



**EXCELLENCE  
TODAY  
FOR TOMORROW**

**Springton Lake Middle School**  
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Spring 2009

Dear Springton Lake Students and Parents,

As the end of the school year draws closer, we hope you're making plans to enjoy your summer, relax, and...read. Our **SLMS Summer Reading List** has been designed to help students increase the amount of reading they do in their free time. This year our theme, ***Making Connections***, has been selected to provide a common thread for comparing and contrasting the various titles students choose to read.

Friendship is, of course, among the most powerful of the personal connections we make. Recently, a radio show host was discussing a poll that indicated the best husband or wife is one who respects you, gets along with your friends and family, but most importantly inspires you to be a better person. Perhaps this is what a really good friend should do as well.

As you read this summer's selections and discover young people making connections and searching for friendship, perhaps it will help to keep this idea in mind. Since reading can be a wondrous rehearsal for life, we're encouraging *both* students *and* their parents to read from the selections on this year's list. This will create an opportunity for you to have some great dinner table conversations this summer and to share family ideas, feelings and experiences.

Students are expected to read ***at least two books*** this summer. You will read one book that has been selected for the entire grade you will be entering in September as well as one from the list of four selections for that grade. AGP/ELA students are also expected to read a third book of their choice during the summer. Please note that Springton Lake's summer reading list is not optional: ***it is required.***

Should parents prefer that their child not read a particular title for their grade level, there are five selections for each grade level: an all-grade read and four grade-level selections. A parent may opt to have their child read any two of these five selections for their grade level instead. It is not necessary for parents to contact the school, should they choose this option.

Also included in this packet is a suggested list of titles by genre. None of the titles on this list are required. These have been provided to offer a variety of titles that may be of interest to students who are looking for additional ideas for other good reads.

To assist in book selection for the required titles, language arts teachers will provide preview books in their classrooms. Mrs. Motley will deliver book talks and student reviews will be featured on SLTV. Titles for grade level reads will be on sale at the SLMS Book Fair, May 11-15 with evening hours on May 12 and 13 from 7-9 p.m.

In September, students will be evaluated on their summer reading books. Please complete the enclosed story maps over the summer. These story maps will be useful to refresh students' memories of plot, characters, etc., especially if books are read early in the summer.

Local bookstores will stock copies of each title, and the Middletown and Media-Upper Providence Libraries will make additional copies of the books available for your use. The summer reading books will also be listed on both the district cable channel (Channel 11) and the Rose Tree Media School District website.

At the back of this packet, you will find a summer reading contract. We ask that both students and parents read the contract, sign it, and return it to your language arts teachers by **Friday, May 15.**

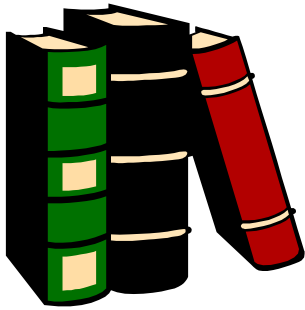
**REMEMBER:**

- **Read, sign, and return your summer reading contract by Friday, May 15, 2009.**
- **Read the all-grade selection for the grade you're entering in September and complete a story map.**
- **Read one book from the list of four titles for the grade you're entering in September and complete a story map.**
- **ELA/AGP students read an additional book of their choice and complete a story map.**

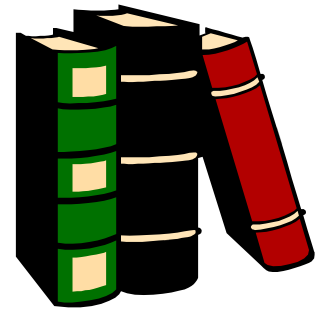
**Enjoy your summer, relax, and *READ!***

Sincerely,

**SLMS Summer Reading Committee  
SLMS Language Arts Department**



**2009  
Grade 8  
Summer Reading Contract**



I have read the summer reading letter and understand that I am expected to:

- Read ***Bronx Masquerade*** for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade all-class read.
- Complete a story map for ***Bronx Masquerade***.
- Read one book from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade selection list.
- Complete a story map for that book.
- AGP/ELA students should read an additional book of their choice and complete a story map.

