

Calvert County Sophomore Summer Reading Program 2009

The Calvert County Board of Education encourages students to be lifelong and year-round learners. Therefore, a summer reading program is part of the high school English curriculum.

Objectives for Students:

- Maintain or improve reading comprehension and vocabulary over the summer
- Demonstrate ability to select books of interest and of appropriate difficulty level
- Improve scores on tests such as the college entrance exams and job-related tests
- Become exposed to a variety of literary genres and cultural heritages during high school years
- Become lifelong readers by choosing books and reading at their own pace

Program: During the summer, upcoming sophomores will be expected to read **two** books from the list on the back of this page. Students should make their selections based on their interests and reading skills. Parents are encouraged to provide guidance in choosing books, as well as reading and discussing the works with their students.

- Students should be prepared to take an essay test on one of their books in their English class on **Tuesday, September 1st that can count up to 5% of their first quarter English grade.** The essay will be open book and will be an open-ended question intended to demonstrate that the student read and understood the book. (Students can also bring in notes. See the rubric in this packet.)
- Students should also complete the Summer Reading Book Project (see next page) based on their other book. **The assignment is due by Friday, September 4th and can count up to 5% of their first quarter English grade.**

Hints from previous students about completing the summer reading:

- If at all possible, buy the books. Sometimes, if you pair up with a friend, each of you can buy a book and then trade. (Most middle schools and high schools will have a book fair before the end of the school year. The area bookstores have been given copies of the list. *Educate and Celebrate* in Prince Frederick usually carries the books. Internet bookstores such as *Amazon* and *Barnes and Noble* also carry the books.)
- If you lose your list, you can find a copy at the Calvert County Public Schools website (www.calvertnet.k12.md.us) OR at any of the Calvert County libraries.
- Having a hard time deciding on which book to read? Ask librarians at one of the county libraries for suggestions. Ask teachers, parents, and friends for recommendations.
- Copies of all titles are available for checkout at the four Calvert Library locations
- Pick the same book or books as a friend, and then the two of you can discuss it when you are finished.
- If you start a book and don't like it, try another.
- Start reading early.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q. How are books chosen for the list?
- A. This year there are nineteen new books on the lists; sixteen of them were recommended by students.
- Q. I work over the summer and so I don't have time to read. What can I do?
- A. Although we would prefer that you read the books because that will sharpen your reading skills, you can still improve your vocabulary by listening to them on your way to work. Many of the books are available on tape or CD at the local libraries. The audio and ebook versions of some books can be downloaded to a computer and some portable devices. See the county library website for more information.
- Q. Why are some books written on such a simple reading level?
- A. The books are chosen for their content, not their reading level. Our goal is to provide a wide enough variety of books so there is something for all students regardless of their reading level or interest.

***The Afterlife* by Gary Soto** (F) A 17-year-old murder victim's ghost sets off to solve the mystery of his own brutal death and, along the way, befriends a homeless man and a fellow spirit, visits his grieving friends and family, says his goodbyes, and moves towards the afterlife.

***American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen** (Graphic novel) Jin eats lunch alone, is picked on by bullies and gets a crush on a pretty girl. It's not just a story of a Chinese-American childhood; it's a fable for those born into a life they wish they could escape. (Language, situations)

***Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging* by Louise Rennison** (F) Hilarious diary of 14-year-old Georgia—a ditzzy English girl—about her bizarre life, embarrassing parents, trouble at school, wild adventures, and the ultra-cool guy she likes. (mature themes)

***Bad Boy: A Memoir* by Walter Dean Myers** (Bio) Myers had a turbulent adolescence as he struggled with being Black and poor; he was quick-tempered, ready for a fight, always in trouble in school, and barely escaped jail, but eventually became a successful writer.

***A Bend in the Road* by Nicholas Sparks** (F) A combination mystery and love story, it's about a man, a woman, and the devastating secret that threatens to keep them apart. Sweet, sentimental, and suspenseful—with a surprising ending. (mature themes)

***A Child Called "It": One Child's Courage to Survive* by David J. Pelzer** (NF) Memoir of an unwanted, unloved and abused little boy and his unrelenting determination to survive growing up with his emotionally unstable, alcoholic mother. (some graphic language)

***Code Orange* by Caroline B. Cooney** (F) Mitty, a NYC teen, finds old smallpox scabs. Who is in danger from his possible exposure to this hyper-contagious disease? He looks into the symptoms in precise, gruesome detail as terrorists threaten to use him as a biological weapon.

