

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. The required book is **Nothing But The Truth** by Avi. For this book you are expected to come to the first day of school with **one page** of notes on the characters, plot, and main ideas of the novel which you will be allowed to use during the comprehension test on the book. This assessment will count as a quiz grade.
2. All students must then choose **one** of the following to read and use to **complete the attached story map to be collected during the first week of September**. The story map will count as a quiz grade. *The rubric for the story map is included here so you can see how it will be graded.*

*These two assignments will be the first grades you will receive in September toward your first report card grade. Reading these two books and completing the two assignments is an enjoyable and easy way to start off the year with an A.

The following are your options for the book of choice:

Hoot by Carl Hiassen

Carl Hiassen (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 a disenfranchised teenager 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.

Name _____ Date _____

Book Title _____

Author _____

Genre _____

STORY MAP – Grade 8

PROTAGONIST (MAIN CHARACTER)

Name the protagonist:

Identify two **physical** traits (age, appearance, size, etc.):

- 1.
- 2.

Three **personality** traits

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How did the character change?

SETTING

Describe the place and time of the story.

THEME

Explain the theme, message, or main idea.

PLOT/SUMMARY (answer on a separate sheet of paper)

1. Describe the beginning events in the story. (rising action)
2. Identify and explain the conflict. Is it internal (man vs. self) or external (man vs. man, nature, society)
3. List the major events including the climax of the story.
4. Explain how the main problem/conflict is solved. (resolution)

Choose one (answer on a separate sheet of paper)

1. Make a text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to-world connection to the story.
or
2. Describe your favorite part of the book:

Name _____ 1 point _____ Date _____ 1 point _____
Book Title _____ 1 point _____ Author _____ 1 point _____
Genre _____ 1 point _____

STORY MAP RUBRIC– Grade 8

PROTAGONIST (MAIN CHARACTER)

Name the protagonist: **2 points**

Identify two **physical** traits (age, appearance, size, etc.):

1. **2 points**

2. **2 points**

Three **personality** traits

1. **2 points**

2. **2 points**

3. **2 points**

How did the character change? **6 points**

SETTING

Describe the place and time of the story. **5 points**

THEME

Explain the theme, message, or main idea. **12 points**

PLOT/SUMMARY

1. Describe the beginning events in the story. (rising action) **12 points**

2. Identify and explain the conflict. Is it internal (man vs. self) or external (man vs. man, nature, society) **12 points**

3. List the major events including the climax of the story. **12 points**

4. Explain how the main problem/conflict is solved. (resolution) **12 points**

Choose one - 12 points

1. Make a text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to-world connection to the story.

or

2. Describe your favorite part of the book.