

Dear Whittier Family,

June 13, 2017

Next year your child will be an eighth grade ELA student. Reading is a central focus of our classes at Whittier. We know that reading is a skill and that the only way for children to get better at reading is to read. This holds true for both excellent readers as well as reluctant readers. With this in mind, we're requesting that all of our students read at least **two books** before the first day of 8th grade on Thursday, August 31, 2017. You can use the list of this year's Maine Student Book Award titles to help you find a book. You can also go to goodreads.com to find appropriate books.

1. **Choose two** or more books. These should be books that you have **not** yet read.

2. **Read and review at least two books:**

Each review should have the following:

- a. underlined title of the book
- b. full name of the author of the book
- c. setting (time and location) of the book
- d. main character
- e. major conflict (problem) of the book
- f. some examples of ways in which the main character confronts (faces or struggles with) the conflict (problem)
- g. give the book a rating and explanation of that rating:
 - ***** = This is the best book I've ever read!
 - **** = A great book
 - *** = Average book
 - ** = Not such a great book
 - * = This is the worst book I've ever read!

Here's An Example Review:

The book Trapped by Michael Northrop takes place in a modern-day New England town during the winter time. The main character, Scotty Weems, finds himself trapped with a group of other students in his high school during a record-breaking blizzard. He and the other kids must locate food, find a way to stay warm, and figure out how to get along with each other in a time of high stress. At first, Scotty complains a lot and he doesn't think about much other than how he can impress one of the girls there. Soon, however, he realizes the seriousness of his situation and he switches into survival mode by trying to brainstorm ways to communicate with the outside world and, eventually, find a way to escape their situation.

*I'd give this book 3 stars (***) because it was an entertaining read. I liked the characters and the story was fast-paced. Still, I didn't like how the author left the characters at the end of the book and I wish that he had done more with the creepy character Elijah.*

3. **Post your review** to the **Summer Reading 2017** edmodo page. **Group Code:** dzgz3b

Please use your local library, e-readers, used bookstores, the book collections of other kids in our school, or any other book source you might have to find a book that is a good fit for you. If you are struggling to find books, please let one of your teachers know ASAP:

eswenson@rsu16.org or cwood@rsu16.org

Also, if you do not have access to the Internet at home, please print or handwrite your two reviews and submit them during our Open House night (TBD) or on the first day of school (Thursday, August 31, 2017). Please know that we will not accept late submissions.

Happy Reading!

Ms. Swenson and Mrs. Wood
8th Grade English Language Arts