



Saint Sebastian School
“commitment to excellence”

Dear Parents,

As the summer draws near, the Language Arts Department of St. Sebastian School extends to you and your children our best wishes for a relaxing and enjoyable vacation. We hope, that as you plan your time together, you also look forward to enjoying the pleasures and adventures that reading good books can offer. We believe that summer reading should be an enjoyable pastime. We also believe that reading can expand one’s personal interests. As you review the brief descriptions for each title contained in this booklet, we hope that the images, emotions, and ideas conveyed in these books will engage your middle schooler’s heart as well as his/her head!

All students entering Grades 6, 7, and 8 are expected to read at least three books during the summer. We know that middle school is a time of choice and responsibility for those choices. Therefore, students should make good decisions about what is “just right” for them to read, both in interest and difficulty level. This year, we are not requiring all students to read any one title. We really want to honor responsible decision-making.

It is also expected that all titles chosen are new for the reader, that is, have not been read independently or as part of in-school reading from previous grades. We are asking the students to complete two assignments for each book while they are reading. All students will be required to complete a vocabulary log of words that they may not know. They will be asked to write down the word, define it using context clues, define using a dictionary and use it in a sentence. Students entering sixth grade will be required to make a story map for each book read. Students entering seventh or eighth grade will be required to complete a plot line.

Studies show that if you are reading actively students will benefit by having a higher level of vocabulary and will work on comprehension strategies. It is our belief that the students will benefit considerably by having their Reading and English teachers process the readings when the students return to school in August. Assignments will be based on the books read.

We look forward to beginning the new school year by discussing the books your children will read this summer. We encourage you to read along with your children and enjoy the rewarding conversations that usually follow from reading a good book.

Sincerely,

Ms. Sally Weakland
7th and 8th Grade Language Arts Teacher

Mr. Michael McDonald
6th Grade Language Arts Teacher

Summer Reading 2010
Saint Sebastian School
Language Arts Department
Grade 6

realistic fiction

Keeper of Doves Betsy Byars

Byars organizes this novel in 26 brief chapters, each beginning with a letter of the alphabet. Amen McBee, born in 1891 and the fifth daughter of a fragile mother and a father who ardently wishes for a son, searches for her place in the family and discovers a talent of her own. (Booklist Editors' Choice)

Say Yes Audrey Coulombis

In the first chapter, the narrator, 12-year-old Casey, describes her morning exchange with her stepmother, Sylvia; by the second chapter Sylvia is gone and Casey is completely alone, fending for herself in her NYC apartment. This is a modern day survival story with no clear lines between heroes and villains, where morals are tested by fear and desperation. (Publishers Weekly)

Racing the Past. Sis Deans

Ricky stops taking the school bus in his small town in Maine, first to evade the bullies (who call his family "white trash") and then gradually to improve his running speed and beat the bus home. Sports fans will appreciate the realism of Ricky's grueling training, and the story is just as honest about family struggles.

* Because of Winn-Dixie Kate DiCamillo

Because of Winn Dixie, a big, ugly happy dog, 10-year-old Opal learns 10 things about her long-gone mother from her preacher father. Because of Winn-Dixie, Opal makes new friends among the somewhat unusual residents of her new hometown. Because of Winn Dixie, Opal begins to find her place in the world and to let go some of her sadness. Is the book better than the movie?

The Reappearance of Sam Webber Jonathan Fuqua

When his father disappears without a trace, 11-year-old Sam moves into a new house and school, where he becomes friends with the janitor and learns about racism, loss, and forgiveness.

* Joey Pigza Loses Control Jack Gantos

Joey finally feels a sense of self-control over his hyperactivity now that he receives daily medication patches. Visiting his divorced father for the summer seems like a good idea until his father, a mirror image of the pre-medicated Joey, flushes all of Joey's patches down the toilet. (part of a series)

Loser Jerry Spinelli

Jerry Spinelli's novel, LOSER, details the childhood of Donald Zinkoff, focusing on his life from the first through sixth grades. Most readers will relate to either knowing or being a Donald Zinkoff at some point in their lives. Zinkoff is usually the last person picked for athletic teams, his flute consistently hits the wrong note during concerts, and he is occasionally too eager at the wrong times.

The Million Dollar Shot Dan Gutman

Eleven-year-old Eddie enters a poetry contest hoping to get a chance to win a million dollars by sinking a foul shot at the NBA finals games.

The Homework Machine Dan Gutman

Brenton invents a homework machine that seems too good to be true.

Hoot Carl Hiassen

This satire features middle schoolers - the new kid, Roy, joining forces with tough Beatrice and the elusive Mullet Fingers to defeat a bully, thwart an avaricious corporation, Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House, and save a colony of burrowing owls. (ALA) Newbery Honor

* Shiloh Season Phyllis Naylor

When mean and angry Judd, who has never known kindness, takes to drinking and

mistreats his dogs, Marty discovers how deep a hurt can go and how long it takes to heal. (Sequel to Newbery Award winner *Shiloh*.)

The Same Stuff as Stars Katherine Paterson

Paterson explores the theme of what defines a family in this contemporary novel set in rural Vermont. Eleven-year-old Angel Morgan, despite her youth, is the head of her family. With a father in jail for robbery and murder, and Verna, her mother, too preoccupied to care for anyone else including Angel's seven-year-old brother, Angel's intelligence and abiding trust help her rise above her circumstances. (Publishers' Weekly) Booklist Editors' Choice

Buddy Is a Stupid Name for a Girl Willo Roberts

When her father mysteriously disappears, motherless, 11-year-old Buddy must move in with relatives she doesn't know, finding herself in a family with secrets in their past.

