

Briarcliff Middle School
444 Pleasantville Road
Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510

June, 2022

Dear Students,

Welcome to 8th Grade! You are required to read two books this summer. We recommend the books below, but if you want to read books off the list, that is fine too. If you prefer to listen to your books, spoken books are a great option! You can purchase an audiobook or borrow one from the public library using the Libby app.

As you read your required books, you should take notes on the key characters and events and how each contributed to what happened. When we get back to school in September, we will be working with these notes to write our first essay, so make sure they are legible and thorough.

There are many different types of books on this list, graphic novels, action, sports, realistic, romantic, historical fiction – a little something for everyone. Choose books that interest you so your reading will be enjoyable.

We highly recommend you read more than just 2 books and hope you find many books you enjoy from this list! You will need acquire these books on your own. If you cannot get a physical copy of the books (through the library or for purchase) you choose, you can look for them in an electronic format from the Briarcliff Public Library or the New York Public Library. You can find instructions on how to access those here:

<https://bit.ly/PublicLibraryHowTo>

Have a wonderful summer and happy reading!

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Grade 8 Summer Reading 2022

Reading over the summer will help you improve your comprehension and writing skills. There are many types of books on this list, some short, some long, some serious, some funny, true stories and fiction. Find a few you're interested in and enjoy them on vacation!

- Alcott, Louisa May **LITTLE WOMEN:** Grown-up Meg, tomboyish Jo, timid Beth, and precocious Amy. The four March sisters couldn't be more different. But with their father away at war, and their mother working to support the family, they have to rely on one another. Whether they're putting on a play, forming a secret society, or celebrating Christmas, there's one thing they can't help wondering: Will Father return home safely?
- Alexander, Kwame **SOLO:** Blade never asked for a life of the rich and famous. In fact, he'd give anything not to be the son of Rutherford Morrison, a washed-up rock star and drug addict. His one light is his girlfriend, Chapel, but her parents have forbidden their relationship. In reality, the only thing Blade and his dad have in common is the music that lives inside them. When a family secret comes to light, the music disappears. In its place is a letter that could bring Blade the freedom and love he's been searching for.
- Anderson, M.T. **ASSASSINATION OF BRANGWAIN SPURGE:** Uptight elfin historian Brangwain Spurge is on a mission: survive being catapulted across the mountains into goblin territory, deliver a priceless peace offering, and spy on the goblin kingdom - from which no elf has returned alive in more than a hundred years. Brangwain's host, the goblin archivist Werfel, is delighted to show Brangwain around. They should be the best of friends, but a series of double crosses, blunders, and cultural misunderstandings throws these two bumbling scholars into the middle of an international crisis.
- Anderson, Natalie **CITY OF SAINTS AND THIEVES:** Sixteen-year-old Tina and two friends leave Kenya and slip into the Congo, from where she and her mother fled years before, seeking revenge for her mother's murder but uncovering startling secrets.
- Austen, Jane **MANSFIELD PARK:** Fanny Price, a teenaged girl of low social rank brought up on her wealthy relatives' countryside estate feels the sharp sting of rejection when her cousin Edmund, the only person who treats her as an equal, is won over by a flirtatious, exciting--and unprincipled--London girl.
- Bolden, Tonya **CROSSING EBENEZER CREEK:** Freed from slavery, Mariah and her young brother Zeke join Sherman's march through Georgia, where Mariah

meets a free black named Caleb and dares to imagine the possibility of true love, but hope can come at a cost.

- Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker **THE WAR I FINALLY WON:** When Ada's clubfoot is surgically fixed at last, she knows for certain that she's not what her mother said she was--damaged, deranged, crippled mentally as well as physically. She's not a daughter anymore, either. Who is she now? World War II rages on and Ada & Jamie, move with Susan, into a cottage with Lady Thorton and Maggie. Life in the crowded home is tense. Then Ruth moves in. Ruth, a Jewish girl, from *Germany*. Could Ruth be a spy?
- Cashore, Kristin **GRACELING:** In a world where some people are born with extreme and often-feared skills called Graces, Katsa struggles for redemption from her own horrifying Grace of killing and teams up with another young fighter to save their land from a corrupt king. *Sequels:* **FIRE, BITTERBLUE**
- Deuker, Carl **GUTLESS:** Falling short of varsity qualifications because of his tendency to avoid physical aggression, talented football player Brock Ripley struggles to face his fears when his team's star quarterback begins bullying Brock's best friend.
- Florence, Debbi Michiko **JUST BE COOL, JENNA SAKAI:** When boyfriend Elliott breaks up with Jenna Sakai before Christmas break, she just about convinces herself that relationships are for suckers and she is better off without them; but unfortunately she finds herself in competition with Elliott for a journalism scholarship, and worse her first assignment for the newspaper club is to write a personal essay, which is difficult when you are someone who prefers to keep your emotions bottled up--and then there is Rin Watanabe, a boy as stubborn as Jenna herself, and a mystery that Jenna cannot help but investigate.
- Fukuda, Andrew **THIS LIGHT BETWEEN US:** In 1935, ten-year-old Alex Maki from Bainbridge Island, Washington is disgusted when he's forced to become pen pals with Charlie Levy of Paris, France--a *girl*. He thought she was a boy. In spite of Alex's reluctance, their letters continue to fly across the Atlantic--and along with them, the shared hopes and dreams of friendship. Until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the growing Nazi persecution of Jews force them to confront the darkest aspects of human nature.
- Gephart, Donna **LILY AND DUNKIN:** Lily Jo McGrother, born Timothy McGrother, is a girl. But being a girl is not so easy when you look like a boy. Especially when you're in the eighth-grade. Norbert Dorfman, nicknamed Dunkin Dorfman, is bipolar and has just moved from the New Jersey town he's called home for the past thirteen years. This would be hard enough, but the fact that he is also hiding from a painful secret makes it even worse. One

summer morning, Lily Jo McGrother meets Dunkin Dorfman, and their lives forever change

- Glaser, Mechthild **BOOK JUMPER:** A teen girl discovers she is a book jumper--she can leap directly into books, meet the characters, and experience the world of the book.
- Green, Tim **FOOTBALL GENIUS:** Troy has an unusual gift for predicting football plays before they occur. He attempts to use his ability to help his favorite team, the Atlanta Falcons, but he must first prove himself to the coach and players.
- Hardinge, Frances **A FACE LIKE GLASS:** When Neverfell, who has no memory, arrives in Caverna, her facial expressions make her very dangerous to the people who live with blank faces or pay dearly to learn to simulate emotions.
- Jackson, Tiffany D. **LET ME HEAR A RHYME:** Brooklyn, 1998. Biggie Smalls was right: Things done changed. But that doesn't mean that Quadir and Jarrell are cool letting their best friend Steph's music lie forgotten under his bed after he's murdered--not when his rhymes could turn any Bed Stuy corner into a party. With the help of Steph's younger sister Jasmine, they come up with a plan to promote Steph's music under a new rap name: the Architect. Soon, everyone wants a piece of him. When his demo catches the attention of a hotheaded music label rep, the trio must prove Steph's talent from beyond the grave.
- Jewell, Tiffany **THIS BOOK IS ANTIRACIST:** Who are you? What is racism? Where does it come from? Why does it exist? What can you do to disrupt it? Learn about social identities, the history of racism and resistance against it, and how you can use your anti-racist lens and voice to move the world toward equity and liberation.
- Johnson, Angela **FIRST PART LAST:** Bobby's carefree teenage life changes forever when he becomes a father and must care for his adored baby daughter.
Companion novel: HEAVEN.
- Kinsella, W.P. **SHOELESS JOE:** Ray Kinsella's fanatic love of baseball drives him to build a baseball stadium in his corn field and kidnap the author, J.D. Salinger, and bring him to a baseball game.
- Krosoczka, Jarrett **HEY KIDDO:** In his graphic novel style memoir, Jarrett Krosoczka describes how in kindergarten his teacher asks him to draw his family, with a mommy and a daddy. But Jarrett's family is much more complicated than that. His mom is an addict, in and out of rehab, and - Jarrett's life. His father is a mystery. Jarrett lives with his loud, opinionated, but loving

