

# Normal Park Museum Magnet Upper Summer Reading List Grade 7 - 2010

*Directions to students:*

*Students are required to read **The Tequila Worm** during the summer prior to entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as complete the attached reading guide. In addition, students must read a minimum of **two** additional books. **One must be chosen from the list below**, while the other may be a book of your choosing. Please keep up with a **reading log for each book**.*

*Some advice on choosing a book:*

- 1) Choose something that catches your attention and will keep it.*
- 2) Choose a novel that challenges your reading ability.*
- 3) Choose one that you have **not** already read.*

*In order to help you with your search for the best book,  
I have provided you with brief annotations of each option.  
(Annotations from [booksamillion.com](http://booksamillion.com) and [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com))*

## **Aliens Ate My Homework**

**Bruce Colville**

Rod is surprised when a miniature spaceship lands in his school science project and reveals five tiny aliens, who ask his help in apprehending an interstellar criminal.

## **Bad Boy**

**Walter Dean Myers**

Walter recounts what growing up in Harlem was like in the 1940s and 50s—when seeing Langston Hughes and Sugar Ray Robinson on the street was the norm and Jackie Robinson ruled the baseball field. Just how bad was Walter? From instigating mischievous pranks at home to fighting in the classroom—especially when teased about his speech impediment—irrepressible Walter was a handful. Still, he had a tremendous love for books, and by high school, he longed to become a writer. But Walter felt his options were so limited that he dropped out of school. Where was the direction and motivation he needed to pursue his dreams?

## **Chew on This**

**Eric Schlosser and Charles Wilson**

(Non-fiction) Eric Schlosser and Charles Wilson unwrap the fast-food industry to bring you a behind-the-scenes look at a business that both feeds and feeds off the young. Find out what really goes on at your favorite restaurants—and what lurks between those sesame seed buns.

## **The Divorce Express**

**Paula Danzinger**

Resentful of her parents' divorce, a young girl tries to accommodate herself to their new lives and also find a place for herself.

## **Farewell to Manzanar**

**Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston & James D. Houston**

(Non-fiction) *Farewell to Manzanar* is the true story of one spirited Japanese-American family's attempt to survive the indignities of forced detention and of a native-born American child who discovered what it was like to grow up behind barbed wire in the United States.

## **Flipped**

**Wendelin Van Draanen**

In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.

## **The Giver**

**Lois Lowry**

Given his lifetime assignment at the Ceremony of Twelve, Jonas becomes the receiver of memories shared by only one other in his community and discovers the terrible truth about the society in which he lives.

**Hunger Games**\***Suzanne Collins**

Katniss is a 16-year-old girl living with her mother and younger sister in the poorest district of Panem, the remains of what used to be the United States. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games." The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed. When Kat's sister is chosen by lottery, Kat steps up to go in her place.

**Kimchi and Calamari****Rose Kent**

Kimchi and calamari. It sounds like a quirky food fusion of Korean and Italian cuisine, and it's exactly how Joseph Calderaro feels about himself. Why wouldn't an adopted Korean drummer—comic book junkie feel like a combo platter given: (1) his face in the mirror (2) his proud Italian family. Now Joseph has to write an essay about his ancestors for social studies. All he knows is that his birth family shipped his diapered butt on a plane to the USA. End of story. But what he writes leads to a catastrophe messier than a table of shattered dishes—and self-discovery that Joseph never could have imagined.

**I Rode a Horse of Milk White Jade****Diane Lee Wilson**

In early fourteenth-century China, Oyuna tells her granddaughter of her girlhood in Mongolia and how love for her horse enabled her to win an important race and bring good luck to her family.

**Last Shot: A Final Four Mystery****John Feinstein**

Steven Thomas is one of two lucky winners of the U.S. Basketball Writer's Association's contest for aspiring journalists. He wins a trip to New Orleans and a coveted press pass for the Final Four. But the games going on behind the scenes between the coaches, the players, the media, the money-men, and the fans turn out to be even more fiercely competitive than those on the court. Steven and his fellow winner, Susan Carol Anderson, are nosing around the Superdome and overhear what sounds like a threat to throw the championship game. Now they have just 48 hours to figure out who is blackmailing one of MSU's star players . . . and why.