Hang Tough, Paul Mather Alfred Slote

A baseball pitcher with an incurable blood disease is determined to get in as much time on the mound as possible.

Cat Running Zilpha Keatley Snyder

A solitary girl joins forces with a boy who is an outcast. They race for help against weather and prejudice in a time when his little sister is stricken with pneumonia.

Something Invisible Siobhan Parkinson

This tender, quirky Irish novel focuses on Jake, who is unsettled by the changes in his household, but who gains sudden perspective from a tragedy in his friend's family. (Center for Children's Books)

Way Down Deep Ruth White

On the first day of summer in 1944, a red-haired toddler appears on the courtroom steps in Way Down Deep, West Virginia. Nobody knows who she is or how she got there. (from the author of *Belle Prater's Boy*)

fantasy

Charlie Bone and the Magician Series Jenny Nimmo

Midnight for Charlie Bone: Children of the Red King: Book 1

Charlie Bone, our protagonist, can hear people in pictures talking. The danger is that they can see him when he eavesdrops. Charlie Bone has been raised by his mother and his grandmothers. His mother and maternal grandmother are very poor and depend on the wealth and indulgence of his father's relations. These relations are all rather frightening and intimidating. They had ignored him for most of his life because he hadn't shown any signs of magical talent. When his gift does emerge, everything changes.

The Book of Three Lloyd Alexander

Set in the mythical land of Prydian, this book draws together the elements of the hero's journey from boy to courageous young man. Taran grumbles with frustration at home; he yearns to go into battle like his hero, Prince Gwydion. Before the story is over, he has met his hero and fought the evil leader who threatens the peace of Prydian.

The Book without Words: A Fable of Medieval Magic Avi

At the dawning of the Middle Ages, Thorston, an old alchemist works feverishly to create gold and to make a potion that will enable him to live forever.

Diary of a Fairy Godmother Esme Codell

Hunky Dory is the top student in her charm school, but her inner conflict about the purpose of witchcraft bothers her. Characters from well-known fairy tales come in and out

of this story.

Artemis Fowl (Book 1) Eoin Colfer

Arctic Incident (Artemis Fowl Book 2)

The Eternity Code (Book 3)

Three adventures of 12-year-old Artemis Fowl who is a boy-genius and a member of a legendary crime family down on its luck. The adventures in each book combine folklore, fantasy, and high-tech.

Island of the Aunts Eva Ibbotson

Three aging aunts who need help for their magical animals resort to an unusual plan which involves kidnapping!

The Star of Kazan Eva Ibbotson

A mix of villains, crumbling aristocratic families, stolen jewels, and a cast of lovable adventures, help a 12-year-old search for her true family. (Booklist Editors' Choice)

Ella Enchanted Gail Carson Levine

Spunky, stubborn and very clever, this new Cinderella spends a lifetime trying to outwit the curse of a fairy's unwelcome gift of obedience.

Gossamer Lois Lowry

Readers first meet the dream-givers as they creep around a dark house in the middle of the night where an old woman and a dog named Toby are sleeping.

mystery

Something Upstairs Avi

When the present day family moves into a 1789 house, Kenny meets the ghost of Caleb, a sixteen-year-old slave who denies that he killed himself in the attic years ago.

Chasing Vermeer Blue Balliett

Outsiders Petra and Calder become friends as they try to find out what happened to a missing Vermeer painting. This story mixes mysteries, puzzles, possibilities, coincidences, and art. Readers of *From the Mixed up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* and *The Westing Game* will love this unique book. (Booklist Editors' Choice)

The Figure in the Shadow John Bellairs

Chubby Lewis, the timid hero of *The House with the Clock in Its Walls*, finds a magic charm that can cause astonishing events to occur.

The Dark Stairs Betsy Byars

Herculeah Jones didn't get her name because she was "dainty and shy." She's bossy and overly curious and, with her father as a police officer and her mother as a private investigator, there's plenty to attract her attention. With her equally snooty sidekick, Meat, they have quite a story to tell.

* Behind the Attic Wall Sylvia Cassedy

Maggie, an orphan, who is difficult to love, is sent to live with her equally unlovable aunt and uncle. She manages to alienate not only her relatives, but everyone at school too. Mysterious noises come from the walls of the old gloomy house and Maggie discovers the source- two dolls who can think and speak.

The Ghost and Mrs. Hobbs Cynthia DeFelice

11-year-old Allie's investigation into a fire that happened seventeen years earlier causes a ghost to enter into her life.

Dangling Lillian Eige

11-year-old Ben's unusual new friend disappears when he walks into a river and never resurfaces. Did he drown, run away and what was he hiding? Ben is determined to find the answers.

The Mysterious Benedict Society Carson Ellis

After Reynie Muldoon responds to an advertisement recruiting "gifted children looking for special opportunities," he finds himself in a world of mystery and adventure. The 11-year-old orphan is one of four children to complete a series of challenging and creative tasks, and he, Kate, Constance, and Sticky become the Mysterious Benedict Society.

Danger at the Fair Peg Kehret

When Ellen receives a spirit message during a séance at the county fair warning that her younger brother is in danger, she dismisses it until he disappears. Can she find him before it's too late?

A Drowned Maiden's Hair Laura Schlitz

The classic orphan story takes an original turn in this story of Maud, a nineteenth-century orphan adopted by spiritualist sisters who plan to use her to defraud a wealthy client. (Center for Children's Books)

historical fiction

Crispin: The Cross of Lead Avi

Action-filled page-turner set in 14th century England. A 13-year-old is suddenly orphaned and stripped of home and possessions. Accused of murder and wanted dead or alive, Crispin flees his village and falls in with a juggler, Bear, who becomes his protector and teacher. Relentlessly pursued by Crispin's enemies, the pair flees to solve the mystery of Crispin's true identity and fight the injustices of feudalism. (ALA) Newbery Winner

Crispin: At the Edge of the World Avi

Sequel to the Newbery Award winner, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. Yet another adventure in the Middle Ages.