grandparents. Only as a teenager can Jarrett begin to piece together the truth of his family, reckoning with his mother and tracking down his father.

Lupica, Mike

THE BIG FIELD: When fourteen-year-old baseball player Hutch feels threatened by the arrival of a new teammate named Darryl, he tries to work through his insecurities about both Darryl and his remote and silent father, who was once a great ballplayer too.

Lupica, Mike

DEFENDING THE CHAMP: When the girls soccer team learns it has been canceled due to budget cuts, they come up with a plan to raise the necessary funds through a face-off with the boys' team, which is led by sneering superstar Chase Gwinn.

Medina, Tony

I AM ALFONSO JONES: The ghost of fifteen-year-old Alfonso Jones travels in a New York subway car full of the living and the dead, watching his family and friends fight for justice after he is killed by an off-duty police officer while buying a suit in a Midtown department store.

Myers, Walter Dean

HOOPS: Seventeen-year-old Lonnie Jackson sees the city-wide basketball Tournament of Champions as a possible escape from Harlem but fears the pressures that have sidelined his coach, Cal.

Nayeri, Daniel

EVERYTHING SAD IS UNTRUE: (A TRUE STORY): At the front of a middle school classroom in Oklahoma, a boy named Khosrou (whom everyone calls 'Daniel') stands, trying to tell a story. His story. But no one believes a word he says. To them he is a dark-skinned, hairy-armed boy with a big butt whose lunch smells funny; wo makes things up and talks about poop too much. But Khosrou's stories, stretching back years, and decades, and centuries, are beautiful, and terrifying, from the moment he, his mother, and sister fled Iran in the middle of the night, stretching all the way back to family tales set in the jasmine-scented city of Isfahan, the palaces of semi-ancient kings, and even the land of stories.

Neilson, Jennifer

A NIGHT DIVIDED: When the Berlin Wall went up, Gerta, her mother, and her brother Fritz were trapped on the eastern side where they were living, while her father, and her other brother Dominic were in the West-- four years later, now twelve, Gerta sees her father on a viewing platform on the western side and realizes he wants her to risk her life trying to tunnel to freedom.

Ness, Patrick

A MONSTER CALLS: Thirteen-year-old Conor awakens one night to find a monster outside his bedroom window, but not the one from the recurring nightmare that began when his mother became ill--an ancient, wild creature that wants him to face truth and loss.

