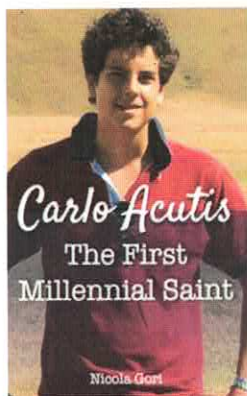


# Reading

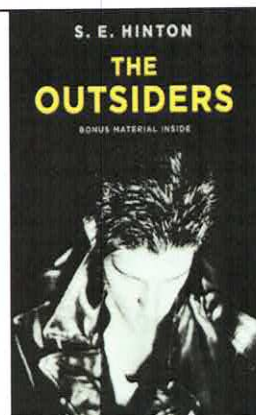
## Summer Reading - ELAR 8

### REQUIRED READING - ALL



***Carlo Acutis:***  
***The First Millennial Saint***  
by Nicola Gori

Carlo Acutis, known as a computer whiz, he also liked to play soccer, video games, and the saxophone. Yet Carlo was a little "different" at school. What set Carlo apart was his constant pursuit of holiness and strengthen his devotion to Jesus, and to invite others to grow in love for the Eucharist. Read about this amazing young man.



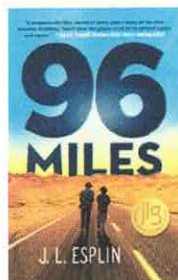
No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends—true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on "greasers" like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect—until the night someone takes things too far.

Be prepared first weeks of 2025-26 *Back to School* with a variety of projects from Required Reading: E.g., book reports (oral, and/or digital et al) as well as essay or other forms of written response: analysis, reflections, or creative pieces assigned w/rubric criteria - all weighing in as "test" grades.

**Challenge:** Read a minimum of 800 pages (3-4 books) and/or 800 minutes (choosing books from the following **Recommended List for ELAR8**). \*Students need to log their reading on their reading log, aiming for 20 min a day x5 days a week = 100 min/week or 800" for the 8-week summer break.

### RECOMMENDED ELAR8 READING LIST

#### Realistic/Contemporary Fiction



**96 Miles** by J. L. Esplin

The Lockwood brothers are supposed to be able to survive anything. Their dad, a hardcore believer in self-reliance, has stockpiled enough food and water at their isolated Nevada home to last for months. But when they are robbed of all their

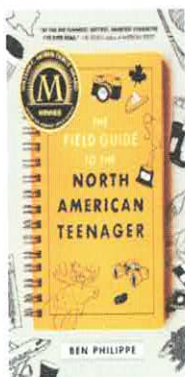
supplies during a massive blackout while their dad is out of town, John and Stew must walk 96 miles in the stark desert sun to get help.



**Challenger Deep** by Neal Shusterman;  
Brendan Shusterman (Illustrator)

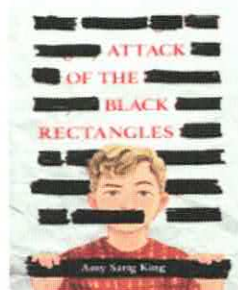
Caden Bosch is on a ship that's headed for the deepest point on Earth: Challenger Deep, the southern part of the Marianas Trench. Caden Bosch is a brilliant high school student whose friends are starting

to notice his odd behavior. Caden Bosch is torn.



## The Field Guide to the North American Teenager by Ben Philippe

When Norris, a Black French Canadian, starts his junior year at an Austin, Texas, high school, he views his fellow students as clichés from "a bad 90s teen movie."