The Midwife's Apprentice Karen Cushman

In medieval England, young Alyce rises from homelessness and nothingness to find a new reason for living - apprenticed to the cantankerous midwife, Jane Sharp.

Willow Run Patricia Reilly Giff

Introduced as Lily's friend in the Newbery Honor Book *Lily's Crossing* (1997), Margaret "Meggie" Dillon now experiences World War II on her own. "For the duration" is how the adults talk about the war's deprivations, whether they are referring to eating Spam or to the Dillons' makeshift housing in Michigan, where Meggie's father has moved the family in order to take a job building planes. Meggie desperately misses her home in Rockaway, and German-born Grandpa, who was left behind.

nonfiction

The Journey that Saved Curious George: the True Story Wartime Escape

of Margret and H.A. Rey Louise Borden

The amazing story of Margret and H.A. Rey, who fled German troops during WWII and entered France with their first Curious George manuscript, unfolds in scrapbook style with photographs, documents, and original illustrations.

Houdini: The Handcuff King Jason Lutes and Nick Bertozzi

A great picture of an amazing showman.

about sixth graders

Shakespeare's Secret Elise Broach

When sixth grader Hero Netherfield moves into the famous Murphy Diamond House, she obsesses over finding the centuries-old diamond said to be inside.

Stray Voltage Eugenie Doyle

An accumulation of telling details and subtle scenes trace the maturation of sixth grader Ian Daley, the second-born son in a family of Vermont dairy farmers, whose mother has recently left them. As Ian tries to make sense of his new life with his gruff, silent father and dismissive brother and no mother as a buffer between them, he begins to discover his own strengths. (Booklist Editors' Choice)

Heads or Tails Jack Gantos

Here is a series of short stories about life during Jack's sixth grade year.

The Sixth Grade Nickname Game Gordon Korman

Jeff and Wiley find out what happens when the nicknames they have given others begin to backfire against them.

How I Became a Writer and Oggie Learned to Drive Janet Taylor Lisle

As sixth-grader Archie and his six-year-old brother Oggie shuttle back and forth between the houses of their separated parents, Archie tries desperately to take care of Oggie and pretend that everything is normal.

Agnes Parker... Girl In Progress Kathleen O'Dell

Eleven-year-old Agnes determines that this year she will become a completely new person – or at least a better version of herself in this novel of the trials and joys of sixth grade.

Bat 6 Virginia Wolff

Set in a small Oregon town just after World War II, this is a powerful tale of a community shattered by its reaction to two young newcomers, Aki and Shazam, told from 21 different points of view of sixth grade girls on a softball game.

The Friends Kazumi Yumoto

Outsiders at home and at school, Kiyama and his two sixth grade friends decide to spy on a solitary old man in their small town.

* indicates a book that is appropriate for students who receive support in reading instruction

Summer Reading 2009
Saint Sebastian School
Language Arts Department
Grade 7

realistic fiction

Stand Tall Joan Bauer

Tree, a six-foot-three-inch seventh grader, copes with his parents' divorce and his failure as an athlete by helping his grandfather, a Vietnam vet and recent amputee, and Sophie, a new girl in school.

Flush Carl Hiassen

Noah and his sister try to stop the sabotage of Florida's natural resources. This author of *Hoot* once again has an entertaining story with a serious message about conservation and greed.

Trino's Choice Diane Bertrand

Lacking adult supervision, seventh grader Trino must decide whether to join a violent street gang or to allow new people in his life to help him choose a better path. (first in a series)

Tangerine Edwared Bloor

Paul Fisher, a legally blind seventh grader, has a passion for soccer and a deep mistrust of his football hero brother, Erik. Why is everyone blind to the truth?

Al Capone Does My Shirts Gennifer Choldenko

In this appealing novel set in 1935, 12-year-old Moose Flanagan and his family move from Santa Monica to Alcatraz Island where his father gets a job as an electrician at the prison and his mother hopes to send his autistic older sister to a special school in San Francisco. When Natalie is rejected by the school, Moose is unable to play baseball because he must take care of her, and her behavior sometimes lands him in hot water.. Family dilemmas are at the center of the story, but history and setting--including plenty of references to the prison's most infamous inmate, mob boss Al Capone--play an important part, too. (from School Library Journal 2005 Newbery Honor Book)

Getting Near to Baby Audrey Coulombis

This Newbery Honor book of 2000 tells the story of loss, family love, and new beginnings with a dollop of humor. While their mother is trying to cope with the death of their baby sister, 13-year-old Willa Jo and eight-year-old Little Sister are spending a few weeks with Aunt Patty and Uncle Hob.(School Library Journal)

Replay Sharon Creech

Follow the story of quiet Leo, sandwiched in his noisy family between two outgoing siblings as he tries to untangle a family mystery involving his father's journal as a teenager and an unknown girl in a family photograph!

The Wanderer Sharon Creech

Thirteen year old Sophie, who is passionate about sailing, talks her way onto her uncle's sailboat as he, his two brothers, and a couple of nephews prepare to sail across the Atlantic. Although she is brave and resourceful, Sophie is haunted by fears.

Chicken Boy Frances Dowell

Seventh-grader Tobin, his family falling apart, finds support in an unlikely friendship.

