



Dear Students and Parents,

All incoming MTS fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students have a required reading assignment over the summer. Please refer to the following pages for specific details on each grade's reading requirement.

Of course, we sincerely hope and would encourage our students to read more than what is required. Summer reading is one of life's great pleasures, not to mention the best way to keep the mind nimble over a long vacation.

Many of these books should be available at your local library. You can search the Marin County Library and the city libraries from home at marinet.lib.ca.us. While it is not necessary to purchase summer reading books, local bookstores will be happy to help you. Book Passage in Corte Madera gives a 4–6% school rebate if you mention MTS. Our school code is 30. In addition, MTS receives a percentage of your purchases from Amazon.com if you link through our school's library homepage (www.mttam.org/library).

Enjoy your summer vacation, and happy reading!

Sincerely,

The MTS English Department

5th-Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Incoming fifth graders must choose two mysteries from the list below and a “free choice” book that is appropriately challenging.

The following books may be borrowed from the Marin County Public Library System and the city libraries or purchased through our *MTS on Amazon Store* or at local bookstores. The “*” indicates that the author has written other mysteries which are acceptable choices.

Emma Jean Lazarus Fell in Love by Lauren Tarshis
The Eye of the Crow by Shane Peacock
The London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd
Way Down Deep by Ruth White
The Traitor’s Gate by Avi
Gilda Joyce, Psychic Investigator by Jennifer Allison*
Mr. Chickee’s Funny Money by Christopher Curtis
Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliet*
Alien Secrets by Annette Curtis Klause
Shadow Horse by Alison Hart
Spiderweb for Two by Elizabeth Enright
Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief by Wendelin Van Draanen*
A Summer in the South by James Marshall
Peppermints in the Parlor by Barbara Wallace*
Mansion in the Mist by John Bellairs*
Danger in the Dark by Tom Lalicki*
The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin
The Case of the Goblin Pearls by Laurence Yep*
The Dollhouse Murders by Betty Ren Wright*
The 100-Year-Old Secret by Tracy Barrett
Dark Stairs by Betsy Byars*
Letters from Camp by Kate Klise*
Key to the Treasure by Peggy Parish*
Spider Kane and the Mystery at Jumbo Nightcrawler’s by Mary Pope Osborne*
Secrets of Vesuvius by Caroline Lawrence*
Ghost in the Tokaido Inn by Dorothy Hoobler*
Little Wolf: Forest Detective by Ian Whybrow*
Running Out of Time by Margaret Haddix
Hamster of the Baskervilles by Bruce Hale*
Case of the Cat with the Missing Ears: From the Notebooks of Edward R. Smithfield by Scott Emerson.
Man in the Moon by Melanie Jackson*
Princess for a Week by Betty Ren Wright*
Problem Child by Michael Buckley*
Fall of the Amazing Zalindas by Tracy Mack
Half-Moon Investigations by Eoin Colfer
Midnight in Lonesome Hollow by Kathleen Ernst
The Case of the Left-Handed Lady: An Enola Holmes Mystery by Nancy Springer*
Raven League: Sherlock Holmes is Missing by Alex Simmons*
Exile by Grace Cavendish
Door to Time by Pierdomenico Baccalariu*
Club of the Linoleum Lederhosen by M.T. Anderson*
Deep Secrets by Emily Rodda*
Shadow Beast by Justin Richards*

6th-Grade Summer Reading Assignment

In preparation for English class, you are required to read **(at least) three books over the summer:**

◆ ***Tangerine***

by Edward Bloor
Harcourt
ISBN 0152057803



and

◆ **Two free-choice novels**

The books must be by different authors (which means you can't count more than one book from a series). Beyond that, the only other constraint is that you choose something that is at, or even slightly above, your reading level. The books should not be too "easy" or too short. (The average length of a novel is 200 pages; if you choose a book that is significantly less than that, it will attract suspicion.)



How to Find What to Read

The best choices are books that come highly recommended to you by avid readers. Trading book suggestions with friends is a great place to start.

Here are two good resources for additional suggestions:

- The **Mt. Tam Summer Reading List**—sent home in a Friday Folder by our widely read librarian, Kathy Teree—is an excellent resource for age-appropriate recommendations.
- There is a carefully tended list of novels posted on the **website of the Book Passage**, Marin's treasure of a book store in Corte Madera:
<http://bookpassage.com/book-kids>

A word of advice: Don't stick with a book that you don't like; free choice books should be books that engage you.

When You Return to School

If possible, please bring your copies of *Tangerine* and your two free-choice books to the first day of school. If you don't have copies because you borrowed any or all of the books from the library, or read them on an e-reader, that is okay; instead, bring in a written list of what you read that includes both titles and authors.

For *Tangerine*, you won't be expected to know fine-grained plot details—e.g. What was the name of the dog in chapter three?—but you will be expected to name the major characters, summarize the significant plot events, and identify the novels' themes in a reading comprehension quiz. Therefore, it does make sense to read this book later in the summer, so it is still fresh in your mind when you return to school.

For your free-choice books, you will be expected to write short essays in the form of book reviews after you return to school. (You don't need to be worried about the details of the assignment until your return.)