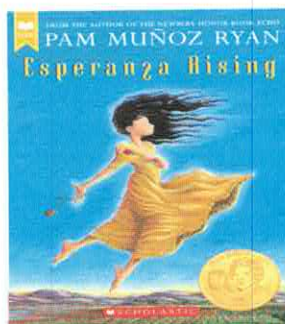


When Mac first opens his classroom copy of Jane Yolen's *The Devil's Arithmetic* and finds some words blacked out, he thinks it must be a mistake. But then when he and his friends discover what the missing words are, he's outraged. Mac has been raised by his mom and grandpa to call out things that are wrong. He and his friends head to the principal's office to protest the censorship... but her response doesn't take them seriously. So many adults want Mac to keep his words to himself. Mac's about to see the power of letting them out. In *Attack of the Black Rectangles*, acclaimed author Amy Sarig King shows all the ways truth can be hard... but still worth fighting for.



## Playing Through the Turnaround by Mylisa Larsen

In a timely, insightful story told with sparkling wit and heart, young musicians protesting plans for budget cuts navigate miscalculations, indifferent adults, and unexpected loss as they discover the power of speaking out and the value of listening.



Esperanza thought she'd always live a privileged life on her family's ranch in Mexico. She'd always have fancy dresses, a beautiful home filled with servants, and Mama, Papa, and Abuelita to care for her. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California and settle in a Mexican farm labor camp. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard work, financial struggles brought on by the Great Depression, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When Mama gets sick and a strike for better working conditions threatens to uproot their new life, Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances—because Mama's life, and her own, depend on it.

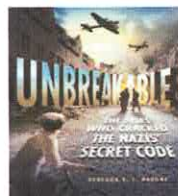
## Non-Fiction



## The Greatest Stories Ever Played by Dustin Hansen

In this fun and informative YA Non-fiction title, Dustin Hansen, author of *Game On!*, a self-confessed video game addict with over 20-years experience in the gaming industry, examines the storytelling skills

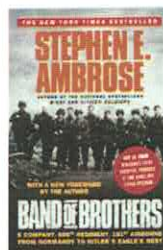
shown in some of the most beloved and moving games of all time.



## Unbreakable: the Spies Who Cracked the Nazis' Secret Code by Rebecca E. F. Barone

Unbreakable tells the story of one of the most dangerous war-time code-breaking efforts ever. As Hitler marched his troops across conquered lands and deadly

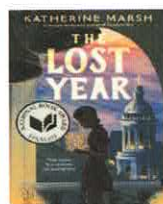
"wolfpacks" of German U-Boats prowled the open seas, victory or defeat for the Allies hinged on their desperate attempts to crack the code.



## Band of Brothers by Stephen E. Ambrose

They came together, citizen soldiers, in the summer of 1942, drawn to Airborne by the \$50 monthly bonus and a desire to be better than the other guy. And at its peak—in Holland and the Ardennes—Easy Company was as good a rifle company as

any in the world. From the rigorous training in Georgia in 1942 to the disbanding in 1945, Stephen E. Ambrose tells the story of this remarkable company.



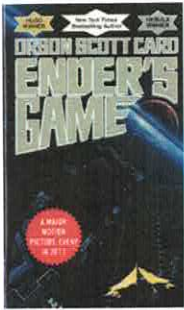
## The Lost Year by Katherine Marsh

Thirteen-year-old Matthew is miserable. His journalist dad is stuck overseas indefinitely, and his mom has moved in his one-hundred-year-old great-grandmother to ride out the pandemic, adding to his stress and isolation. But when Matthew

finds a tattered black-and-white photo in his great-grandmother's belongings, he discovers a clue to a hidden chapter of her past, one that will lead to a life-shattering family secret.



## Science Fiction/FantasyAdventure/



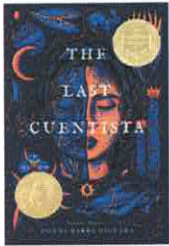
### **Ender's Game** by Orson Scott Card

Young Ender Wiggin may prove to be the military genius Earth needs to fight a desperate battle against a deadly alien race that will determine the future of the human race.



### **Uglies** by Scott Westerfeld

Just before their 16th birthdays, when they will be transformed into beauties whose only job is to have a great time, Tally's best friend runs away and Tally must find her and turn her in, or never become pretty at all.



