



The Park School

Brookline, Massachusetts

June 2016

Dear Parents of Rising Grade VII Students,

As your family plans for summer and your children's transition to the next grade level, we hope that this letter regarding Upper Division summer reading requirements for 2016 will be helpful. Our intention for summer reading is to promote a lifelong love of reading, enrich our students' understanding of the world, and prepare them for their lives as students in Grade VII. We expect students to arrive to school in September ready to actively engage in discussions about these texts.

Students entering seventh grade in the fall are required to read at least FOUR books over the summer:

1. ***The Red Pencil*** by Andrea Davis Pinkney
This book, written in verse, captures ten months in the life of a 12-year-old Sudanese girl named Amira. Students are asked to think about the form of the narrative, and why poetry provides an important means of expression for this powerful story.
2. ***The Wednesday Wars*** by Gary Schmidt
This is a story about Holling Hoodhood, who learns over the course of his seventh grade year that there is more to life than what he sees in his own world. With the help of a strict but caring teacher, his sister, a host of friends and heroes, and even Shakespeare, Hoodhood learns lessons we'd like readers to be on the lookout for: about discrimination, becoming an adult, war, and determining one's own destiny.
3. A choice from the four Community Reading Books
**Students select their book and are given a paper copy before summer.*
4. For Social Studies class: ***My Brother Sam is Dead*** by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier
**Students will be given a paper copy of this text before summer.*
This is a story of one family's struggles in Colonial North America during the American Revolution. Students are asked to note of what day-to-day life was like for people at this time and of the complexities of choosing sides during this conflict. How many "sides" were there? Could one avoid choosing sides or not? What would you have liked or disliked about life in this time and place?

Please join us in our effort to promote reading as a wonderful way to unplug, relax, and enjoy the summer. You are invited, though by no means expected, to read these powerful texts alongside your children and engage them in active conversations.

Unless noted, families must obtain their own copies of these books (local library, Kindle, e-reader, or paper copy are all acceptable formats). Audio book accompaniment is also acceptable for readers who need or benefit from it. An [E] on the online Summer Reading list means it is available from Park's ebook collection. Recreational ebooks and audiobooks are available all summer from the Park School Digital Library. Upper Division students can log in with a Park School email address and read or listen to books on the device of their choice.

If you have any questions about reading or purchasing these texts, please don't hesitate to contact me.

With warmest wishes for a lovely summer!

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