- Reeve, Philip **FEVER CRUMB:** Foundling Fever Crumb has been raised as an engineer although females in the future London, England, are not believed capable of rational thought, but at age fourteen she leaves her sheltered world and begins to learn startling truths about her past while facing danger in the present. Sequels: **WEB OF AIR, SCRIVENER'S MOON**
- Reintgen, Scott **NYXIA:** Emmett accepts an interstellar space contract but learns en route that to win the promised fortune he and nine other recruits face a brutal competition, putting their very humanity at risk
- Remarque, Erich M. **ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT:** In 1914 a room full of German schoolboys, fresh-faced and idealistic, are goaded by their schoolmaster to troop off to the 'glorious war'. With the fire and patriotism of youth they sign up. What follows is the moving story of a young 'unknown soldier' experiencing the horror and disillusionment of life in the trenches.
- Reynolds, Jason **ALL AMERICAN BOYS:** 16-year-old Rashad is accused of stealing and is brutally beaten by the police officer. There were witnesses: Quinn—a varsity basketball player and Rashad's classmate—and a video camera. The officer, Quinn's best friend's brother, is accused of prejudice and racial brutality. Quinn refuses to believe the man he knows could be guilty. But then Rashad is absent. Tensions threaten to explode as Rashad and Quinn are forced to face decisions and consequences they had never considered before.
- Rhodes, Jewell Parker **PARADISE ON FIRE:** Addy is haunted by the tragic fire that killed her parents, leaving her to be raised by her grandmother. Years later, Addy's grandmother has enrolled her in a summer wilderness program. Deep in the forest the kids learn new skills: camping, hiking, rock climbing, and how to start and safely put out campfires. Most important, they learn to depend upon each other for companionship and survival. But then comes a devastating forest fire...
- Riordan, Rick, editor: **CURSED CARNIVAL AND OTHER CALAMATIES: NEW STORIES ABOUT MYTHIC HEROES:** Ten bestselling and award-winning authors contributed to this collection: Roshani Chokshi, J.C. Cervantes, Yoon Ha Lee, Carlos Hernandez, Kwame Mbali, Rebecca Roanhorse, Tehlor Kay Mejia, Sarwat Chadda, Graci Kim, and Rick Riordan. There's something for everyone in this group of fast-paced and funny adventure stories that show what it takes to be a hero in any time, setting, and universe.
- Saenz, Benjamin Alire **ARISTOTLE AND DANTE DISCOVER THE UNIVERSE:** Fifteen-year-old Ari Mendoza is an angry loner with a brother in prison, but when he meets Dante and they become friends, Ari starts to ask

questions about himself, his parents, and his family that he has never asked before.

Savit, Gavriel

ANNA AND THE SWALLOW MAN: When her university professor father is sent by the Gestapo to a concentration camp, seven-year-old Anna travels the Polish countryside with the mysterious Swallow Man during World War II.

Schmidt, Gary D

ORBITING JUPITER: The shattering story of Joseph, a father at thirteen, who has never seen his daughter, Jupiter. After spending time in a juvenile facility, he's placed with a foster family on a farm in rural Maine. Here Joseph, damaged and withdrawn, meets twelve-year-old Jack, who narrates the account of the troubled teen who wants to find his baby at any cost. In the time they're together the two boys discover the true meaning of family and the sacrifices it requires.

Scieszka, Jon, editor

SPORTS PAGES: the third volume in Jon Scieszka's Guys Read Library of Great Reading, features ten short stories guaranteed to put you in the ring, under the basket, and right behind home plate. From fiction to nonfiction, from baseball to mixed martial arts and everything in between, these are a collection of stories about the rush of victory and the crush of defeat on and off the field.

Sharpe, Tess

CAPTAIN MARVEL: LIBERATION RUN: When a mysterious spacecraft comes hurtling toward Earth, Carol Danvers--the hero known as Captain Marvel--narrowly prevents it from crashing. The craft's pilot is a young inhuman woman, part of a group who rejected that society's caste system and left for the stars in search of a new life. What they found, however, was imprisonment on a planet where Inhumans are treated like currency, and possession of an Inhuman girl brings great power and influence. To refuse means death, and Rhi has risked everything to seek help.

Stevenson, Robert Louis

TREASURE ISLAND: The tale is told by an adventurous boy, Jim Hawkins, who gets hold of a treasure map and sets off with an adult crew in search of the buried treasure. Among the crew, however, is the treacherous Long John Silver who is determined to keep the treasure for himself. Stevenson's first full-length work of fiction brought him immediate fame and continues to captivate readers of all ages.

Tolkein, J.R.R.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING: One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them, One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them. In a sleepy village in the Shire, young Frodo Baggins finds himself faced with an immense task, as his elderly cousin Bilbo entrusts the Ring to his care. Frodo must leave his home and make a perilous journey across

Middle-earth to the Cracks of Doom, there to destroy the Ring and foil the Dark Lord in his evil purpose.