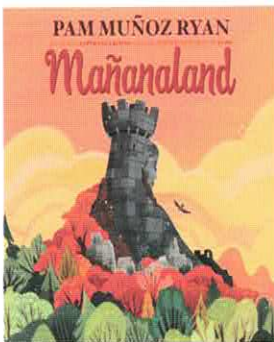
### **The Last Cuentista** by Donna Barba Higuera

Earth has been destroyed by a comet, and only a few hundred scientists and their children - among them Petra and her family - have been chosen to journey to a new planet. Hundreds of years later, Petra wakes to this new planet - and the discovery that she is the only person who remembers Earth. A sinister Collective has taken over the ship during its journey, bent on erasing the sins of humanity's past.

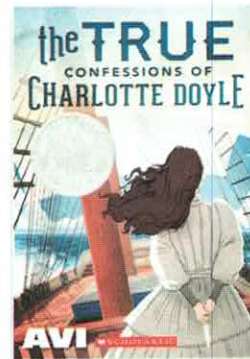


### **Eragon** by Christopher Paolini

In Alagaesia, a fifteen-year-old boy of unknown lineage called Eragon finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power, peopled with dragons, elves, and monsters.



Maximiliano Córdoba loves stories, especially the legend Buelo tells him about a mythical gatekeeper who can guide brave travelers on a journey into tomorrow. If Max could see tomorrow, he would know if he'd make Santa Maria's celebrated fútbol team and whether he'd ever meet his mother, who disappeared when he was a baby. He longs to know more about her, but Papá won't talk. So when Max uncovers a buried family secret—he decides to seek answers on his own. This timeless tale of struggle, hope, and the search for tomorrow has much to offer today about compassion and our shared humanity.



Thirteen-year-old Charlotte Doyle is excited to return home from her school in England to her family in Rhode Island in the summer of 1832.

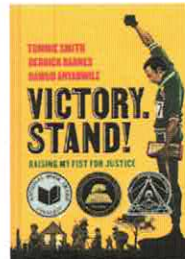
But when the two families she was supposed to travel with mysteriously cancel their trips, Charlotte finds herself the lone passenger on a long sea voyage with a cruel captain and a mutinous crew. Worse yet, soon after stepping aboard the ship, she becomes enmeshed in a conflict between them! What begins as an eagerly anticipated ocean crossing turns into a harrowing journey, where Charlotte gains a villainous enemy... and is put on trial for murder!

## Graphic Novels



### **Sophie's World** by Jostein Gaarder; Nicoby (Artist); Vincent Zabus (Adapted by, Adapted by)

One day, young Sophie finds a letter addressed to her which contains only one question: "Who are you?" Then there's another one asking, "Where does the world come from?" The sender of these letters remains a mystery, but the questions intrigue Sophie. This is the beginning of a strange correspondence that will lead the young girl on a coming of age quest to meet major figures of philosophy (Socrates, Plato, Descartes, Hegel, Sartre, etc.).

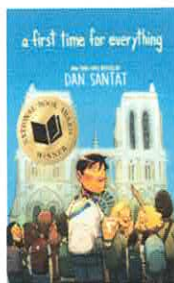


### **Victory. Stand!** by Tommie Smith; Derrick Barnes

On October 16, 1968, during the medal ceremony at the Mexico City Olympics, Tommie Smith, the gold medal winner in the 200-meter sprint, and John Carlos, the bronze medal winner, stood on the podium

in black socks and raised their black-gloved fists to protest racial injustice inflicted upon African Americans. Both men were forced to leave the Olympics, received death threats, and faced ostracism and continuing economic hardships.





**A First Time for Everything** by Dan Santat

Funny, heartwarming, and poignant, *A First Time for Everything* is a feel-good coming-of-age memoir based on New York Times bestselling author and Caldecott Medal winner Dan Santat's awkward middle

school years.