Just Ask Iris Lucy Frank

When seventh grader Iris arrives at her new home in a run-down New York City apartment building, she is determined to earn money and spend as much time outside the

stuffy building as possible. But, as she begins her errand running business, she meets her neighbors and helps them solve problems.

Pictures of Hollis Wood Patricia Giff

Having run away from a family that offered her a home, troubled 12-year-old orphan Hollis Wood is not about to let Social Services separate her from the elderly artist she has been living with.

Bluish Virginia Hamilton

Bluish is unlike any 10-year-old Dreenee has ever seen. At school she sits in a wheelchair, her skin is so pale, it is almost blue. Dreenee, herself new to the NYC school, is fascinated by her but also cautious. Together with Tuli, a biracial girl who pretends to be Spanish, the three carefully forge a bond of friendship.

When Zachary Beaver Came to Town Kimberly Willis Holt

Zachary Beaver, fattest boy in the world, is abandoned in a small Texas town in 1971. This town was too small and too boring for 13-year-old Toby Wilson's mother, who left to become a country singer. Through knowing Zachary, Toby comes to realize others are worse off than he.

Kira-Kira Cynthia Kadohata

Katie and her older sister Lynn have trouble adjusting when their parents move the family from Iowa to a small town in rural Georgia, where they are among only 31 Japanese-Americans. Then Lynn becomes deathly ill, and Katie is often left to care for her, a difficult and emotionally devastating job. Told from Katie's point of view and set in the 1950s, this beautifully written story tells of a girl struggling to find her own way in a family torn by illness and horrendous work conditions. All of the characters are believable and well developed, especially Katie, who acts as a careful observer of everything that happens in her family, even though there is a lot she doesn't understand. (review from amazon.com)
2005 Newbery Winner

Shoeless Joe W.P. Kinsella

The power of baseball, dreams, and Joe Jackson combine to create a place where those dreams really do come true.

The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place E. L. Konigsburg

Twelve year old Margaret Rose Kane is incorrigible. Not only does she refuse to bend to the will of her manipulative cabin mates at Camp Talequa, she stands up to and inadvertently insults the camp director and Queen-in-residence, Mrs. Kaplan. The intimidating and cruel confrontations that threaten to break Margaret's spirit only serve to strengthen her resolve, and everyone is happy when Margaret is finally banished/rescued from Camp Talequa. Luckily for her, with her parents in Peru, this means she can spend the rest of the summer with her delightfully eccentric Hungarian great-uncles, Alexander and Morris Rose. Margaret adores her great-uncles, and loves the house at 19 Schuyler Place--especially the three peculiar clock towers (tall painted structures covered in pendants made from broken china, crystal, bottles, jars, and clock parts) that the Rose brothers have been building for as long as she can remember. For Margaret and the Rose brothers, the towers represent beauty for beauty's sake--they sparkle in the sun and sing in the wind--they exist only to spread joy. Not everyone loves the towers however, and forty-five years after the birth of the project, the city council declares the towers "unsafe," and demands that they be dismantled and destroyed. Filled with the same fiery resolve that helped her survive Camp Talequa, Margaret (with the help of a handyman named Jake, a loyal dog named Tartufo, and few other unexpected allies) launches a plan to save the towers in the name of art, history, and beauty. (from amazon.com)

Gold Dust Chris Lynch

Who can resist a story about Boston, Fenway Park, and Red Sox legends? Two seventh graders from very different backgrounds form a friendship in the difficult world of Boston in 1975 when racism is all around them.

Baby Patricia MacLachlan

Two troubled families are healed when their paths cross. Some years ago on a remote island resembling Nantucket, Larkin's parents are silently mourning the death of a baby they never named and never described to his sister. The day the summer people leave, they find year-old Sophie on their doorstep with a note: "I will lose her forever if you don't do this, so please keep her. I will come back for her one day..."

Walkabout James Marshall

This is a story of the unification of two cultures that are 10,000 years apart. Peter and Mary, two American kids from Charleston, South Carolina, end up in the ruthless Australian outback where not one person is found in miles, just true desolation, after their plane crashes on a flight to visit their uncle in civilized Adelaide. However they don't encounter what we call civilized. Almost on the point of dying they find an aborigine who saves them from hunger. One of the most important customs performed by the aboriginal people is the "walkabout," which is really the initiation to manhood, just like the bush boy is doing in the story, Mary and Peter however are not on a walkabout to manhood but a walk for survival.

The Schernoff Discoveries Gary Paulsen

A great story of friendship as Paulsen tells the misadventures of Harold Schernoff, science whiz and social nerd.

The Boy Who Saved Baseball John Ritter

The fate of his beloved hometown playing field depends upon the outcome of one game and twelve-year-old Tom hopes that uncovering some secrets will lead his team to victory.

Holes Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats is heir to his family's curse of bad luck. He is convicted of a crime he didn't commit. He serves his sentence at Camp Green Lake, a dry flat wasteland where the warden assigns each inmate the task of digging one deep hole every day. Hole by hole, Stanley and his friend, Zero, dig their destiny. Is the book better than the movie?

Loser Jerry Spinelli

Donald Zinkoff is one of the greatest kids you could ever meet. He laughs easily, he likes people, he loves school, he tries to rescue lost girls in blizzards, and he talks to old ladies. The only problem is he's a loser. Another Spinelli story with humor and heart to spare. (amazon.com)

Stargirl Jerry Spinelli

An amazing story about being different in high school.

Eggs Jerry Spinelli

Spinelli pairs up two kids who have been through more than their years would indicate: 9-year-old David, whose mother was killed in an accident and 13-year-old Primrose, who has never met her father.