Wang, Jen

THE PRINCE AND THE DRESSMAKER: In this graphic novel, Prince Sebastian is looking for a bride--or rather, his parents are looking for one for him. Sebastian is too busy hiding his secret life from everyone. At night he puts on daring dresses and takes Paris by storm as the fabulous Lady Crystallia! Sebastian's secret weapon (and best friend) is the brilliant dressmaker Frances—the only other person who knows the truth: sometimes this boy wears dresses. But Frances dreams of greatness and being someone's secret weapon means being a *secret*. How long can Frances defer her dreams to protect a friend?

Wein, Elizabeth

THE ENIGMA GAME: Told in multiple voices, fifteen-year-old Jamaican Louisa Adair uncovers an Enigma machine in the small Scottish village where she cares for an elderly German woman, and helps solve a puzzle that could turn the tide of World War II.

Williams, Alicia

GENESIS BEGINS AGAIN: Thirteen-year-old Genesis tries again and again to lighten her black skin, thinking it is the root of her family's troubles, before discovering reasons to love herself as is.

Yoon, Nicola

THE SUN IS ALSO A STAR: Natasha is a girl who believes in science and facts. Daniel has always been a good son and good student. But when he sees Natasha he forgets all that and believes there is something extraordinary in store for both of them. **Printz Honor Book, 2017**

NON-FICTION

Alexander, Kwame

THE PLAYBOOK: 52 RULES TO AIM, SHOOT, AND SCORE IN THIS GAME CALLED LIFE Kwame Alexander shares poetry and inspiring lessons about the rules of life, as well as uplifting quotes from athletes such as Stephen Curry and Venus Williams and other exemplars like Sonia Sotomayor and Michelle Obama in this motivational and inspirational book just right for graduates of any age and anyone needing a little encouragement.

Anderson, Carol

WE ARE NOT YET EQUAL: UNDERSTANDING OUR RACIAL DIVIDE: When America achieves milestones of progress toward full and equal black participation in democracy, the systemic response is a consistent racist backlash that rolls back those wins - The end of the Civil War and Reconstruction was greeted with Jim Crow laws; the promise of new opportunities in the North during the Great Migration was limited when blacks were blocked from moving away from the South; the Supreme Court's landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* was met with the shutting down of public schools; the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and

Voting Rights Act of 1965 led to laws that disenfranchised millions of African American voters and a War on Drugs that disproportionately targeted blacks; and the election of President Obama led to an outburst of violence including the death of black teen Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

Bascomb, Neal

THE NAZI HUNTERS: HOW A TEAM OF SPIES AND SURVIVORS CAPTURED THE WORLDS MOST NOTORIOUS NAZI: In 1945 at the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the head of operations for the Nazi's Final Solution, walked into the mountains of Germany and vanished from view. Sixteen years later, an elite team of spies captured him at a bus stop in Argentina and smuggled him to Israel, resulting in one of the century's most important trials – one that cemented the Holocaust in the public imagination.

Bausum, Ann

WITH COURAGE AND WITH CLOTH: WINNING THE FIGHT FOR A WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE: The long, arduous and sometimes violent struggle for a woman's right to vote is told in an engaging narrative. The roots of the movement as well as the other efforts it spawned are well told.

Blumenthal, Karen

BOOTLEG: MURDER, MOONSHINE, AND THE LAWLESS YEARS OF PROHIBITION: It began with the best of intentions. Worried about the effects of alcohol on American families, mothers and civic leaders started a movement to outlaw drinking in public places. Over time, their protests, petitions, and activism paid off with a Constitutional Amendment banning the sale and consumption of alcohol. Instead, it began a decade of lawlessness, when the most upright citizens casually broke the law, and a host of notorious gangsters entered the public eye.