**Little Women****Louisa May Alcott**

This classic novel chronicles the joys and sorrows of the four March sisters as they grow into young ladies in nineteenth-century New England.

**Marley: A Dog Like No Other****John Grogan**

(Non-fiction) This memoir is John Grogan's funny, unforgettable tribute to this wonderful, wildly neurotic Lab and the meaning he brought to his family.

**Notes from the Midnight Driver****Jordan Sonnenblick**

16-year-old Alex decides to get even. His parents are separated, his father is dating his former third-grade teacher, and being 16 isn't easy, especially when it comes to girls. Instead of revenge though, Alex ends up in trouble with the law and is ordered to do community service at a senior center where he is assigned to Solomon Lewis, a "difficult" senior with a lot of gusto.

**The Red Badge of Courage****Stephen Crane**

In the spring of 1863, as he faces battle for the first time at Chancellorsville, Virginia, a young Union soldier matures to manhood and finds peace of mind as he comes to grips with his conflicting emotions about war.

**Red Kayak**\***Priscilla Cummings**

Living near the water on Maryland's Eastern Shore, thirteen-year-old Brady and his best friends J.T. and Digger become entangled in a tragedy which tests their friendship and their ideas about right and wrong.

**The Schwa Was Here****Neal Shusterman**

Schwa isn't an obscure sound, but an average kid who seems to appear and disappear without being noticed. In an accidental friendship, he meets Ansty Bonano, who wants to take advantage of his ability to be nearly invisible, and Lexie, who cannot see.

**The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants****Ann Brashares**

**(You may also read any others in this series.)**

They were just a soft, ordinary pair of thrift-shop jeans until the four girls took turns trying them on—four girls who are best friends, about to be parted for the summer. Promising to uphold the vows of their sisterhood, the foursome begin a journey of fun, adventure, and heartbreak.

**The Tequila Worm****Viola Canales**

Sofia, 14, lives in McAllen, TX. What she lacks in material possessions, she makes up for in personality and intelligence. When she is called a taco head by a student at her school, she decides to kick that girl by getting better grades and being a better soccer player than her tormentor. As a result of this determination, Sofia is offered a scholarship to the elite Saint Lukes school in Austin. Now she must convince her family and herself that she is up to the challenge.

**Worlds' Afire****Paul Janeczko**

Haunting poems about the Hartford circus fire of July 6, 1944, in which 167 people were killed and more than 500 injured.

**Z for Zachariah****Robert B. O'Brien**

Seemingly the only person left alive after a nuclear war, a sixteen-year-old girl is relieved to see a man arrive into her valley until she realizes that he is a tyrant and she must somehow escape.

**\*Books that may contain mature or potentially objectionable language, sexual references, or excessive violence are noted with an asterisk.**

**P.S. Reading is one of the best (and cheapest) ways to travel. Enjoy yourself and have a great trip!**



**Connecting**

*The Tequila Worm* is about a teenage Mexican-American girl who has cultural experiences that may be different from your own. While you are reading, make note of connections that you make with Sophia's life/cultural experiences. Use the chart below to help you organize your thoughts. If you need more room, please create your own chart on a separate sheet of paper and attach.

<b>Text</b>	<b>My life</b>
"Skulls and Quarters" - Sophia dresses up for Halloween in costumes that her mother makes her. Her Halloween meant something special to her family.	As a little girl, I would dress up each Halloween in costumes made by my grandmother. Halloween just seems as if it is another day to get candied treats. It isn't as special as it is in Sophia's culture.

## **Synthesis, Analysis, Connection**

*Respond:*

How did Sophia's lunches with Coach Clarke influence her life? Reflect on the teachers you have had. Describe an instance when a teacher did something special for you.

## **Analysis, Predicting**

*Respond:*

Before reading the final chapter ("The Plaza"), explain how you feel Sophia's choice to return to school will influence her life and her cultural heritage.