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(Student Signature)

---

(Student Name Printed)

I have read the summer reading letter and understand that my child is responsible for completing the following for the Summer Reading Program at Springton Lake Middle School:

- Read ***Bronx Masquerade*** for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade all-class read.
- Complete a story map for ***Bronx Masquerade***.
- Read one book from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade selection list.
- Complete a story map for that book.
- AGP/ELA students should read an additional book of their choice and complete a story map.

---

(Parent Signature)

---

(Parent Name Printed)

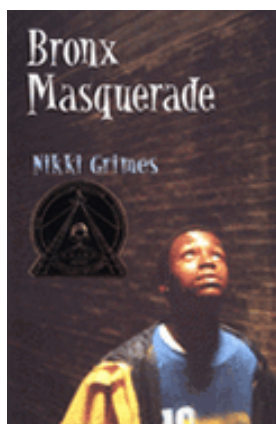
Please return this summer reading contract to your:

**Language Arts Teacher  
by Friday, May 15, 2009**

***Making Connections***  
**Grade 8 Summer Reading List 2009**  
**Springton Lake Middle School**

**Directions:**

- Every 8<sup>th</sup> grader will read *Bronx Masquerade* and one of the four titles below.
- Fill out a story map to organize your thoughts and make it easier for you to recall important points when you return to school in the fall.
- If your parents also read a book, record their reactions on the parent interview form.
- An optional list is also provided with many suggestions for exciting summer reading in a variety of genres.
- Should parents opt to not have their child read *Bronx Masquerade*, their child may read any *two* books from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level selections below.



**All Incoming Eighth Graders Read:**

***Bronx Masquerade* by Nikki Grimes. New York: Speak, 2003.**

While studying the Harlem Renaissance, students at a Bronx high school read aloud poems they've written, revealing their innermost thoughts and fears to their formerly clueless classmates. Students share experiences ranging from dyslexia to low self-esteem, teenage motherhood, physical abuse, and their perceptions of race and gender.

**and...Select One Title from the List Below.**

**Bloor, Edward. *Tangerine*. San Diego, California: Harcourt, 2006.**

Twelve-year-old Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother Erik, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness and slowly begins to remember the incident that damaged his eyesight.

**Koja, Kathe. *Buddha Boy*. New York: Farrar, Speak, 2004.**

Justin spends time with Jinsen, the unusual and artistic new student whom the school bullies torment and call Buddha Boy, and ends up making choices that impact Jinsen, himself, and the entire school. (*Occasional use of language that may be offensive*)

**Kerr, M. E. *Your Eyes in Stars*. New York: Harper Teen, 2007. (Paperback due 7-1-07)**

In their small New York town, two teenaged girls – one from Germany – become friends while helping each other make sense of their families, neighbors, and selves as they approach adulthood in the years preceding World War II.

**Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. New York: Dell Laurel Leaf, 2004.**

Stargirl, a teen who animates quiet Mica High with her colorful personality, suddenly finds herself shunned for her refusal to conform.

# SLMS

## More Summer Reading Suggestions for 2009

*...for students who want ideas of what to read  
after completing the two required titles for their grade-level.*

### Fantasy

**Barry, Dave and Ridley Pearson. *Peter and the Starcatchers*. New York: Hyperion, 2004.**

In this prequel to *Peter Pan*, Peter leads a group of orphan boys being sent into slavery aboard the ship *Never Land* captained by a fearsome pirate Black Stache who commands a villainous crew. Of course, there is a shipwreck...and two sequels follow as well.

**Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline*. New York, Harper Trophy, 2003.**

Looking for excitement, Coraline ventures through a mysterious door into a world that is similar, yet disturbingly different from her own. There she must challenge a gruesome entity in order to save herself, her parents, and the souls of three others.