Don't Get Caught Driving the School Bus Todd Strasser

Seventh graders Kyle, Wilson, and Dusty manage to break every one of the principal's rules and never get caught. That is, until ex-prison guard Sarge is hired to be their new bus driver.

Surviving the Applewhites Stephanie Tolan

Pierced and spike-haired 13-year-old Jake, has been expelled from every other school until he arrives at Wit's End, N.C. where the school is run by the outrageous Applewhite family.

So Be It Sarah Weeks

This is a lovely story of the life of 13-year-old Heidi and her developmentally disabled

mother who speaks only 23 words.

Act I, Act II, Act Normal Martha Weston

A middle school boy deals with being bullied over having the lead as Rumpelstiltskin in the school play, the death of his family pet, his loyalty to his best friend and middle school girls !!

Pigman Paul Zindel

Two lonely high schoolers form a strange and ultimately joyful relationship with a lonely old man.

fantasy

The Game of Sunken Places M.T. Andersen

When Brian and Gregory accept an invitation from strange Uncle Max (who rather resembles Count Olaf from Lemony Snicket series) they hardly anticipate how bizarre it will be! (summary from Eight Cousins Newsletter)

King of the Shadows Susan Cooper

The young hero, Nat, has been chosen to participate in a national company of American boy actors doing Shakespeare at the newly created Globe Theater in London. A few dizzy spells and his body is isolated with bubonic plague, but his mind is experiencing the Globe in 1599 as he rehearses and performs his role for the Queen.

Victory Susan Cooper

How does a present day 12-year-old girl become connected to an 11-year-old English boy living in the early 1800s?

Conch Bearer Chitra Benerjee Divarkaruni

Anand's compassionate gesture of sharing his tea with an old man in a Calcutta market leads to radical changes in the 12-year-old's life. The stranger is a member of the Brotherhood of Healers and invites the boy to join him on a dangerous journey to return a magical conch shell to its proper home in the far-off Himalayas. Along with Nisha, a sweeper-girl who insists on joining them, Anand and Abhaydatta travel to the mountains pursued by the evil Surabhanu, a power-hungry ex-member of the brotherhood. (School Library Journal)

Inkheart Cornelia Funke

Characters literally leap off the page in this fantasy. Meggie, 12, has had her father to herself since her mother went away when she was young. Her father, Mo, taught her to read when she was five and the two share a love of books. Things change after a visit from a scarred man who calls himself Dustfinger and who refers to Mo as Silvertongue. Meggie learns that her father has been keeping secrets.

Fly by Night Frances Hardinge

A twelve-year-old outcast, her belligerent goose, and a smooth talking rogue with whom she has been traveling find themselves in the middle of a factional war in a world where the written word is treason. (Center for Children's Books)

Fairest Gail Carson Levine

In a sophisticated, richly drawn world of fairy tale music and magic, Asa, an innkeeper's daughter with a beautiful voice, is blackmailed by a treacherous queen. Family secrets and Asa's artistic growth add to the dramatic politics and thrilling romance. (Booklist – Editor's Choice List - Youth Fiction)

Voyage of the Arctic Tern Hugh Montgomery

A thrilling tale of voyages, treachery, honor, secrecy, and royal courts. Bruno, a promising young man who betrayed his village, is condemned to live on and on and on until he completes three acts of penance: save a life, rescue someone betrayed, and give away some

great wealth to help the local people. These tasks take him through the centuries.
(summary from Eight Cousins Newsletter)

Wintersmith Terry Pratchett

In her third witty and magical adventure, young witch Tiffany Aching is courted by the Wintersmith, the spirit of Winter, and she needs the help of the Wee Free Men to right the misunderstanding. (Blue Ribbon, Center for Children's Books)

historical fiction

True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Avi

This suspenseful story set on the high seas features an unusual heroine – a 13-year-old girl sailing to America in the mid-nineteenth century with a cutthroat captain and a mutinous crew.

The Seeing Stone Kevin Crossley-Holland

In language both precise and beautiful, Crossley-Holland takes readers back to medieval England in this lush, intricately layered story of 13-year-old Arthur, whose magical obsidian allows him to slip back to the time of the legendary Arthur. .

Francie Karen English

Waiting for the day when her Pullman porter father will send for the family, thirteen-year-old Francie bides her time in her small-minded Alabama town. This is a great story of the past filled with courageous characters pursuing a dream.

Shadow Spinner Susan Fletcher

A young girl rescues the famous storyteller, Shahrazad, from the Sultan's wrath.

Nory Ryan's Song Patricia Reilly Giff

Nory Ryan tells the story of a few weeks in her life during the potato blight in Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century, when the landlord evicts his tenants, taking their remaining livestock and fishing boats. Nory's courage and self-reliance are all her family has to survive.

The Truth about Sparrows Marian Hale

Sadie's father is a terrific mechanic and a creative carpenter who can do just about anything except make a living in Dust Bowl Missouri. Resentful about leaving her home, her friend Wilma, and the beautiful table he made that eventually was to have been hers, the 12-year-old is further angered when strangers stare at her dad's polio-withered legs. Relocating to coastal Texas where the fishing industry offers opportunity, the family obtains a one-room tar-paper shack. Promised letters from Wilma fail to arrive, a homeless man living in a cardboard box disappears, and a snobbish town girl constantly humiliates Sadie, causing her to snap when the overly talkative Dollie, with whom she has a budding friendship, tries to console her. The loss of this relationship and a crisis involving the newborn sister Sadie helps deliver cause her to reevaluate what is important. (from School Library Journal)

Stowaway Karen Hesse

Follow the life of 11-year-old Nicholas Young who is on the run from his demanding father and the cruel butcher who employed him, as Nick finds adventure beyond his wildest imaginings when he stows away on the ship of the legendary Captain James Cook.

