You have been assigned to read two books this summer.

Read one book from the list below and answer the attached questions. Bring the completed questions with you on the first day of school. This assignment will be graded. A thorough knowledge of one book from this list will be crucial to success in English class this year.

Also, read any book of your choice, as long as that book is the first book in a series. It should be a series you have never read. Read this series book carefully and come prepared to demonstrate your knowledge of the plot within the first week of school. You do not have to write your answers to the questions about the series book.

Parents:

- It is recommended that you purchase the books for your student so that they may annotate as well as add to their personal library. Current Collegiate students will purchase one of the novels below from their English teacher.
- All of the novels on this list as well as books in a series are readily available at local bookstores or at Amazon.com.
- WARNING: Any of the following young adult literature may contain mature reading material.

Choose one (1) novel from the following:

**The House on Mango Street** by Sandra Cisneros
Told through a series of vignettes, *The House on Mango Street* covers a year in the life of Esperanza, a Chicana (Mexican-American girl), who is about twelve years old when the novel begins. During the year, she moves with her family into a house on Mango Street. The house is a huge improvement from the family’s previous apartment, and it is the first home her parents actually own. However, the house is not what Esperanza has dreamed of, because it is run-down and small. The house is in the center of a crowded Latino neighborhood in Chicago, a city where many of the poor areas are racially segregated. Esperanza does not have any privacy, and she resolves that she will someday leave Mango Street and have a house all her own.

**A Lesson Before Dying** by Ernest Gaines
*A Lesson Before Dying* is set in a small Cajun community in the late 1940s. Jefferson, a young black man, is an unwitting party to a liquor store shootout in which three men are killed; the only survivor, he is convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Grant Wiggins, who left his hometown for the university, has returned to the plantation school to teach. As he struggles with his decision whether to stay or escape to another state, his aunt and Jefferson's godmother persuade him to visit Jefferson in his cell and impart his learning and his pride to Jefferson before his death. In the end, the two men forge a bond as they both come to understand the simple heroism of resisting—and defying—the expected.

**The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie
Bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and
beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*—based on the author's own experiences and coupled with poignant drawings by Ellen Forney that reflect the character's art—chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live.

**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time** by Mark Haddon
Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher’s quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.

**All American Boys** by Jason Reynolds
A bag of chips. That’s all sixteen-year-old Rashad is looking for at the corner bodega. What he finds instead is a fist-happy cop, Paul Galluzzo, who mistakes Rashad for a shoplifter, mistakes Rashad’s pleadings that he’s stolen nothing for belligerence, mistakes Rashad’s resistance to leave the bodega as resisting arrest, mistakes Rashad’s every flinch at every punch the cop throws as further resistance and refusal to STAY STILL as ordered. But how can you stay still when someone is pounding your face into the concrete pavement? There were witnesses: Quinn Collins—a varsity basketball player and Rashad’s classmate who has been raised by Paul since his own father died in Afghanistan—and a video camera. Soon the beating is all over the news and Paul is getting threatened with accusations of prejudice and racial brutality. Quinn refuses to believe that the man who has basically been his savior could possibly be guilty. But then Rashad is absent. And absent again. And again. And the basketball team—half of whom are Rashad’s best friends—start to take sides. As does the school. And the town. Simmering tensions threaten to explode as Rashad and Quinn are forced to face decisions and consequences they had never considered before.

**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings** Maya Angelou
Here is a book as joyous and painful, as mysterious and memorable, as childhood itself. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* captures the longing of lonely children, the brute insult of bigotry, and the wonder of words that can make the world right. Maya Angelou’s debut memoir is a modern American classic beloved worldwide. Sent by their mother to live with their devout, self-sufficient grandmother in a small Southern town, Maya and her brother, Bailey, endure the ache of abandonment and the prejudice of the local “powhitetrash.” At eight years old and back at her mother’s side in St. Louis, Maya is attacked by a man many times her age—and has to live with the consequences for a lifetime. Years later, in San Francisco, Maya learns that love for herself, the kindness of others, her own strong spirit, and the ideas of great authors (“I met and fell in love with William Shakespeare”) will allow her to be free instead of imprisoned.

**Also choose one (1) book that is the first book in a series of your choice.**

Series suggestions:

- **Harry Potter** by J.K. Rowling
- **The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins
- **The Lunar Chronicles** by Marissa Meyer
- **Ender’s Game** by Orson Scott Card
- **The Mortal Instruments** by Cassandra Clare
- **The Infernal Devices** by Cassandra Clare
- **Beautiful Creatures** by Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl
- **The Maze Runner** by James Dashner
- **Divergent** by Veronica Roth
- **Eve** by Ana Carey
- **Uglies** by Scott Westerfeld
- **Delirium** by Lauren Oliver
- **Perfect Chemistry** by Simone Elkeles
- **The Lord of the Rings** by J. R. R. Tolkien
- **The Space Trilogy** by C. S. Lewis
- **Gone** by Michael Grant
- **Daughter of Smoke and Bone** by Laini Taylor
- **Matched** by Ally Condie
- **Legend** by Marie Lu
- **Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants** by Ann Brashares
- **Reboot** by Amy Tintera
- **Chaos Walking** by Patrick Ness
- **His Dark Materials** by Philip Pullman
- **The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy** by Douglas Adams
- **The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency** by Alexander McCall Smith
- **Shades of Magic** by V. E. Schwab
Summer Reading Assignment, 8th Grade English

**Directions:** Answer the following questions about the book you chose from the summer reading list (NOT the first book of a popular series).

- You may write your answers neatly on notebook paper or you may type and print them out.
- Your answers to all of these questions should total 1-2 double-spaced typed pages, or 2-3 pages handwritten.
- Include quotes from the book (with page numbers) in your answer to each question.
- Your answers must come from **your brain** and **the book itself**. Material taken from online summaries is considered plagiarism and will receive **ZERO CREDIT**.

**Evaluate the ending of the book by answering the follow questions:**

1. What is the main problem that the protagonist must overcome? How is this problem resolved?
2. Does this ending indicate that the protagonist(s) has/have shown growth and development over the course of the novel? If so, how? If not, what evidence indicates to you that the protagonist has not changed?
3. Were you happy with the conclusion? Why or why not?

**Summer Reading Assignment Checklist:**

- [ ] I answered each part of each question (including all the how? and why? questions).
- [ ] My answers include specific quotes (with page numbers) that clearly show my knowledge of the book.
- [ ] I did not look on the Internet for help. All answers came from the book and my brilliant brain.
- [ ] My handwriting is neat and large enough that another human can read it.