



# St. Gregory the Great Academy

A Ministry of the Church of St. Gregory the Great

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## Summer Reading Requirements for 8th Grade 2017

I believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year; we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all of our students who share varied reading ability levels, learning styles and interests. Leading researchers in reading suggest that an often-overlooked method to improve reading is providing readers with a supply of interesting and accessible books by visiting local libraries and bookstores. Research demonstrates that self-selected voluntary reading leads to the greatest gains in reading achievement.

As a result, I am offering a varied list of both fiction and nonfiction suggested titles. **Students should bring a copy of their chosen text** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices upon their return from vacation during the first full week of school. Students can choose a book (not on this list) of comparable merit with parent permission. One book is required to fulfill the assignment; I encourage students to read as many titles as they would like!

Mrs. O'Keefe

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**Dear Parents or Guardians:**

**Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:**

**Title** \_\_\_\_\_ **Author:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_



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## **8th Grade Book List 2017**

Arroyo, Raymond. **Will Wilder #1 The Relic of Perilous Falls.** Will Wilder is a mischievous, headstrong twelve-year-old with an otherworldly gift—he alone can see the nefarious creatures encroaching on Perilous Falls. For nearly a century, a sacred relic has protected his hometown from the raging waters surrounding it. But when Will “borrows” the relic for his own purposes, he accidentally unleashes an ancient evil. As boats sink and hideous creatures crawl from the rising waters, Will must set things right before it is too late. With the help of his sweet (if lethal) Great Aunt Lucille, the curator of a museum of powerful artifacts, Will proves that the actions of one twelve-year-old boy can change the world. Science fiction.

Brown, Daniel James. **The Boys in the Boat: The True Story of an American Team's Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics (Young Adult Version Only).** Out of the depths of the Great Depression comes the astonishing tale of nine working-class boys from the American West who at the 1936 Olympics showed the world what true grit really meant. With rowers who were the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington’s eight-oar crew was never expected to defeat the elite East Coast teams, yet they did, going on to shock the world by challenging the German boat rowing for Adolf Hitler. Non-fiction.

Bruchac, Bruce. **The Code Talker: A Novel About Navajo Marines of World War II.** Throughout World War II, in the conflict fought against Japan, Navajo code talkers were a crucial part of the U.S. effort, sending messages back and forth in an unbreakable code that used their native language. They braved some of the heaviest fighting of the war, and with their code, they saved countless American lives. Yet their story remained classified for more than twenty years. Historical fiction.

Hillenbrand, Laura. **Unbroken: An Olympian’s Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive (Young Adult Version Only).** In this captivating young adult edition of her award-winning #1 New York Times bestseller, Laura Hillenbrand tells the story of Louie Zamperini’s breathtaking odyssey and the courage, cunning, and fortitude he found to endure and overcome. Biography.

Kidd, Sue Monk. **The Secret Life of Bees.** Set in South Carolina in 1964. This book tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily’s fierce-hearted black “stand -in mother,” Rosaleen, insults three of the deepest racists in town, Lily decides to spring them both free. They escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother’s past. Realistic fiction.

Kline, Christina Baker. **Orphan Train**. A captivating story of two very different women who build an unexpected friendship: a 91-year-old woman with a hidden past as an orphan-train rider and the teenage girl whose own troubled adolescence leads her to seek answers to questions no one has ever thought to ask. Historical/realistic fiction.

London, Jack. **The Call of the Wild and Selected Stories**. Out of the white wilderness, out of the Far North, Jack London, drew the inspiration for his robust tales of perilous adventure and animal cunning. Swiftly paced and vividly written, the novel and five short stories included here capture the main theme of London's work—the law of the club and the fang, man's instinctive reversion to primitive behavior when pitted against the brute force of nature. Adventure fiction.

Lowry, Lois. **Gathering Blue**. This is the second book following **The Giver** book that we read together in class. Science fiction.

Raskin, Ellen. **The Westing Game**. Penguin Young Readers Group, 2004. The mystery begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of the very strange will of the very rich Samuel W. Westing. They could become millionaires depending on how they play a game. Mystery.

Sepetys, Ruta. **Between Shades of Gray**. A knock comes at the door in the dead of night, and Lina's life changes in an instant. With her young brother and mother, she is hauled away by the Soviet secret police from her home in Lithuania and thrown into a cattle car en route to Siberia. Separated from her father, Lina secretly passes along clues in the form of drawings, hoping they will reach his prison camp. Historical fiction.

Wyss, Johann. **The Swiss Family Robinson**. Following a wild and raging storm, the Swiss family Robinson are stranded at sea. But the thundering waves have swept them off to a tropical island, where a new life awaits them. Their ship is laden with supplies and the island is packed with treasures, so they soon adapt and discover new dangers and delights every day. Adventure.

Zusak, Mark. **The Book Thief**. Liesel Meminger finds her life changed when she unearths a single object from the snow. It is the *Grave Digger's Handbook*, left there by accident at her brother's funeral, and it is her first act of book thievery. But these are dangerous times. When Liesel's foster family hides a Jewish man in their basement, Liesel's world is both opened up and closed down. Historical fiction.

**You may decide to highlight or take notes on the book to help you answer questions like the ones below when you return to school.**

### **For Narrative Reading...**

1. *Tone* is created by what is said and how it is said. This is a combination of the diction (the words used), the details that the author focuses on, the images, the way the characters are described and what they say. Here is a list of what to look for to identify the tone and offer evidence to support it:

Look for words that tend to have emotions attached to them.

Look for how the narrator describes things and people.

Identify the *theme* first; then, ask yourself what the narrator thinks about that theme.  
How did it make you feel; what passages were memorable to you?

Look for clues about tone in those.

2. What symbols are central in the book? How do they contribute to the theme or to the book as a whole?
3. What is the conflict that the main character/characters has to face and how does the character change?
4. What are the themes of the book and what evidence does the author use to support the theme?

### **For Nonfiction Reading...**

1. Give some examples of specific clue words the author uses that let you know she/he is stating an opinion or a fact.
2. Does this book provide recent information? Where could you look to find more information about the topic? Give examples.
3. What do you think the author's central idea is? What would you describe as the author's purpose?
4. How does the author structure the book? Is it chronological (time order), general to specific, cause and effect, pros and cons...?
5. Was there a specific passage that left had a strong tone to it that revealed the author's attitude toward a topic? What choices did the author make to make that section stand out?
6. Was the purpose of the book to bring to light an issue? If so, did it make you more aware and knowledgeable about the particular issue? How did earlier opinions about the issue changed after reading this book?