**Invisible: a Graphic Novel** by Christina Diaz Gonzalez; Gabriela Epstein (Illustrator)

Can five overlooked kids make one big difference? There's George: the brain; Sara: the loner; Dayara: the tough kid; Nico: the rich kid; and Miguel: the athlete.

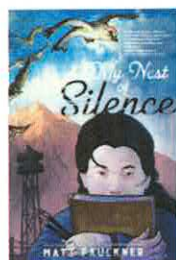
They're stuck together when they're forced to complete their school's community service hours.

## Historical Fiction



**Every Hidden Thing** by Kenneth Oppel

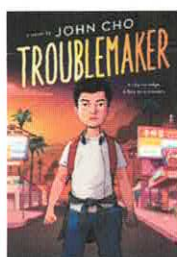
In the late 19th century, a budding romance develops between Rachel and Samuel, two teenagers from rival families of fossil hunters heading out to the badlands in search of a rare dinosaur skeleton.



**My Nest of Silence** by Matt Faulkner

A graphic novel/prose hybrid which tells the story of a young Japanese American man who leaves his family in the Manzanar internment camp to fight in the European theater during World War II, and of his 10-year-old sister who, frustrated

over her brother risking his life for the government that imprisoned them, decides to stop talking until he returns.



**Troublemaker** by John Cho

On the first night of rioting in the wake of the Rodney King verdict, Jordan's father leaves to check on the family store, spurring 12-year-old Jordan and his friends to embark on a dangerous journey through South Central and Koreatown to

come to his aid, encountering the racism within their community as they go.



**Secret Soldiers** by Keely Hutton

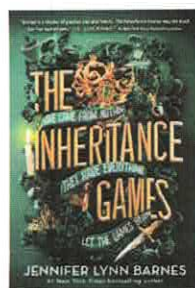
In 1917, Thomas, a 13-year-old coal miner seeking his missing brother, James, joins the Claykickers, who tunnel beneath the battlefields of the Western Front as they learn to be men.

## Mystery



**And Then There Were None** by Agatha Christie

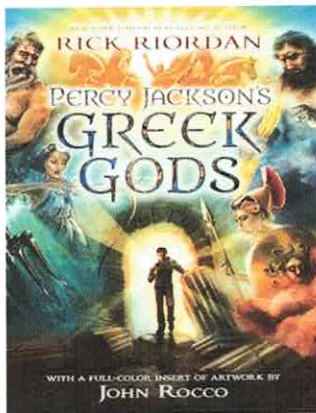
A curious assortment of strangers summoned as weekend guests to a little private island off the coast of Devon. All that the guests have in common is a wicked past they're unwilling to reveal--and a secret that will seal their fate. One by one they fall prey. Who has choreographed this dastardly scheme? And who will be left to tell the tale?



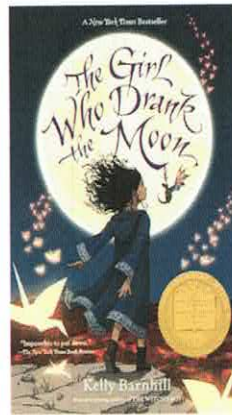
**The Inheritance Games** by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

When a Connecticut teenager inherits vast wealth and an eccentric estate from the richest man in Texas, she must also live with his surviving family and solve a series of puzzles to discover how she earned her inheritance.

## Folk Tale/Mythology

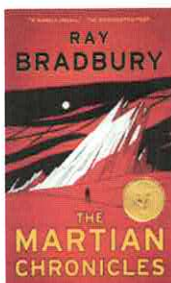


*"It helps if you know your Greek gods, to survive an encounter with them if they ever show up in your face, then I guess writing all this down will be my good deed for the week."* So begins *Percy Jackson's Greek Gods*, in which the son of Poseidon adds his own magic—and sarcastic asides—to the classics. He explains how the world was created, then gives readers his personal take on a who's who of ancients



Kelly Barnhill's Newbery Medal winner is a must-read for fans of classic children's literature—described as "impossible to put down... Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind and decides to keep the girl, she calls "Luna." Xan decides to keep the girl, her magic begins to emerge with dangerous consequences.