***Don't You Dare Read This Mrs. Dunphrey* by Margaret Peterson Haddix** (F) Tish, an underachieving sophomore, writes privately in her English journal about caring for her younger brother and coping with her violent father, irresponsible mother, and unpaid bills.

***Dragonflight* by Anne McCaffrey** (F) It's about romance, adventure, and the wonderful, magical fantasy of dragons. The planet of Pern is running out of time, and Lessa is the only person who can save it, but can F'lar teach her the truths of the legends?

***Forged by Fire* by Sharon Draper** (F). When his loving aunt dies, Gerald is thrust into a new home filled with anger and abuse. He struggles to protect his little sister from a drug-addicted mother & brutal stepfather who he must be strong enough to face in a final confrontation.

***Last Shot: A Final Four Mystery* by John Feinstein** (F) Stevie wins a sports writing contest. The prize—a trip, to the Final Four in New Orleans. He uncovers a dangerous conspiracy to fix the games and is forced to overcome his fears as he and a friend race to stop the conspirators.

***Me and Emma* by Elizabeth Flock** (F) Told from the point of view of an abused and all-but-abandoned 8 year old girl who shows spirit and courage, this story takes twists and turns and ends with a spectacular finish, shocking the reader and turning the entire story on its head.

***Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck** (F) Tragic tale of two ranch hands, one a retarded man and the other the friend who tries to protect him, who dream of a better life but drift from job to job. (Graphic language)

***Raptor Red* by Robert T. Bakker** (F) A year in the life of a fast-moving 500-pound raptor with razor-sharp claws and teeth. It's action filled & features vivid encounters with prey and rival carnivores—what the real Jurassic Park must have been like. Good for animal lovers.

***Rebecca* by Daphne DuMaurier** (F) A novel of mystery, passion, romance and suspense—the new Mrs. DeWinter is determined to uncover the darkest secrets and shattering truths about Maxim's first wife—the late and hauntingly beautiful Rebecca.

***Shadowland* by Meg Cabot** (F) 16-year-old Suze has the responsibility of helping troubled ghosts move on to the next world. She hopes to leave her "job" behind when she moves to California, but finds Heather, a spiteful, vengeance-seeking ghost, haunting her new school.

***Slam* by Walter Dean Myers** (F) On his Harlem basketball court, 17-year-old Greg "Slam" Harris is in control, but his grades aren't so hot and the street talk that serves him well on the courts gets his teachers and his college-bound girlfriend, Mtisha, on his case.

***Stones in Water* by Donna Jo Napoli** (F) After being kidnapped in Italy by German soldiers, teenagers Roberto and Samuele are forced into hard labor in Nazi work camps. Trouble comes when a boy discovers a dangerous secret about Samuele that could get them both killed.

***Thirteen Little Blue Envelopes* by Maureen Johnson** (F) This whirlwind adventure begins as Ginny, 17, reads a letter from her free-spirited, unpredictable Aunt Peg. She is given several destinations, four rules, and the instruction to open one envelope upon her arrival at each place.

***Small Steps* by Louis Sachar** (F) This sequel to *Holes* focuses on Armpit, an African-American former resident of Tent D. It's been 2 years since his release, and the appealing 16-year-old's trying to take "small steps" to turn his life around. Suspenseful, humorous and touching.

***Song Yet Sung* by James McBride** (F) Set on Maryland's Eastern Shore in 1850, this is the story of a runaway slave girl who, after a head wound, looks into the future and see the work of Martin Luther King and other civil rights reformers. These visions feed and support her journey toward freedom. Intricate and gripping tale of escaped slaves, free blacks, and slave catchers. (One Book One Maryland selection for 2009)

***The Truth about Forever* by Sarah Dessen** (F) Macy is dealing with her father's death and her boyfriend's rejection when she meets Wes, an artist with a past and a taste for Truth-telling. As she ventures out of her shell, she wonders if it really is better to be safe than sorry.