Dave at Night Gail Carson Levine

By day, Dave is a downtrodden orphan at the Hebrew Home for Boys. At night he mingles with the movers and shakers of the Harlem Renaissance in New York of 1920.

Worth A. LaFaye

As 11-year-old Nathaniel rushes to bring in hay ahead of an approaching thunderstorm, his leg is crushed beneath a wagon when the team of horses, spooked by lightning, lurches out of control. His father brings one more conflict to their late-19th-century Nebraska homestead in the person of John Worth, a boy taken off the orphan train to help. (from

School Library Journal) Will the boys work out their differences?

No Turning Back Beverley Naidoo

“A powerful novel about the plight of a 12-year-old black boy who becomes a street child in the suburbs of Johannesburg.”

Of Nightingales That Weep Katherine Paterson

This is a colorful, emotional tale of Takiko, a samurai's daughter in feudal Japan. Since it is wartime, she has to move from place to place to escape the enemy. On her way, she meets a handsome young enemy warrior and they fall in love. Will she choose loyalty to her dead father's cause or forbidden romance?

Black Storm Comin' Diane Lee Wilson

This rip-roaring Wild West adventure begins, “On the morning of September 16, 1860, my pa shot me.” That is only the first of many misadventures on an ill-fated wagon trip from Missouri to Sacramento.

mystery

Framed Frank Boyce

Boyce's second novel is written with the same charm and deadpan humor as *Millions* (HarperCollins, 2004). Dylan Hughes is the only boy living in Manod, an uneventful Welsh town of drizzling grayness that he thinks is full of Hidden Beauty. His best buddies are two agoraphobic chickens named Michelangelo and Donatello after the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. His family runs the Snowdonia Oasis Auto Marvel garage. When the business falters, his father takes off, and Dylan, Mam, his older sister, Marie, and his aspiring criminal genius younger sister, Minnie, try to make Oasis more profitable so that he will return. Flooding in London causes the National Gallery to evacuate its paintings to the safety of Manod's mine. (An actual evacuation to the Manod slate quarry occurred during World War II.) Lester, the art expert in charge, takes a shine to Dylan as an art connoisseur on hearing the chickens' names.

Time for Andrew: A Ghost Story Mary Downing Hahn

Drew discovers there is something odd about the house his great-aunt lives in. By removing a bag of marbles from beneath the attic floorboard, he and his aunt open a door to the past in which Drew and a distant relative, Andrew Tyler, change places, causing Drew to travel back to 1910.

Penny from Heaven Jennifer Holm

Penny Falucci, 11, lives with her widowed mother and maternal grandparents, but her father's large, Italian family is tremendously important to her, too. It frustrates her that no one talks about his death, but as the summer of 1953 progresses, several events occur. First, her mother begins dating the milkman, and, when Penny's arm goes through the wringer on the washing machine, things come to a head. Finally, the secrets behind her father's death come out. (School Library Journal)

Crazy Weekend Gary Soto

Seventh graders Hector and Mando's visit to Uncle Julio turns unexpectedly exciting when their photograph of a robbery is published in the newspaper and they are pursued by bumbling thugs.

Summer Reading 2009
Saint Sebastian School
Language Arts Department
Grade 8

realistic fiction

Hope Was Here Joan Bauer

Ever since her mother left, Hope has, with her comfort-food-cooking aunt Addie, been serving up the best in diner food from Pensacola, Florida to NYC. Moving has been tough, so it comes as a surprise to 16-year-old Hope, that rural Wisconsin, where she and her aunt are now settled, offers more excitement, friendship, and even romance (for both Hope and Addie) than the big city. (Booklist)

Rules of the Road Joan Bauer

Here is a teenager protagonist who is smart, moral, funny, confident (mostly) and open-minded about grownups. Not that hulking Jenna Boller doesn't have her share of problems. At 5'11", hard-working Jenna is an outsider at school. The fact that she spends most of her time selling shoes at Gladstone's shoe store (and loving it) doesn't help in terms of a social life, and her main problem is her alcoholic father. (Booklist)

Ruby Holler Sharon Creech

Having suffered through a string of appalling foster homes, 13-year-old orphans and twins, Dallas and Florida, have pretty much given up on ever finding a happy home, until an eccentric older couple enters their lives. (from amazon.com)

Ironman Chris Crutcher

What does it take to compete in a swimming-biking-running triathlon? Is it heart as well as body?

Keeping the Moon Sarah Dessen

Formerly fat Colie cannot shed her poor self-image until she spends the summer with her eccentric aunt and develops a friendship with some interesting waitresses.

La Linea Ann Jaramillo

In a heart-wrenching contemporary survival story, a brother and a sister undergo a harrowing journey from Mexico across the border to join their parents in California. Told without romanticism, the harsh facts are gripping and immediate. (Booklist- Editors Choice)

Poison Ivy Amy Goldman Koss

What better way to explain government in action than to stage a mock trial, in this case, a trial in which one unpopular girl, Ivy (aka Poison Ivy), seeks to bring three bullies to justice? Alas, the questionable ambitions of a teacher, the fearful power of popularity, and the sad truth of how losers are made combine to make things ugly. The trial unfolds through the alternating viewpoint of several students, each of whom has a distinctive voice: Marcus' is penetrating and contemptuous; Ivy's is strangely cool; Ann's bubbles with cruelty. The message is clear: beauty, popularity, and fear are the trinity by which girls rule, and although most teenagers aren't cruel, many are indifferent to the suffering of their peers and are thankful they aren't the ones in the spotlight. (Booklist)