Freedman, Russell

THE VOICE THAT CHALLENGED A NATION: MARIAN ANDERSON AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS: A biography of the great singer Marian Anderson and her role in bringing the injustice of segregation in the arts to national awareness. **Newbery Honor Book, 2005**

Gates, Henry Louis & Bolden, Tonya

DARK SKY RISING: RECONSTRUCTION AND THE DAWN OF JIM CROW: A much-needed examination of Reconstruction and the Jim Crow era, this should supplement all middle school history textbooks. Gates and Bolden look back at historical perspectives while drawing parallels to current issues of inequity and racism, illustrating how we got where we are, and emphasizing that change is imperative.

Hoose, Phillip M.

CLAUDETTE COLVIN: TWICE TOWARD JUSTICE: The story of fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin, an African-American girl who refused

to give up her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama, nine months **before** Rosa Parks, and covers her role in a crucial civil rights case. **Newbery Honor Book 2010, National Book Award, 2009**

Reynolds, Jason

STAMPED: RACISM, ANTIRACISM AND YOU: *This is NOT a history book.*
This is a book about the here and now.
A book to help us better understand why we are where we are.
A book about race.

Roach, Mary

FUZZ: WHEN NATURE BREAKS THE LAW: Roach tags along with animal-attack forensics investigators, human-elephant conflict specialists, bear managers, and "danger tree" faller blasters. Intrepid as ever, she travels from leopard-terrorized hamlets in the Indian Himalaya to St. Peter's Square in the early hours before the pope arrives for Easter Mass, when vandal gulls swoop in to destroy the elaborate floral display. She taste-tests rat bait, learns how to install a vulture effigy, and gets mugged by a macaque.

Seiple, Samantha

LINCOLN'S SPYMASTER: ALLAN PINKERTON, AMERICA'S FIRST PRIVATE EYE: Pinkerton was just a poor immigrant barrel-maker in Illinois when he stumbled across his first case just miles from his home. His reputation grew and people began approaching Pinkerton with their cases, he assembled a team of undercover agents, and together they caught train robbers, counterfeiters, and other outlaws. Seeing firsthand the value of Pinkerton's service, President Lincoln, seeing how useful Pinkerton's team was, funded Pinkerton's spy network, a precursor to the Secret Service.

Sheinkin, Steve

FALLOUT: SPIES, SUPERBOMBS AND THE ULTIMATE COLD WAR SHOWDOWN: As World War II comes to a close, the United States and the Soviet Union emerge as the two greatest world powers on opposites of the political spectrum. After the U.S. showed its hand with the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, the Soviets refuse to be left behind. The two nations begin a neck-and-neck competition to build even more destructive bombs and conquer the Space Race. In their battle for dominance, spy planes fly above, armed submarines swim deep below, and undercover agents meet in the dead of night. The Cold War game grows more precarious as weapons are pointed towards each other, with fingers literally on the trigger. The decades-long showdown culminates in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the world's close call with the third-and final-world war.

Stone, Tanya Lee

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE BARBIE: A DOLL'S HISTORY AND HER IMPACT ON US: Is Barbie a blond Chucky slashing away at

little girls' self-esteem? Or is she *My First Feminist*, with her lab coats, astronaut helmets, and high-fashion gowns, encouraging girls to imagine themselves in whatever roles they choose? This book explores how Barbie has influenced generations of girls, discussing criticisms of the doll, her role in fashion, and her surprising popularity during her first fifty years.

Turner, Pamela

SAMURAI RISING: THE EPIC LIFE OF MINAMOTO

YOSHITSUNE: Minamoto Yoshitsune should not have been a samurai. But his story is legend in this real-life saga. When Yoshitsune was a baby, his father went to war with a rival samurai family--and lost. Yoshitsune was sent away to live in a monastery. Skinny, small, and unskilled in the warrior arts, he nevertheless escaped and learned the ways of the samurai. His daring feats and impossible bravery earned him immortality.