

Calvert County Freshman 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, entering freshmen 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 on 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 list; 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.

All-American Girl by **Meg Cabot** (F) Samantha is an "urban rebel" who has dyed all of her clothes black. Her life changes dramatically when she saves the President, becomes a national hero, and finds love. Far-fetched? Absolutely, but that's exactly why this is so much fun.

At Home in Mitford by **Jan Karon** (F) A heartwarming story of everyday life in Mitford, a small, charming North Carolina town, and its colorful inhabitants including Tim, a bachelor rector who is falling in love with his neighbor, a stray dog, and a stray boy.

Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman by **Ernest Gaines** (F) A novel written as the recollections of a down-to-earth, stoic Black woman who has lived 108 years and so has gone from being a slave to a witness of the militancy of the 1960s.

The Beekeeper's Apprentice by **Laurie R. King** (F) Imagine Sherlock Holmes, supposedly retired, with an apprentice—a 15-year-old girl whose brilliant intellect, caustic wit, egotistical personality, and gift for detail rival Holmes' own.

A Boy at War: A Novel of Pearl Harbor by **Harry Mazer** (F) While fishing in Pearl Harbor on 12/07/41, teenaged Adam is caught in the Japanese attack and tries to find his father, a naval officer on a ship there. His story's fast paced with graphic detail and nonstop action.

The Chosen by **Chaim Potok** (F) The story of the friendship that develops between two Jewish boys in New York City. Although set in the 1940s, the struggles the boys share with their faith and their fathers are universal and so familiar to families of all faiths.

Dacey's Song by **Cynthia Voigt** (F) Realistic sequel to *Homecoming* (read by many students in 8th grade). Story of a teenager and siblings living with their grandmother on Maryland's Eastern Shore—the mother is sick and the father has deserted the family.

Dunk by **David Lubar** (F) Chad's a hard-luck teen who police mistake for a petty criminal, teachers think is lazy, and who never gets the girl. He thinks if he can work as the boardwalk clown hurling insults, then he can take out his anger on people who have made him miserable.

Ender's Game by **Orson Scott Card** (SF) After Earth is twice attacked by aliens, the world government begins breeding young military geniuses, one of whom is Ender Wiggin, age 6. Is he smart enough to save the planet? (Graphic language)

Gifted Hands by **Ben Carson** (NF) Ben Carson recounts his rise from inner-city kid to director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University Hospital and renowned surgeon who has successfully separated 30 Siamese twins who had little hope of survival.

King of Shadows by **Susan Cooper** (F) A mystery, a fantasy, and an adventure book all in one. Nat, a young actor with a tragic past, is transported back 400 years to be Puck in Shakespeare's version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (a play many students read in 8th grade).

Let the Circle Be Unbroken by **Mildred D. Taylor** (F) The Logan family saga continues from where *Roll of Thunder* ended (a book many students read in 8th grade). It tells of the hardships and good times of a Southern Black family and their neighbors during the Depression.

Life as We Knew It by **Susan Beth Pfeffer** (F) 16 yr old Miranda's life was normal until the moon's knocked out of orbit. Grocery stores empty, electricity fails, skies gray, and cold sets in. A story of survival and treasuring what matters most—family, friendship, and hope.

Maximum Ride by **James Patterson** (SF) Max, 14, leads a group of children, escapees from a lab that designed them by grafting bird DNA onto human genes so they can fly and have other unique talents. They are running from part-human, part-wolf predators called Erasers.

The Maze by **Will Hobbs** (F) Just fourteen, Rick Walder is alone, on the run, and desperate. He ends up exploring Utah's Canyonlands where he faces danger and learns about hang gliding, preserving wildlife and himself—an adventurous and exciting novel.

Monster by **Walter Dean Myers** (F) "Monster" is what the prosecutor called 16-year-old Steve Harmon for his supposed role in the shooting of a convenience-store owner. Was Steve really the lookout or just in the wrong place at the wrong time? (Mature themes)

One Hundred Demons by **Lynda Barry** (Graphic novel) Sweet, sometimes painful stories from the author's past that haunt her such as old boyfriends, family relationships, people who lied to her, lost childhood friends, abused dogs, and head lice. (Language and mature themes)

Peeling the Onion by **Wendy Orr** (F) Following an automobile accident in which her neck is broken, a teenaged karate champion begins a long and painful recovery with the help of her family.

Racing the Past by **Sis Deans** (F) Fights start on the bus when kids tease Ricky until he hits back. He starts running instead of riding the bus, first to avoid fights, then because long-distance running proves to be what he needs to escape his problems. (some graphic language)

Red Kayak by **Priscilla Cummings** (F) He loves life on the Chesapeake Bay, but tragedy strikes when a kayak sinks. He discovers the terrible truth behind its sinking; it changes the lives of those he loves forever. A suspenseful tale of 3 teens caught in a wicked web of deception.

The Secret Life of Bees by **Sue Monk Kidd** (F) Lily's life has been shaped by the blurred memory of the day her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted "stand-in mother" insults some local racists, they escape to a town that holds the secret to her mother's past.

Soldier's Heart by **Gary Paulsen** (F) Based on a true story of a fifteen-year-old who lies about his age and joins the Union army to seek adventure but is instead traumatized by the brutality.

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) y and savagery of war. (Contains realistic descriptions of battles.)

Soul Surfer by **Bethany Hamilton** (NF) The inspiring story of the courageous thirteen-year-old surfer girl who lost her arm in a horrific shark attack but never lost her faith -- and of her triumphant return to competitive surfing.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by **Betty Smith** (F) Francie grows up in the slums of Brooklyn at the turn of the century. Life treats her badly but she faces it with courage. This book has everything: danger, romance, family, history, struggle, and suspense. (Mature themes)

Woodson by **Gary Paulsen** (NF) The author of *Hatchet* recounts his own adventures in the wilderness and the Iditarod, a dogsled race across Alaska. Some events are violent and painful, others are touching or humorous and some are unexplainable mysteries of nature.

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		
(Talk to your teacher about whether you will present to the class or hand in.)		
<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		
(Can be handed in to your teacher with a written commentary or shared with the class.)		
<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>