Alabama Moon Watt Key

This excellent novel of survival and adventure begins with the death of young Moon's father, an antigovernment radical who has been living off the land in rural Alabama with Moon for years. Moon has never known any truth but his dad's, and so he tries to continue his father's lifestyle. Unfortunately, Moon quickly finds himself in the claws of civilization, as personified by a sadistic cop. After a brief stint in jail (a lifetime of hunting and gathering leaves Moon hilariously pleased with the prison food), Moon again lights out for the territories, only to be recaptured and end up in reform school. Of course, no reform school is

going to keep Moon in check. A terrific choice for reluctant readers and also for fans of Gary Paulsen's Brian novels. (Booklist Starred Review)

Rules Cynthia Lord

Twelve-year-old Catherine has conflicting feelings about her younger brother, David, who is autistic. While she loves him, she is also embarrassed by his behavior and feels neglected by their parents. In an effort to keep life on an even keel, Catherine creates rules for him (It's okay to hug Mom but not the clerk at the video store). Each chapter title is also a rule, and lots more are interspersed throughout the book. When Kristi moves in next door, Catherine hopes that the girl will become a friend, but is anxious about her reaction to David. Then Catherine meets and befriends Jason, a nonverbal paraplegic who uses a book of pictures to communicate, she begins to understand that normal is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to define. Rules of behavior are less important than acceptance of others. Catherine is an endearing narrator who tells her story with both humor and heartbreak. Her love for her brother is as real as are her frustrations with him. Lord has candidly captured the delicate dynamics in a family that revolves around a child's disability. Set in coastal Maine, this sensitive story is about being different, feeling different, and finding acceptance. A lovely, warm read, and a great discussion starter. (School Library Journal)

Here Today Ann Martin

This family story is unforgettable in this sharp, tender narrative told from the viewpoint of Ellie, 11, who is caught between love, shame, and fury after her self-obsessed mother leaves their small town to search for stardom in New York. (Booklist Editors Choice)

Dairy Queen Catherine Murdock

Girl joins football team!!!

A Small White Scar K.A. Nuzum

Fifteen-year-old Will strikes out across the Colorado plains in an attempt to leave behind his job on the family ranch; looking after his twin brother, who has Downs syndrome. This coming-of-age story offers adventure as well a solid emotional and family dynamics. (Booklist – Editor's Choice List - Youth Fiction)

Dovey Coe Frances O'Roark Dowell

When accused of murder in her North Carolina mountain town in 1928, Dovey Coe, a strong-willed twelve-year-old girl, comes to a new understanding of others, including her deaf brother.

Of Sound Mind Jean Ferris

Universal issues of family relationships, coming-of age, and death are packed tightly in this thought-provoking, richly cast novel about teenage Theo, who is the only hearing member in his family of four.

Tending to Grace Kimberly Fusco

Cornelia Thornhill avoids eye contact with others, stutters badly, is presumed to be slow at school, and likens herself to a stone, hard and strong way down inside. Taken out of school during ninth grade by her shiftless mother, she is dropped off at the rural New England home of Great-aunt Agatha while mother and her boyfriend depart for places out west. Cornelia and her aunt argue, stop talking, and Cornelia even packs her bag to run away. What can bring these unlikely companions back together? (from School Library Journal)

Part of Me Kimberly Willis Holt

Set in Louisiana bayou country, this unusual collection of stories spans four generations of one family and uses reading as the thread that strings them together. The first three tales, which begin in 1939, concern Rose, who must go to work at 14 and passes herself off as 17 to drive the library bookmobile. Two stories tell of Rose's 12-year-old son, Merle Henry, reading Old Yeller around 1957. In 1973, his daughter, Annabeth, an eighth-grader, clings to fairy tales in the face of first love. Then Annabeth's 13-year-old son, Kyle, in 2004 can only find a

library job--though he doesn't like to read. The final story, also taking place in 2004, centers again on Rose, now 79. Though readers may sometimes wish for more about a particular character, this collection offers a different experience: marking the passage of time through a succession of related characters. Readers intrigued by Rose, whose early entries are the only stories told here in first person, will have the satisfaction of seeing her in later tales and watching her quiet triumph at the end. (Booklist)

Adventures of the Blue Avenger: A Novel Norma Howe

Sixteen-year-old David decides to change his name to Blue Avenger, in an attempt to act and think more heroically.

Gentlehands M.E. Kerr

Buddy's world is turned upside down, first when he falls in love with rich Skye Pennington and then, catastrophically, when he discovers that his refined and cultured grandfather is a notorious Nazi war criminal.

Visiting Miss Caples Elizabeth Kimmel

When your best friend has always provided the thrills and you've eagerly gone along for the ride, where do you draw the line between exciting and dangerous? Jenna has been friends with Liv forever, but when the popular and beautiful Liv shows a mean side in a vicious campaign against a classmate, Jenna must decide if she will still go along.

California Blue David Klass

John Rodgers lives in a northern California logging town, but the redwoods he runs through mean more to him than a livelihood. At 17, he cares about track and butterflies, although neither pursuit is understood by his family. His father's recently diagnosed cancer occupies the family, and John, a loner who is shy around girls, dreams about his biology teacher, Miss Merrill. When the unusual chrysalis John finds turns out to be an unknown species, everything is called into question, from his father's job to his relationship to Miss Merrill. Klass' exploration of the human cost of environmental action suggests that there are alternatives to the simplistic "butterfly vs. logging jobs" model.

