



Cobb Middle School 2018 Summer Reading



All students are expected to read **ONE** of the three books listed below before the 2018-2019 school year starts. Although summer provides a break from the daily structured learning routines at school, we want to ensure that students continue to build and expand their love of reading. The language arts department has compiled the following list of books for your student's selection. These books are based on current student interests, and should keep your student engaged!

Students will take a summer reading assessment in their language arts class on the first Friday after school starts (August 17th, 2018). The test will assess general knowledge of the book that was selected. To help with this, students are encouraged to create a "legal" cheat sheet about their novel choice. The "legal" cheat sheet cannot be any larger than an index card. Students can write notes on the front and back of their index card. The "legal" cheat sheet will not be graded; it will solely be used to assist students during their assessment. On the back of this handout here is a list of guiding questions that can be used to help direct students as to what they need to know for their assessment. Again – the guiding questions will not be graded.

The books below were selected by the language arts department, and fall within the appropriate grade level Lexile range. A Lexile measure is a valuable piece of information that assigns a readability level to a text, like a book or magazine article. A Lexile text measure is based on two strong predictors of how difficult a text is to comprehend: word frequency and sentence length. Many other factors affect the relationship between a reader and a book, including its content, the age and interests of the reader, and the design of the actual book. The Lexile range for middle school is 665L-1100L. The Lexile band is not the only factor in determining the appropriateness of a book for middle school students. Other things to consider are your child's interests and the subjects dealt with in the book.

Rising 6th Grade Novel Choices:

***The Skin I'm In* by Sharon Flake (Lexile: 670):** Maleeka Madison is a seventh grader who has low self-esteem because of her dark skin color. She is tall and skinny. Those are problems for her, because they're problems for everyone else at school, it seems. To make her life easier, Maleeka befriends the toughest girl in school. The problem is, bullies force you to pay more than you'd like, so life for Maleeka just gets harder until she learns to stand up for herself and love the skin she's in.

***Transall Saga* by Gary Paulsen (Lexile: 630):** Mark's solo camping trip to the desert begins as any other camping trip, until a mysterious beam of light appears. The trip turns into a terrifying and thrilling adventure when the light beam transports Mark into another time, and what appears to be another planet! Although he is searching for his way back to earth, in the meantime he is forced to make a life in this unknown world. He meets primitive tribes and shares the joy of human bonds, but this end of isolation in the new world also brings war and a struggle for power.

***Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine (Lexile: 630):** Caitlin has Asperger's. The world according to her is black and white; anything in between is confusing. Before, when things got confusing, Caitlin went to her older brother, Devon, for help. But Devon was killed in a school shooting, and Caitlin's dad is so distraught that he is just not helpful. Caitlin wants everything to go back to the way things were, but she doesn't know how to do that. Then she comes across the word closure--and she realizes this is what she needs. And in her search for it, Caitlin discovers that the world may not be so black and white after all.

Rising 7th Grade Novel Choices:

***The Eye of Minds* by James Dashner (Lexile: 790):** Michael is a gamer. And like most gamers, he almost spends more time on the VirtNet than in the actual world. The VirtNet offers total mind and body immersion, and the more hacking skills you have, the more fun. Why bother following the rules when most of them are dumb, anyway? But some rules were made for a reason. Some technology is too dangerous to fool with. And one gamer has been doing exactly that, with murderous results.

***Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper (Lexile: 700):** Melody is not like most people. She cannot walk or talk, but she has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She is smarter than most of the adults who try to diagnose her, and smarter than her classmates in her integrated classroom - the very same classmates who dismiss her as mentally challenged - because she cannot tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by cerebral palsy. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

***Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson (Lexile: 990):** In her memoir, Jacqueline Woodson tells of her childhood as an African American in the American Northeast and South in the 1960s. Born in Columbus, Ohio, to the descendants of former slaves, Jacqueline is named after her father, Jack, much to the chagrin of her mother, Mary Ann. This story is written in verse, and is a beautiful depiction of one girl's experience.

***The Big Hoot* by R.L. McDaniel (Lexile 740):** High school freshman, Harper Johnson, has been living in his older brother's shadow all his life – both on and off the basketball court. With his brother now off playing college basketball at Georgetown, Harper feels he can finally make a name for himself. Less than an hour before the opening game of the season, Harper finds a clue that his father, whom he has never known, could possibly be living in New Orleans as a street musician. With no other option, Harper knows he must somehow reach New Orleans to search for his father. With the assistance of his best friend and a girl he hopes turns into something more than just a crush, Harper sets out on the journey of a lifetime to reach the Big Easy, but what he finds there is so much more than he could ever imagine...

Rising 8th Grade Novel Choices:

***Full Tilt* by Neal Shusterman (Lexile: 700):** Sixteen-year-old Blake has always been the responsible one in his dysfunctional family - the one who drives safely, gets good grades, and looks after his wild younger brother, Quinn. Quinn is his brother's opposite - a thrill-seeker who's always chasing the next scary rush, no matter what the cost. But Quinn and Blake are in for the surprise of their lives when they're thrust into the world of a bizarre phantom carnival, and their souls are the price of admission.

***Fire from the Rock* by Sharon Draper (Lexile: 760):** Sylvia Patterson is shocked and confused when she is asked to be one of the first black students to attend Central High School, which is scheduled to be integrated in September 1957, whether the citizens or governor of Arkansas like it or not. Before Sylvia makes her final decision, smoldering racial tension in the town ignites into flame. When the smoke clears, she sees clearly that nothing is going to stop the change from coming. It is up to her generation to make it happen, in as many different ways as there are colors in the world.

***My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult (Lexile: 840):** Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate -- a life and a role that she has never challenged...until now. Like most teenagers, Anna is beginning to question who she truly is. But unlike most teenagers, she has always been defined in terms of her sister -- and so Anna makes a decision that for most would be unthinkable, a decision that will tear her family apart and have perhaps fatal consequences for the sister she loves.

Per School Board Policy 2240, Leon County Schools recognizes that certain instructional materials may conflict with a student's or parent's value system. In such cases, a parent may request, in writing, an alternative summer reading assignment. Please direct inquiries to Mr. Roberson or Mrs. Day (harringtond@leonschools.net)

Summer Reading Discussion Questions

Use these to create your "legal" cheat sheet for the test.

1. What is the title of the novel? Underline or *italicize* the book's title.
2. Who is the author of the novel?
3. What is the setting of the novel? Remember, there are two parts to the setting: time and place.
4. Create a list of the main characters from the novel.
5. Describe the main character (appearance and personality).
6. How does the main character's perspective shift from the beginning of the book to the end?
7. Create a plot summary of the novel (15-20 main events covering the entire book).
8. Create a list of the main conflict(s) from the novel: describe them as man vs. ____ (man, nature, society, the unknown, or himself), and describe them in reference to the book's characters.
9. What is the resolution to the novel's central conflict?
10. What is the central theme or themes represented throughout the novel?
11. What external conflicts do the characters in the novel face?
12. Identify the protagonist and antagonist in the novel.
13. How does the setting affect the character's struggles and conflicts?
14. Describe the main problem the protagonist has to overcome, and the obstacles to overcoming it.
15. What is the mood of the novel?