**Hunter, Eric. *Into the Wild*. New York: Avon, 2003.**

Rusty, a bored house kitten, is apprenticed by the Thunder Clan and must struggle to fit in when the group of feral cats is threatened by the enemy Shadow Clan. This first of an exciting animal fantasy series, *Warriors*, is followed by another series entitled, *Warriors: The New Prophecy*.

**MacHale, D.J. *The Merchant of Death*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002.**

Fourteen-year-old Bobby Pendragon, having learned he is a Traveler--someone who can ride "flumes" through time and space, is soon off to the alternative dimension of Denduron where he teams up with Loor, a girl his age from the warrior-territory of Zadaa, in an attempt to save the gentle Milago people from slavery. This is the first of the long, page-turning *Pendragon* series!

**Mumby, Art. *Starcross: a stirring adventure of spies, time travel and curious hats*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2007.**

Young Arthur Mumby, his sister Myrtle, and their mother accept an invitation to take a holiday at an up-and-coming resort in the asteroid belt, where they become involved in a dastardly plot involving spies, time travel, and mind-altering clothing. This title is the sequel to *Larklight!*

### Historical Fiction

**Blackwood, Gary. *The Year of the Hangman*. New York: Dutton, 2002.**

In this "what if" take on American history, the rebellion of colonies against British rule has been crushed, George Washington is awaiting execution, Benjamin Franklin's banned rebel newspaper has gone underground, and young, irresponsible Creighton Brown, a fifteen-year-old Brit, has just arrived in the colonies. Having been shipped off against his will, Creighton befriends Franklin, and lands a job with his print shop. But his uncle expects the spoiled Creighton to spy on Franklin and Creighton must decide where his loyalties lie.

**Carbone, Elisa. *Blood on the Water: Jamestown, 1607*. New York: Viking, 2006.**

Traveling to the New World in 1606 as the page to Captain John Smith, twelve-year-old orphan Samuel Collier settles in the new colony of James Town, where he must quickly learn to distinguish between friend and foe.

**Chotjewitz, David. *Daniel Half-Human and the Good Nazi*, translated by Doris Orgel. New York: Athenaeum, 2004.**

In 1933, best friends Daniel and Armin admire Hitler, but as anti-Semitism buoys Hitler to power, Daniel learns he is half Jewish, threatening the friendship even as life in their beloved Hamburg, Germany, is becoming nightmarish. Also details Daniel and Armin's reunion in 1945 in interspersed chapters.

**Morgan, Clay. *The Boy Who Spoke Dog*. New York: Dutton, 2003.**

After being marooned on an island near New Zealand, Jack, an orphaned nineteenth century cabin boy from San Francisco, becomes allied with a group of dogs who protect the local sheep from wild dogs. The story alternates between Jack's point of view and that of Moxie, one of the dogs living on a remote island years after his master died in a house fire.

**Roy, Jennifer. *Yellow Star*. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2006.**

Based on the true story of the author's aunt, Sylvia herself narrates from the autumn of 1939, when she is four years old, until January, 1945 recounting the detail-filled memories of a child's life in the Lodz Ghetto – an experience from which only twelve children emerge alive. This book is a standout in the genre of Holocaust literature.

## Humor

**Avi and Rachel Vail. *Never mind! : a twin novel*. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.**

Avi and Vail pair up in this often hilarious and sometimes poignant comedy of errors starring 12-year-old dueling fraternal twins, Edward and Meg. They have nothing in common, so they are just as shocked as everyone else when Meg's hopes for popularity and Edward's mischievous schemes coincidentally collide in a hilarious showdown.

**Fleischman, Sid. *Disappearing Act*. New York: Greenwillow, 2003.**

When their archaeologist mother fails to return from Mexico, twelve-year-old Kevin and his opera-singing older sister discover that someone is stalking their Albuquerque house. They flee to Venice, California, where they rent a room from Miss Fiesta Foote, a plump movie extra, scare up jobs on the boardwalk (Kevin tells fortunes; Holly sings arias), and hope that new identities (Pepe and Chickadee Gomez) will keep them safe.