## Classics



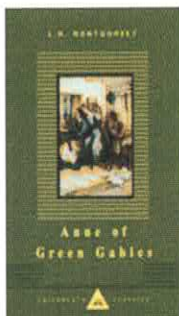
### **The Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury**

Earthmen conquer Mars and then are conquered by it, lulled by dangerous lies of comfort and familiarity, and enchanted by the lingering glamour of an ancient, mysterious native race. In this classic work of fiction, Bradbury exposes our ambitions, weaknesses, and ignorance in a strange and breathtaking world where man does not belong.



### **The Once and Future King by T. H. White**

Once upon a time, a young boy called "Wart" was tutored by a magician named Merlyn in preparation for a future he couldn't possibly imagine. A future in which he would ally himself with the greatest knights, love a legendary queen and unite a country dedicated to chivalrous values. A future that would see him crowned and known for all time as Arthur, King of the Britons.



### **Anne of Green Gables by L. M. Montgomery**

Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her.



Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury is a dystopian sci-fi novel set in the distant future where books have been outlawed. Firemen no longer perform their traditional role of putting out fires. Instead, they set fires to books and buildings that contain books.



# STUDENT READING LOG

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

May 7, 2025

Hello, Incoming or Returning Middle Schooler.

It feels so good to look forward to summer. After months of hard work, it will be nice to enjoy a more relaxing schedule. I know you have worked hard all year, and I don't want your word skills and creative skills to slip. I encourage you to participate in my summer challenge. My hope is that completing this activity will help you stay sharp with your word skills.

Here is the challenge; complete the lists following these guidelines.

1. Unless you have an accommodation plan that allows you to use your computer, the lists must be hand-written.
2. Your answers need to come from your own brain. It's not okay to look them up on the computer or ask your family or friends what you should write (although it is okay for your mom or your friend to give you one or two suggestions).
3. Start each list on a separate sheet of paper. One list may extend over multiple pages.
4. Each time you add to one of your lists, add the date.
5. The longer your lists, the more points you earn.
6. **At the end of your work, add this statement: All of these answers came from my head. I did not use the internet, and I only got a few ideas from my parents or other people. Then sign it.**
6. Students who do a really good job will be rewarded with a bonus test grade for the first quarter of next year. Everyone who turns in any work will receive a couple of pieces of candy; I'd definitely aim for the test grade.
7. Start your lists while it's still May and add to them at least a few times each week. I think working for small chunks of time (5-10 minutes) often throughout the summer is the best strategy to follow.

6. Don't let this become burdensome. Look upon it as a challenge. Can you come up with a combined total of 100 answers? (Sure you can!) Can you get to 300 answers? (I bet you can.) How about 500 answers? (That will get you a good test grade.) Can you come up with 1000 answers? (That might get you bragging rights for your class, but we won't know for sure until we count everyone's responses.) 10,000 answers? (I'm speechless!!)

I hope everyone has a great summer. I'll be happy to see you again in August.

Ms. Duyka

Middle School English Teacher

1. Topics I'd Be Interested in Researching
2. Antonyms (early, late)
3. Synonyms for "Good"
4. Words With Three or More Syllables Which I Heard Today
5. Homophones (there, their)
6. Words You Like (Personally, I like "serendipity" and "serene.")
7. Alliteration (Sue sells seashells....)
8. Idioms (It's raining cats and dogs.)
9. Similes (as quiet as falling snow)
10. Personal Favorites (favorite hobby, vacation spot, color, etc.)
11. I Wonder Why....
12. I'd Like to Write About...