



SUMMER READING

MIDDLE
SCHOOL

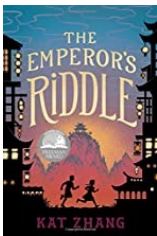
Grade 8

2021-2022

PART 1: CHOOSE A BOOK

Peruse the list of books below. Study the covers and read the descriptions before choosing the one that speaks to you. This will be your required summer reading (but feel free to read more than one book).

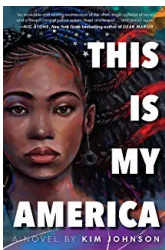
The Emperor's Riddle -- Kat Zhang



From acclaimed author Kat Zhang comes a “fast-paced mystery adventure” (BCCB) about a girl who embarks on a hunt for a long-lost treasure while on a summer trip to China. Mia Chen is on what her mother calls a Grand Adventure. She’s not sure what to make of this family trip to China, and didn’t want to leave her friends for the summer, but she’s excited about the prospect of exploring with her Aunt Lin, the only adult who truly understands her.

Then Aunt Lin disappears, right after her old nemesis, a man named Ying, comes to visit. Mia knows that years ago, when Aunt Lin and Ying were sent to the Fuzhou countryside to work as laborers, the two searched for an ancient treasure together—one that still hasn’t been found. She’s suspicious that their shared history might be linked to Aunt Lin’s disappearance.

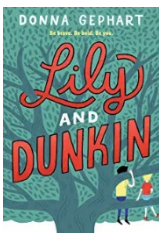
This is My America -- Kim Johnson



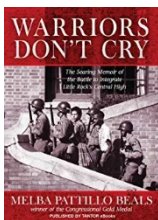
Every week, seventeen-year-old Tracy Beaumont writes letters to Innocence X, asking the organization to help her father, an innocent Black man on death row. After seven years, Tracy is running out of time--her dad has only 267 days left. Then the unthinkable happens. The police arrive in the night, and Tracy's older brother, Jamal, goes from being a bright, promising track star to a "thug" on the run, accused of killing a white girl. Determined to save her brother, Tracy investigates what really happened between Jamal and Angela down at the Pike. But will Tracy and her family survive the uncovering of the skeletons of their Texas town's racist history that still

haunt the present?

Lily and Dunkin -- Donna Gephart



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. Dunkin Dorfman, birth name Norbert Dorfman, is dealing with bipolar disorder 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.

Warriors Don't Cry -- Melba Pattillo Beals

In 1957, well before Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech, Melba Pattillo Beals and eight other teenagers became iconic symbols for the Civil Rights Movement and the dismantling of Jim Crow in the American South as they integrated Little Rock's Central High School in the wake of the landmark 1954 Supreme Court ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*. Throughout her harrowing ordeal, Melba was taunted by her schoolmates and their parents, threatened by a lynch mob's rope, attacked with lighted sticks of dynamite, and injured by acid sprayed in her eyes. But through it all, she acted with dignity and courage, and refused to back down. *Warriors Don't Cry* is, at times, a difficult but necessary reminder of the valuable lessons we can learn from our nation's past. It is a story of courage and the bravery of a handful of young, black students who used their voices to influence change during a turbulent time.

King and the Dragonflies -- Kacen Callender

Twelve-year-old Kingston James is sure his brother Khalid has turned into a dragonfly. When Khalid unexpectedly passed away, he shed what was his first skin for another to live down by the bayou in their small Louisiana town. Khalid still visits in dreams, and King must keep these secrets to himself as he watches grief transform his family.

It would be easier if King could talk with his best friend, Sandy Sanders. But just days before he died, Khalid told King to end their friendship, after overhearing a secret about Sandy — that he thinks he might be gay. "You don't want anyone to think you're gay too, do you?"

But when Sandy goes missing, sparking a town-wide search, and King finds his former best friend hiding in a tent in his backyard, he agrees to help Sandy escape from his abusive father, and the two begin an adventure as they build their own private paradise down by the bayou and among the dragonflies. As King's friendship with Sandy is reignited, he's forced to confront questions about himself and the reality of his brother's death.

