

Summer 2021

Dear Rising 8th Graders,

What a year we all just had! With your coursework now complete, the summer awaits. I have compiled an assortment of books to enrich and supplement your days. My hope is that you find pleasure, discovery, and escape in these pages... and give your eyes a break from all that screen-time!

More specifically, I'm assigning you to read two books between now and September from the summer reading list. One is our grade's required summer read: *The House on Mango Street*, a young adult novel by Sandra Cisneros. We will use this text to launch our discussions, writing exercises, and assessments in the Fall.

The second book is your choice read from the 10 titles provided. This one will serve as the basis of your Book Collage, which is a visual representation of key ideas from a text using illustrations, doodled words, and quotations. Please print out your Book Collage work and be prepared to present and discuss it on the first day of class. You may find the reading list and instructions on the following pages.

So, in sum:

1. Read the required book: *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
2. Read a choice book from the list of 10 titles provided.
3. Create a Book Collage on your choice book.
4. Have fun!

I look forward to welcoming you to 8th Grade in September! Until then, stay well *and enjoy yourselves*. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me at elisabeth.levin@gbwl.org.

Happy reading!

Ms. Levin

8th Grade Summer Reading

Incoming 8th grade students are required to read **two** books over the summer. The first book (with an asterisk) is required for all students. The second book should be chosen from the list below. Students may not substitute a book on the reading list with those of their own choosing.

****The House On Mango Street***—Sandra Cisneros. Mexican-American author Sandra Cisneros tells the story of Esperanza Cordero, a 12 year-old Chicana girl growing up in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago through a series of vignettes. (Young Adult)

Suggested Reading for your Second Book

Attucks! Oscar Robertson and the Basketball Team that Awakened a City—Phillip Hoose. By winning the state high school basketball championship in 1955, ten teens from an Indianapolis school shattered the myth of their inferiority. (Nonfiction)

The Book Thief—Markus Zusak. It is 1939. Nazi Germany. By her brother's graveside, Liesel's life is changed when she picks up a single object, partially hidden in the snow. It is *The Gravedigger's Handbook*, left behind there by accident, and it is her first act of book thievery. (Historical Fiction)

Hole in My Life—Jack Gantos. In the summer of 1971, Jack Gantos was an aspiring writer looking for adventure, cash for college tuition, and a way out of a dead-end job. For ten thousand dollars, he recklessly agreed to help sail a sixty-foot yacht loaded with a ton of hashish from the Virgin Islands to New York City. (Memoir)

Internment—Samira Ahmed. Rebellions are built on hope. Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens. (Dystopian Fiction)

Miss Peregrine's Home For Peculiar Children—Ransom Riggs. As our story opens, a horrific family tragedy sets sixteen-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children. (Gothic Historical Fantasy/Mystery)

Monster—Walter Dean Myers. Sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon is on trial for murder. Guilty or innocent, Steve becomes a pawn in the hands of "the system." As a way of coping with

the horrific events that entangle him, Steve, an amateur filmmaker, decides to transcribe his trial into a script, just like in the movies. (Realistic Fiction/Play)

The Poet X—Elizabeth Acevedo. Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook. (Realistic Fiction, Novel in Verse/Slam Poetry)

Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda—Becky Albertalli. Sixteen-year-old and not-so-openly gay Simon Spier prefers to save his drama for the school musical. But when an email falls into the wrong hands, his secret is at risk of being thrust into the spotlight. (Realistic Fiction)

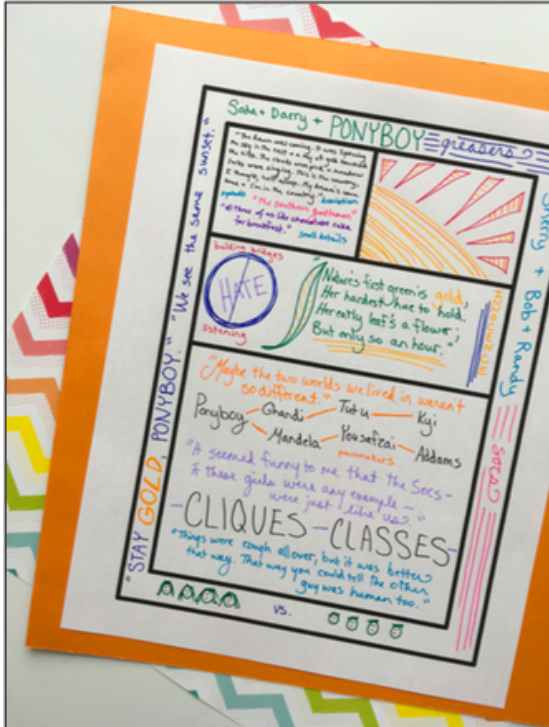
The Sun is Also a Star—Nicola Yoon. Natasha: I'm definitely not the kind of girl who meets a cute boy on a crowded New York City street and falls in love with him. // Daniel: I've always been the good son, the good student, living up to my parents' high expectations. But when I see her, I forget about all that. (Romance)

Warcross—Marie Lu. The obsession started ten years ago and its fan base now spans the globe, some eager to escape from reality and others hoping to make a profit. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down Warcross players who bet on the game illegally. (Science Fiction/Dystopian Fiction)

Please note: All book descriptions are either written by faculty members or supplied by Goodreads.com.