***Under a War-torn Sky* by Laura Elliott** (F) After his plane is shot down by Hitler's Luftwaffe, nineteen-year-old Henry Forester strives to walk across occupied France, with the help of the French Resistance. This novel is packed with action, intrigue, and suspense.

***Underground* by Jean Ferris** (F) This fast-paced historical novel is both a love story and a daring adventure as two teenage slaves become involved with the Underground Railroad. When an opportunity presents itself, should they risk everything for freedom?

***A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula LeGuin** (F). An apprentice to the Master Wizard tampers with long-held secrets and releases a terrible evil upon the world. This tells how he masters his mighty power, tames an ancient dragon, and crosses death's threshold to restore balance.

***Wrestling Sturbridge* by Rich Wallace** (F) Ben's future is bleak—his hometown's small, dismal and known only for its wrestling and factory. So as a senior he tries for a state title and wrestles not only opponents but with life, love, and the choices he must make. (Mature themes)

2009 Summer Reading Book Project for First Book

Select one of the projects below to demonstrate in a creative manner your understanding of one of the novels you read. This will count for up to 5% of your first quarter grade. All projects are due by Friday, September 4th. Most projects include an oral explanation that may last no longer than three minutes. The oral or written presentation is part of your final score.

Your project should focus on a literary element such as:

Theme Impact of Setting Conflicts Symbols Characterization Mood

GRAPHIC PROJECTS		
<p>A Comic Strip, drawn by hand or on a computer, which is <i>at least</i> 12 frames long and highlights important scenes. Short dialogue balloons are fine—but you must be sure to include an explanation of the scene at the bottom of each frame. Share orally with the class.</p>	<p>A Scrapbook for one character. Include mementos of the character such as pictures, ticket stubs, a lock of hair, notes from friends, awards, souvenirs, dried flowers, etc. (Be creative-avoid real pictures from the book!) Each item must be labeled and explained. Share orally with the class.</p>	
PRESENTATION PROJECTS		
<p>A Bag that Book project which uses an appropriate container (Can? Bag? Box?) that you (1) decorate to reflect the book and (2) put six items in that have a connection to the book. You must explain the container, decorations, and items orally to the class and in a brief written report to the teacher.</p>	<p>Can you Prove in Five Minutes that you read your book? Give a 2½ minute oral presentation in which you (1) try to convince your audience to read the book and (2) try to convince your teacher that you read the book. Then fellow students and your teacher have 2½ minutes to ask you questions about the book.</p>	
TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS		
<p>(Talk to your teacher about whether to present to the class or to hand in.)</p>		
<p>A mock up of a MySpace Page for a main character from your book. (It can't be on the MySpace site because that is not accessible from school.) Required: "About Me" section that includes physical description, personality, interests, and friends. Pick three options: Pictures of people, places or events; heroes; description of family; goals; favorites; music; movies, TV and books</p>	<p>A Playlist of <i>at least</i> five (school appropriate) songs that one or more of the characters in the book would have on his/her playlist. Include a chorus or verse from each song and identify which character would have listened to that song and explain why. Be sure to type the playlist, verses, and explanations.</p>	
WRITTEN PROJECTS		
<p>(Can be handed in to your teacher with a written commentary or shared with the class.)</p>		
<p>Create a Newspaper Page with <i>at least</i> four typed newspaper articles based on people and events from the book. Be sure to write the articles in newspaper styles—straight news, features, advice columns, etc.—and place them on a page in columns so it resembles a newspaper. You may include relevant pictures or ads.</p>	<p>Write a Collection of Four (or more) Poems (each at least 10 lines long) about significant events, characters, settings, themes, conflicts, etc. in the book. Include titles for each poem. In your commentary or sharing, you must explain why you wrote each poem and how each one relates to the book.</p>	<p>Create an Interview with a Character. Write seven questions to ask a main character and then write what the character's response to each question would be. Be sure the answers refer to specific details in the book and give insight into the character.</p>