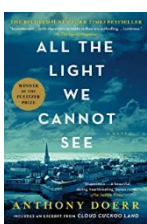
Full Cicada Moon -- Marilyn Hilton

It's 1969, and the Apollo 11 mission is getting ready to go to the moon. But for half-black, half-Japanese Mimi, moving to a predominantly white Vermont town is enough to make her feel alien. Suddenly, Mimi's appearance is all anyone notices. She struggles to fit in with her classmates, even as she fights for her right to stand out by entering science competitions and joining Shop Class instead of Home Ec. And even though teachers and neighbors balk at her mixed-race family and her refusals to conform, Mimi's dreams of becoming an astronaut never fade—no matter how many times she's told no.

This historical middle-grade novel is told in poems from Mimi's perspective over the course of one year in her new town, and shows readers that positive change can start with just one person speaking up.

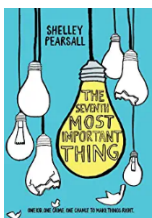
Shuri: A Black Panther Novel -- Nic Stone

Shuri is a skilled martial artist, a genius, and a master of science and technology. But, she's also a teenager. And a princess. This story follows Shuri as she sets out on a quest to save her homeland of Wakanda. For centuries, the Chieftain of Wakanda (the Black Panther) has gained his powers through the juices of the Heart-Shaped Herb. Much like Vibranium, the Heart-Shaped Herb is essential to the survival and prosperity of Wakanda. But something is wrong. The plants are dying. No matter what the people of Wakanda do, they can't save them. And their supply is running short. It's up to Shuri to travel from Wakanda in order to discover what is killing the Herb, and how she can save it, in the first volume of this all-new, original adventure.

All the Light We Cannot See -- Anthony Doerr

Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.

The Seventh Most Important Thing -- Shelley Pearsall

Arthur T. Owens grabbed a brick and hurled it at the trash picker. Arthur had his reasons, and the brick hit the Junk Man in the arm, not the head. But none of that matters to the judge—he is ready to send Arthur to juvie forever. Amazingly, it's the Junk Man himself who offers an alternative: 120 hours of community service . . . working for him.

Arthur is given a rickety shopping cart and a list of the Seven Most Important Things: glass bottles, foil, cardboard, pieces of wood, lightbulbs, coffee cans, and mirrors. He can't believe it—is he really supposed to rummage through people's trash? But it isn't long before Arthur realizes there's more to the Junk Man than meets the eye, and the "trash" he's collecting is being transformed into something more precious than anyone could imagine. . . .

PART II: READING CLOSELY AND ANNOTATING

Annotation is a conversation between you and a piece of literature. It helps focus your reading, encourages you to slow down and read deeply, and helps you keep track of parts that confuse you, words that are new or interesting, and conversations or actions you think are important. Annotation captures your in-the-moment responses to what you are reading. It will aid you in group discussions and shows me what kind of reader you are--your strengths and where I can help you grow. **Annotations should be written as you read.**

Your annotations will help you take part in discussions and activities when we come back in the fall. It is also a good way to practice a skill you will need in 8th grade and beyond.