**Hicks, Betty. *Busted!* Brookfield, Conn.: Roaring Brook Press, 2004.**

Stuart, 12, could make the Guinness Book of World Records for most-busted kid in middle school. His mom has an endless series of rules, and he can't seem to get away with anything. He's already grounded, and lost phone, computer, and video-game privileges. All that's left is soccer. When Mom threatens to make him quit the team, he decides to take action. Figuring that she'll have less time to obsess about him if she has a boyfriend, he plans to set her up with his soccer coach, but his scheme has unanticipated consequences both on and off the field.

**Meacham, Margaret.** *A Mid-semester Night's Dream.* New York : **Holiday House, 2004.**  
Chaos results when Morgan – a seventh grader who's ready for a major makeover – gets help in casting a love spell on a boy at school. Greta Fleetwing, a student at the Fairy Godmother Training Academy, hasn't spent nearly enough time studying her fairy-arts book!

**Smith, D. James.** *The Boys of San Joaquin.* New York: **Alladin Paperbacks, 2006.**  
In a small California town in 1951, twelve-year-old Paolo and his deaf cousin Billy get caught up in a search for money missing from the church collection, leading them on a mad-cap series of adventures that result in discoveries about themselves, other family members, and the townspeople they thought they knew.

## **Mysteries & Adventure**

**Stanley, Diane.** *Bella at Midnight.* New York: **HarperCollins, 2006.**  
Bella's peasant life is changed when her real father, a knight who abandoned her when she was a baby, comes and reclaims her, moving her to his home where she lives with a resentful stepmother and two horrible stepsisters and learns about a plot to kill her friend, Prince Julian.

**Broach, Elise.** *Shakespeare's Secret.* New York: **Holt, 2005.**  
Named after a character in a Shakespeare play, misfit sixth-grader Hero becomes interested in exploring this unusual connection because of a valuable diamond supposedly hidden in her new house, an intriguing neighbor, and the unexpected attention of the most popular boy in school.

**Feinstein, John.** *Last Shot: A Final Four Mystery.* New York: **Alfred A. Knopf, 2005.**  
After winning a basketball reporting contest, eighth graders Stevie and Susan Carol are sent to cover the Final Four tournament, where they discover that a talented player is being blackmailed into throwing the final game. The two also reunite in *Vanishing Act: Mystery at the U.S. Open.*

**Horowitz, Anthony.** *Stormbreaker.* New York: **Philomel, 2001.**  
After the death of the uncle who had been his guardian, fourteen-year-old Alex Rider is coerced to continue his uncle's dangerous work for Britain's intelligence agency, MI6. His adventures continue in this order: *Point Blank*, *Skeleton Key*, *Eagle Strike*, *Scorpia*, and *Ark Angel*.

**Udale, Eleanor.** *Montmorency: thief, liar, gentleman?* New York: **Scholastic, 2003.**  
In Victorian London, after his life is saved by a young physician, a thief utilizes the knowledge he gains in prison and from the scientific lectures he attends as the physician's case study exhibit to create a new, highly successful, double life for himself. Sequels include *Montmorency on the Rocks: Doctor, Aristocrat, Murderer* and *Montmorency and the Assassins*.

## **Realistic Fiction**

**Boyce, Frank Cottrell.** *Millions.* New York: **Harper Trophy, 2004.**  
After their mother dies, two brothers find a huge amount of British money which they must spend quickly before England switches to the new European currency, but they disagree on what to do with it. This book was great...so fabulous, in fact, that they made a movie of it too!

**Cooney, Caroline. *Hit the Road*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2005.**

Sixteen-year-old Brittany acts as chauffeur for her grandmother and three other eighty-plus-year-old women going to what is supposedly their college reunion, on a long drive that involves lies, theft, and kidnappings.