No More Dead Dogs Gordon Korman

For his detention, an eighth grade football hero is sentenced to attend rehearsals of the school play, where, in spite of himself, he gets carried away.

The Cheat Amy Koss

Cheating on an eighth grade geography midterm was easy for Sarah and her friends. But the consequences when they are caught get greater and greater.

Heat Mike Lupica

Michael Arroyo is a 12-year-old Cuban American who lives in the shadow of Yankee Stadium and has big baseball dreams himself.

Parrot in the Oven : Mi Vida Victor Martinez

For Mexican-American teen Manuel, the main challenge in life, whether he always realizes it or not, is to find a reason to survive amid the negativity and emptiness that pervade his growing up in a city project. His father, unemployed and often drunk, is a source of tension for the whole family, especially Manuel's mother, whose determination to keep them all together is at times superhuman.

Petey Ben Mikaelson

Petey, who has cerebral palsy, is misdiagnosed as an idiot and institutionalized. Sixty years later, still in the institution, he befriends a boy and shares with him the joy of life.

Hoops Walter Dean Myers

All eyes are on Lonnie Jackson as he practices for the city-wide basketball Tournament of Champions. Does he have what it takes to be a pro? Will Lonnie or his coach,

a former pro player, give into pressure when some heavy bettors want Cal to stay on the bench for the big game?

Ruby Electric Theresa Nelson

At 12, Ruby Miller's life is on a downward spiral. Her dad has stood her up three times; she unwittingly let the Salvation Army take her little brother Pete's beloved puppet; and she is doing community service with her two arch enemies after being arrested holding a spray paint can. Ruby's only salvation is the screenplay she is writing in her room, in which life always "works out" for the beautiful, courageous heroine. A spirited redhead who sees her life as a screenplay, she is determined to make a difference, whether it's by reuniting her brother with his puppet, or by becoming the world's youngest famous screenplay writer and the savior of the L.A. River. Ruby's voice is electric, and she is an unforgettable character with courage, a cause, and imagination. American Library Association Notable Books (Booklist)

Additional books:

Fantasy:

Eragon by Christopher Paolini (or *Eldest*, *Brisingsr*).

In this fantasy world, the young author creates a vivid world of action and adventure, using rich vocabulary and description. In the novel, Eragon sets out on a quest to avenge his uncle's death and to train his newly hatched dragon, encountering unexpected adventures and allies along the way. His quest continues in *Eldest and Brisingsr*.

Maximum Ride by James Patterson. (or others in the series).

Genetically altered teens struggle against scientist who are trying to recapture them. In this action packed adventure the reader follows them across the country.

The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien (The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, or The Return of the King)

Tolkien creates a fantasy world blending detailed description, development of character, and suspense.

Historical fiction:

Little Woman by Louisa May Alcott.

Sisters grow up during the Civil War, learning to work together as they grow from children to adults.

The Last of the Mohicans by James Fenimore Cooper.

Set during the French and Indian War in pre Revolutionary America, this novel follows the tracker Hawkeye and his Indian friends as they attempt to rescue a captured settler. Advanced vocabulary makes this action packed book a challenge.

A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens.

Set during the reign of terror, this challenging novel follows an attempt to rescue individuals from certain death, at times at great personal sacrifice. Other books by Dickens also acceptable.

Mr. Midshipman Hornblower by C.S. Forester.

In this coming of age classic, a young boy takes a position as midshipman on a British frigate. As he learns his trade, he shows courage and determination in the face of war. The novel traces different adventures he experiences as a midshipman.

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery.

In this novel set in 1800s in Canada, an accident prone orphan comes to live with two elderly siblings, causing much chaos as she learns to fit in and teaches them to love. (Others in series)

Name _____

St. Sebastian Summer Reading Log 6th Grade

You must pick three books to complete from the list provided. You may not select any books that you have already read. You will complete the packet for each book and should be prepared to be assessed on the book when you return to school in August.

Book 1: Among the Hidden

Author: Margaret Peterson Haddix

Type of book: Adventure

What did you expect the book to be like? _____

In the end, was the book a good choice for you? Why or why not? _____

Book title 2: _____

Author: _____ Type of book: _____

Reason why you chose the book: _____

In the end, was the book a good choice for you? Why or why not? _____

Book title 3: _____

Author: _____ Type of book: _____

Reason why you chose the book: _____

In the end, was the book a good choice for you? Why or why not? _____

Context Clues

Context Clues is when you use information from the sentences to define unknown words. It is extremely important that you use context clues in your reading to build your vocabulary. Since you are supposed to learn 1,000 new words each year at your age, most of them will be learned through context clues.

This summer, you will focus on context clues throughout your summer reading. As you read, you will identify words in context. You will copy the sentence from the story directly onto your summer packet and then give an approximate definition. Then check the dictionary to see if you are close and write your own sentence using the word. For each book, find 10 context clues and complete the worksheet for each. You will also need to complete a worksheet on the plot as you read. If you cannot find enough words, use the list of additional words.

1. Word _____ Copy the sentence from the story. _____

Guess what it means _____

Check it in the dictionary. If close, write a check mark, if not write the dictionary definition here. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

2. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Check it in the dictionary. If close, write a check mark, if not write the dictionary definition here. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

3. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Check it and, if not close, write the dictionary definition here. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

4. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Close or dictionary def. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

5. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Close or dictionary def. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

6. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Close or dictionary def. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

7. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Close or dictionary def. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

8. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Close or dictionary def. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

9. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____

Close or dictionary def. _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

10. Word _____ Copy the sentence. _____

Guess what it means _____ Close or dictionary def _____

Write your own QUALITY sentence using the word in context. _____