Book Collage

A Book Collage is a visual representation of key ideas from a text using illustrations, doodled words, and quotations. Part I is the visual component, and Part II will provide written explanations. Be deliberate and detailed as you draw and write, taking care to include the elements below. This project is an opportunity to showcase your critical thinking as well as your creativity and effort.



Part I: Visual Component

- ❑ **Somewhere at the top:** In large, clear lettering, write your full name, the title of the book, and the author.
- ❑ **Border:** Represent in the border panel **your reaction** to the story. Star ratings (e.g.: 3.5 out of 5) are always appreciated, but use this panel to also convey the full range of your emotional experience as you read (...and you can be honest!). Were there parts that surprised, excited, bored, inspired, or upset you? Did any parts feel forced? Did you arrive at any takeaways or learn something new? Draw it!

- ❑ **Top left box:** Represent in this panel an important **symbol** from the story. Note: A symbol is something which stands for something else. For example, a lightbulb can be a symbol for an idea.
- ❑ **Top right box:** Represent in this panel the **development of a key character** from the story. Note: When evaluating a character's growth (or deterioration!), compare her/his beliefs and personality traits from the beginning to the end of the story. There will almost certainly be a difference.
- ❑ **Middle strip:** Represent in this panel a **theme** from the story. Write it out in words, too. Note: A theme is a life lesson or overall message of the text. There might be a few themes within a single book, and depending who you ask, each theme might be worded differently. For instance, one person might say that *Love overcomes all obstacles* is a theme, while another might say that it is *Love gives us strength*;

both could very well be correct. Also, a theme is a full sentence, not just a single word. In other words, *Love overcomes all obstacles* or *Love gives us strength* are themes. The single word *Love* is not.

- ☐ **Bottom box:** Represent in this panel a **connection** between the book and another book, movie, song, piece of art, historical event, current event, or real-life experience (yours or someone else's).
- ☐ **Pick a panel, any panel:** Include at least **two quotations** throughout your Book Collage to help represent any of the information above. You choose which panel(s) to put them in. Remember to include the page number in parentheses after each quotation.

Part II: Written Component

In a Google Doc, write short paragraphs (5-8 sentences) to explain the choices you made for each panel on the front. What did you draw/write/represent, and why? Assume that the audience has not read your book; be specific. If the panel you are describing has a quotation, provide some explanation for that, too. Proofread vigorously. Print this out and attach it to your collage.

All together, this section will amount to five short paragraphs:

- ☐ A short paragraph about **your response (border)**
- ☐ A short paragraph about the **symbol (top left box)**
- ☐ A short paragraph about the **development of a key character (top right box)**
- ☐ A short paragraph about the **theme (middle box)**
- ☐ A short paragraph about the **connection (bottom box)**

Formatting:

- ☐ **Doc Label:** Change the label of your Google Doc from *Untitled* to *Your Last Name, Your First Name, Title of Choice Book*.
- ☐ **Font/Size:** Times New Roman, size 12
- ☐ **Spacing:** Double spaced
- ☐ **Heading:** At the top write, provide your full name, the course (English), and the date
- ☐ **Title:** Center and capitalize your title, which should be the name of the book and author. Italicize the title of the book.

Questions?

There are a lot of directions here. I expect some questions might come up for you along the way. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need any clarification or assistance: elisabeth.levin@gbwl.org.

Rubric

Part I: Visual Component	
Somewhere at the top: Your full name, the title, and the author.	/ 5
Border: Your reaction to the story.	/ 5
Top left box: An important symbol from the story.	/ 5
Top right box: The development of a key character from the story.	/ 5
Middle strip: A theme from the story. Write it out in words, too.	/ 5
Bottom box: A connection between the book and something else	/ 5
Pick a panel, any panel: At least two quotations, properly cited.	/ 5
Level of detail, effort, and creativity	/ 5
Part II: Written Component	
Formatting, grammar, spelling, usage, mechanics	/ 5
A short paragraph about your response (border)	/ 5
A short paragraph about the symbol (top left box)	/ 5
A short paragraph about the development of a key character (top right box)	/ 5
A short paragraph about the theme (middle box)	/ 5
A short paragraph about the connection (bottom box)	/ 5
TOTAL	/ 70