**Han, Jenny. *Shug*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2006.**

Tall, freckled, gawky seventh-grader Annemarie Wilcox (whose family calls her Shug) has a beautiful, popular older sister, a gorgeous, alcoholic mother who doesn't fit in their small Georgia town, a father who's always away on business, *and* a huge crush on Mark, the boy who has always been her best friend. As the school year starts, Shug must deal with Mark's rejection, her parents' bitter fights, and a falling out with her closest girlfriend.

**Lenhard, Elizabeth. *Chicks with Sticks*. New York: Dutton, 2005.**

Scottie, trying to get over the death of a beloved aunt and a disruption in her relationship with her best friend, Amanda, stumbles across *KnitWit*. To Scottie's relief and delight, she is soon joined by popular Amanda who struggles to hide her learning disability, biracial Bella, would like to be a little more rebellious, and punky Tay who wants her male friend to see her as a girlfriend. These are lovable, flawed characters, and their story will be enjoyed by many girls.

**Nuzum, K.A. *A Small White Scar*. New York: Joanna Cotler Books, 2006.**

Since his mother's death, Will's job has been to look after his twin brother, Denny, who has Down syndrome. Their father's word is law on the ranch, and at fifteen Will devises an escape plan that leads first to the rodeo, and then to a career as a cowboy without the responsibility of watching his brother. When Denny follows Will across the plains, that plan takes an unexpected twist.

## Romance

**Bauer, Joan. *Thwonk!* New York: Puffin, 2001.**

When A.J. is assigned to take the cover photograph for her school newspaper, she stumbles onto a stuffed cupid that comes to life and catapults her into love. For other great books with strong female characters try Joan Bauer's *Hope Was Here*, *Rules of the Road* and its sequel, *Best Foot Forward*.

**Malcolm, Jahna N. *The Write Stuff*. New York: Simon Pulse, 2005.**

Hannah has been surrounded by boy friends all her life but has never had a boyfriend. When Dylan moves to Colorado from London, Hannah thinks she's found just the right guy. Unfortunately, he's smitten with her best friend Rachel's stunning looks and strikes up an e-mail correspondence with Rachel instead.

**Sutherland, Tui T. *This Must Be Love*. New York: Harper Collins, 2004.**

Bringing Shakespeare to a modern suburban New Jersey high school, Sutherland tells her story through e-mails, notes passed between classes, diaries, poems, and short plays. The players: Helena and Hermia, best of friends; Dimitri and Alex, love interests of the two girls; and a cast of extras including the football team, overbearing fathers, and teachers. The plot follows A

*Midsummer Night's Dream*, with the two girls becoming involved in a play within a play, happy accidents forcing love interests, and betrayals all around.

**Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Flipped*. New York: Knopf, 2001.**

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

**Woodson, Jacqueline. *If You Come Softly*. New York: Puffin Books, 2000.**

After meeting at their private school in New York, fifteen-year-old Jeremiah, who is black and whose parents are separated, and Ellie, who is white and whose mother has twice abandoned her, fall in love and then try to cope with peoples' reactions. Try the sequel: *Behind You*.

## Science Fiction

**Cooper, Susan. *Green Boy*. New York: Aladain Paperbacks, 2003.**

Twelve-year-old Trey and his seven-year-old brother Lou, who does not speak, cross the barrier between two worlds – that of their island in the Bahamas, and a land called Pangaia – and play a mysterious role in restoring the natural environment in both places.

**DuPrau, Jeanne. *The City of Ember*. New York: Random House, 2003.**

Ember, a 241-year-old, post-holocaust domed city surrounded by a dark unknown, was built to ensure that humans could continue to exist on Earth, and the instructions for getting out have been lost and forgotten. After receiving their lifetime job assignments, Lina and her friend Doon become convinced that their survival means finding a way out of the city. Try the sequel, *The People of Sparks* or the prequel, *The Prophet of Yonwood*.

**Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Among the Hidden*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.**

In a future where the Population Police enforce the law limiting a family to only two children, Luke has lived all his twelve years in isolation and fear on his family's farm, until another "third" convinces him that the government is wrong. This is the first of a *very* popular series!

**Lasky, Catherine. *Star Split*. New York: Hyperion Paperbacks for Children, 2001.**

Genetically enhanced like others of her privileged class, Darci Murlowe, a typical if somewhat lonely teenager in the year 3038, is shocked first, when she accidentally meets her illegal clone, and second, to find that her parents are part of an underground movement to save the genetic future of humanity.

**Halam, Ann. *Dr. Franklin's Island*. New York: Wendy Lamb Books, 2002.**

When their plane crashes over the Pacific Ocean, three science students are left stranded on a tropical island and then imprisoned by a doctor who is performing horrifying experiments on humans involving the transfer of animal genes. This creepy sci-fi horror book is not for the squeamish.

## Sports

**Feinstein, John. *Last Shot: a Final Four mystery*. New York: Knopf, 2005.**

After winning a basketball reporting contest, eighth graders Stevie and Susan Carol are sent to cover the Final Four tournament, where they discover that a talented player is being blackmailed

into throwing the final game. Suasn Carol and Stevie's adventures continue in *Vanishing Act: mystery at the U.S. Open* and *Cover-up: mystery at the Super Bowl*.

**Gutman, Dan. *Million Dollar Putt*. New York : Hyperion, 2006.**

Assisted by his neighbor, Birdie, blind thirteen-year-old Ed "Bogie" Bogard will win one million dollars if he can sink a ten-foot putt in Hawaii's fifth annual Angus Killick Memorial Tournament.

**Lupica, Mike. *Travel Team*. New York: Puffin Books, 2006.**

After he is cut from his travel basketball team--the very same team that his father once led to national prominence--twelve-year-old Danny Walker forms his own team of cast-offs that might have a shot at victory. *Summer Ball* follows Danny's basketball career after the season.

**Ritter, John H. *The Boy who Saved Baseball*. New York: Puffin Books, 2005.**

The fate of a small California town rests on the outcome of one baseball game, and Tom Gallagher hopes to lead his team to victory with the secrets of the now disgraced player, Dante Del Gato. This is more than a baseball story!

**Testa, Maria. *Some Kind of Pride*. New York: Dell Yearling, 2003.**

At 11 Ruth Di Marco is a star baseball shortstop who can play better than any of the boys, and not just those in her small town on the coast of Maine. In fact, she's so good that a writer from *Sports Illustrated* comes to do a feature about her. When she overhears her widower dad say that it's all "wasted on a girl," she's devastated.

**Tharp, Tim. *Knights of the Hill Country*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 2006.**

In his senior year, high school star linebacker Hampton Greene finally begins to think for himself and discovers that he might be interested in more than just football. Taut scenes on the football field and the dilemmas about choosing what feels right over what's expected are all made memorable by Hamps unforgettable, colloquial voice, which speaks about feelings and football with the same unwavering, fully realized personality. (*Contains young adult issues for mature readers*)

# Springton Lake Summer Reading Story Map

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author of Book: \_\_\_\_\_

**Setting (Time/Place):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Main Character Description:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Minor Characters:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of the Problem:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Event 1: (Beginning)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Event 2:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Event 3:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Event 4:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Event 5:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Event 6: (Ending)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of the Solution:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Theme/Values (lessons) brought out in the book:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents: Try reading the same summer reading selection as your child and then let them interview you! 😊

SPRINGTON LAKE MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING PROGRAM  
OPTIONAL PARENT INTERVIEW

*Once you and your parent have read your book(s), discuss these questions together. Then, record your interview results below. Ask your parent to write any comments and to sign the bottom of this sheet.*

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title and Author: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which character did you find the most interesting? Why?
2. What was your favorite part of the story? Why?
3. What lessons/morals do you think this book can teach?
4. What did you learn from reading this book?
5. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?

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Parent comments:

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_