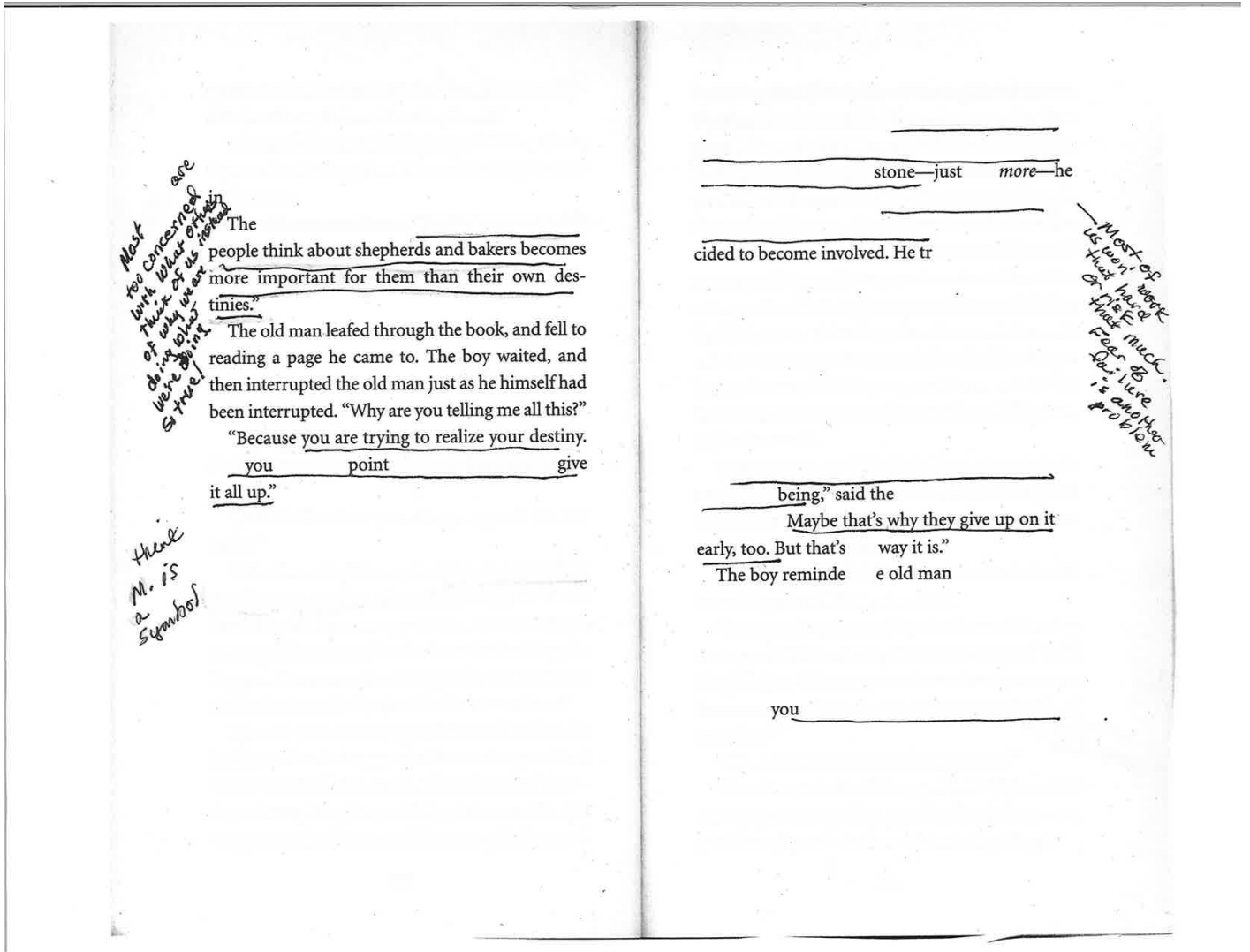
Like any good conversation, annotation:

- Asks questions--lots of questions.
- Comments when an idea or character interests you. Explains why.
- Connects:
 - the book and your experiences
 - the book and other books or stories you have read or heard
 - the book and movies you have watched
 - the book and the world.
- Wonders why the author repeats things. What are they? Is it an image? A color or object? Keep track of it. What might this mean? What does it contribute? Could it be important?
- Comments on powerful imagery.
- Comments on writing that is especially descriptive.
- Comments on passages you think are particularly well written.
- Notes where the author uses literary devices--simile, metaphor, personification, foreshadowing. What do they add to the story?
- Asks what confuses you?
- Asks what inferences can you draw?
- Asks what new, interesting, or surprising words you've encountered? Can you guess the meaning from the way they are used?
- Notices how characters developed and if they change.
- Notes the point of view. Is it first person with the narrator as the main character? Is it 3rd person omniscient where the narrator is like a god who knows everything and sees all?
- Wonders how the author's choice impacts the story, and how the story would change with a different point of view.
- Pays attention to tone in the story. Is there a predominant tone? Where does the tone change and why?
- Looks for the relationship between setting, tone, and plot.
- Notices how the setting impacts the story. Asks, would the story be the same in a different setting?

While you may summarize important plot events or summarize as a way to stay focused, good, meaningful annotation goes far beyond summary. Any highlighting should include a margin note to explain the significance of the highlighted parts.

If you buy a copy of your chosen book, you can annotate right in the margins. If you borrow a book, you can use sticky notes and stick them on the page they go with. If you can't write legibly to save your life, you may type your annotations and include page numbers. Here is a sample so you can see what a conversation with a book might look like.

Sample Annotations:



PART III: DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

Be prepared for small group and whole class discussions and activities in the fall.

I'm looking forward to seeing you in the fall and can't wait to hear your thoughts on your summer reading.

Have a fun, fantastic summer!

Ms. Crowley

)