7th-Grade Summer Reading Assignment



What to Read

In preparation for English class, you are required to read **at least four books** over the summer. There are no required titles; you are **free to choose what you read**.

- The books must be by different authors. You can't count more than one book from a series.
- The only other constraint is that you choose something that is at, or even slightly above, your reading level. The books should not be too "easy" or too short. (The average length of a novel is 200 pages; if you choose a book that is significantly less than that, it will attract suspicion.)
- The books you read don't have to be fictional novels. In fact, you are encouraged to read at least one non-fiction book that interests you.

How to Find What to Read

The best choices are books that come highly recommended to you by avid readers. There are lots of good readers in this class; you are already trading suggestions. Keep it going through the summer.

Here are two good resources for additional suggestions:

- The **Mt. Tam Summer Reading List**—sent home in a Friday Folder by our widely read librarian, Kathy Teree—is an excellent resource for age-appropriate recommendations. There are good non-fiction recommendations on this list. (I will also post a copy of this list in the English First Class conference.)
- There is a carefully tended list of novels posted on the **website of the Book Passage**, Marin's treasure of a book store in Corte Madera:
<http://bookpassage.com/book-kids>

A word of advice: Don't stick with a book that you don't like; this is a free choice and each book should engage you.

When You Return to School

If possible, please bring in physical copies of the books you read to the first day of school. If you don't have copies because you borrowed any or all of the books from the library, or read them on an e-reader, that is okay; instead, bring in a written list of what you read that includes both titles and authors.

For these books, you will be expected to write short essays in the form of book reviews after you return to school. (You don't need to be worried about the details of the assignment until your return.)

8th-Grade Summer Reading Assignment

You are required to read four books over the summer (two for English class, and two in preparation for Yosemite):

1. ***My First Summer in the Sierra* by John Muir**
Most of you already have a copy which we've been reading in class at the end of the year.
2. ***Yosemite: Its Discovery, Its Wonders, and Its People* by Margaret Sanborn**
This is not a book you need to purchase; Eric will distribute a school copy to you to take home for the summer. You do not need to read the entire book, just chapters 1–6, 10–11, 13–14, 18, 20, 22, and 23.
3. **One book from Justin's classics list on the back of this page**
In the interest of exposing you to good books that you might not read on your own, I have compiled a list of twelve books from which you must *choose one*. Take time to learn more about these books before you make your choice. And if you don't like how your first choice is starting, don't hesitate to drop it and try another one.
4. **One free-choice novel**
But choose your book carefully. You will write an essay/book review on this when you return, and you will be graded in part on the quality of your choice. By quality, I mean that the book represents a mature choice on your part; it is not too "easy" or too short. (The average length of a novel is 200 pages; if you choose a book that is significantly less than that, it will attract suspicion.) The best choice might be a work that comes highly recommended to you by multiple adults, a book that challenges you in some way. That said, don't stick with a book that you don't like; this is a free choice and the book should engage you.

When You Return to School

If possible, please bring in physical copies of the books you read to the first day of school. For the Yosemite books, this is mandatory. For your English books, if you don't have copies because you borrowed any or all of the books from the library, or read them on an e-reader, that is okay; instead, bring in a written list of what you read that includes both titles and authors.

For your English choices, you will be expected to write short essays in the form of book reviews after you return to school. (You don't need to be worried about the details of the assignment until your return.)

Eighth Grade Summer Reading Classics List

One of the books you choose for summer reading must come from this list of “classics”:

Call of the Wild by Jack London

The adventures of an unusual dog—part St. Bernard, part Scotch shepherd—forcibly taken to the Alaskan gold fields where he eventually becomes the leader of a wolf pack.

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

A man whose job it is to burn books in a future fascist state finds out books are a vital part of a culture he never knew.

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Victor Frankenstein discovers the secret of generating life from lifeless matter and creates a monster who, scorned for being ugly, swears revenge on his creator and the human race.

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott

A heart-warming classic based on the author’s family life growing up in a household of four girls, each with a unique personality.

My Antonia by Willa Cather

A successful lawyer remembers his boyhood in Nebraska and his friendship with an immigrant gypsy girl.

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck (or any novel by John Steinbeck)

A story of friendship and tragedy for two migrant workers, George and Lennie, on a farm in Central California.

The Once and Future King by T.H. White

The story of the youth and reign of King Arthur, the establishment of the Round Table, and the search for the Holy Grail.

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (or any other novel by Jane Austen)

In early nineteenth-century England, a spirited young woman copes with the courtship of a snobbish gentleman as well as the lives of her four sisters.

Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor

Living in the South during the 1930s, the African-American Logan family faces devastating discrimination and prejudice.

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Mary, a self-centered girl, and Colin, a pampered invalid boy, come to understand compassion and generosity within a mysterious abandoned garden.

A Separate Peace by John Knowles

Against the backdrop of WWII, the rivalry of two roommates at a boys’ school turns into a private war.

Watership Down by Richard Adams

A tale of survival, this story records the adventures of a band of wild rabbits that leave their ancestral home, hoping to build a more humane society.