to keep re-reading it.

14. What is the mood of the novel? Mood is about you, the reader, and how you feel while reading. What emotions did you feel while reading? Be specific and describe how the author made you feel through her writing.
15. Do you think the author chose a good title for the novel? Why or why not?
16. What is your favorite part of the novel? Why?
17. If this novel were adapted for the screen (made into a movie), tell me 5 scenes that MUST be included and why they are important to the story.
18. If this novel were adapted for the screen (made into a movie), tell who you would cast to play the main characters and why.
19. Tell me three reasons this book should be taught in schools. Support each reason with evidence from the text.
20. Who is the narrator of this story? Why do you think the author chose this narrator? How would this story change if the author changed the point of view?
21. Did you like the way the author ended the story? Why or why not?
22. Do any of the characters do things you feel are wrong? Explain.
23. Why do you think the author chose the opening line she did? Did you like it? Why or why not? Did it make you want to keep reading?
24. As you read, circle vocabulary words with which you are unfamiliar and words you find interesting. Choose 10 of those words. Research those words and tell me:
 - A) The sentence in the book where the word appears. Cite this correctly.
 - B) The definition of the word
 - C) Some antonyms
 - D) Some synonyms
 - E) Use the word in an original sentence written by you to demonstrate you understand the meaning of the word
 - F) If you picked the word because it sounded interesting, what makes it interesting?
25. What connections can you make between this novel and ...
 - A) Real life?
 - B) Your own life?
 - C) Movies and TV?
 - D) Other books?