June 2018

Dear Incoming Grade 7 Student,

We are looking forward to having you in our Grade 7 English classes in August!

Every summer, ZIS Middle School students are expected to maintain a regular reading habit, including completing one suggested text. The practice of daily reading will help prevent "summer slide" and keep your vocabulary and English-language abilities growing over the break. As always, our goal is to develop lifelong readers and critical thinkers.

You can choose any book on the list below. You will notice that multiple genres and reading levels are included. All titles are easily available at Orell Füssli located in downtown Zurich at Füsslistrasse 4, via Amazon.co.uk, Bookdepository.com, through E-readers, or most standard Anglophone bookstores while traveling. The novels will not be provided by the school. All students may supplement their reading with the audio book, if desired.

The first activities of the new school year will be based upon your novel of choice and these tasks. Additionally, you are encouraged to read at least one more book written in English during the summer break. You may choose any book(s) you wish. If you are looking for new titles to read, there is a list of suggestions following this letter.

Over the summer, students who have registered to return to ZIS for the 2017-2018 school year may check out up to four books from the Library Media Centre.

Have a wonderful summer,

Grade 7 Teachers
Grade 7 Text Choices

Choose at least one of the below four novels to purchase and read over the summer. Lexile Level indicates the difficulty of the language in the text. Lower numbers indicate greater readability, while higher numbers indicate a greater challenge.

1. **Freak the Mighty** by Rodman Philbrick - Lexile Level: approximately 550, 160 pages
   
   A brilliant, emotionally charged novel about two boys. One is a slow learner, too large for his age, and the other is a tiny, disabled genius. The two pair up to create one formidable human force known as "Freak the Mighty". Together Max and Freak were unstoppable.

2. **Star Girl** by Jerry Spinelli - Lexile Level: 590, 186 pages
   
   A modern-day classic and New York Times bestseller that celebrates the power of individuality and personal expression from beloved Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli. From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her.

   In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love.

3. **The Fault in our Stars** by John Green - Lexile Level: 850, 330 pages
   
   Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

   Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, The Fault in Our Stars is award-winning-author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet.

4. **My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece** by Annabel Pitcher - Lexile Level: 880, 220 pages
   
   Terrorism, racism, alcoholism, eating problems, family break-up. These sound like very serious issues and perhaps not the light summer reading you were hoping for. However, Annabel Pitcher tackles all these topics without making the book depressing. Written from the point of view of Jamie, whose sister Rose is killed in a terrorist attack, we learn how each member of the family has dealt with the death, and we discover that some have coped better than others. Only after a series of tragic incidents do the family come to the point where they can face their past, and start to move forward.

**READING TASK - Quote Hunt**

As you read your novel, have a stack of Post-It notes nearby. When you come across quotes that you like, that you can connect to or that show an important part of the story or a character's identity, use a Post-It note to write why the quote is important.

1. Once you have finished the novel, look through your Post-It notes again. Then, choose four quotes that achieve the following:
   a. Two quotes that show the main character's identity (What he/she is like, who he/she is).
   b. Two quotes that show what the main character's relationship is like with another character.

2. Using a lined piece of paper or a Google Doc, complete the following task:
   a. In the upper right-hand corner of the page, write your name, the date, the book title, and Summer Reading Task - Quote Hunt
   b. Copy each quote and the page number where you found it. (The quote should not be longer than four lines). Underneath each quote, using complete sentences, explain the context (where it happens in the story) and how it is significant to either showing the main character’s identity or the main character’s relationship to another character.
   c. Do this for all four quotes.

On the first day of school, bring your task and your novel, full of your Post-It notes and ideas. These will be used in class to analyze the text.
SUGGESTED BOOKS for Incoming Grade Seven Students to consider for Independent Summer Reading:

**Down the Rabbit Hole (An Echo Falls Mystery)** by Peter Abrahams. Like her idol Sherlock Holmes, eighth-grader Ingrid Levin-Hill uses her intellect to solve the murder of an eccentric local woman in her hometown of Echo Falls.

**Watership Down** by Richard Adams. This classic animal tale chronicles the adventures of a group of rabbits searching for a safe place to establish a new warren where they can live in peace. Gets one thinking about the effects man has on this Earth's other creatures.

**Shipwrecked at the Bottom of the World** by Jennifer Armstrong. Describes the events of the 1914 Shackleton Antarctic expedition when, after being trapped in a frozen sea for nine months, their ship, Endurance, was finally crushed, forcing Shackleton and his men to make a very long and perilous journey to reach inhabited land. (non-fiction)

**Stand Tall** by Joan Bauer. Tree, a six-foot-three-inch twelve-year-old, copes with his parents' recent divorce and his failure as an athlete by helping his grandfather, a Vietnam vet and recent amputee, and Sophie, a new girl at school.

**London Calling** by Edward Bloor. Seventh-grader Martin Conway believes that his life is monotonous and dull until the night the antique radio he uses as a night-light transports him to the bombing of London in 1940.

**A Really Short History of Nearly Everything** by Bill Bryson. Explores the mysteries of time and space and how, against all odds, life came to be on planet earth. A kid-friendly edition of Mr. Bryson’s similarly titled book for adults. (non-fiction)

**Gideon the Cutpurse: Being the First Part of the Gideon Trilogy** by Linda Buckley-Archer. Ignored by his father and sent to Derbyshire for the weekend, twelve-year-old Peter and his new friend, Kate, are accidentally transported back in time to 1763 England where they are befriended by a reformed cutpurse. Sequels titled The Time Thief and Time Quake.

**Avalon High** by Meg Cabot. Having moved to Annapolis, Maryland, with her medievalist parents, high school junior Ellie enrolls at Avalon High School where several students may or may not be reincarnations of King Arthur and his court.

**Al Capone Does My Shirts** by Gennifer Choldenko. A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935 when guards' families were housed there, and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister.

**Horrible Histories** series by Terry Deary. Books in this series bring humor and history together in a very kid-friendly format. Titles that target the seventh grade curriculum include: The Vicious Vikings, The Measly Middle Ages and Dark Knights and Dingy Castles. (non-fiction)

**The Fire Within** by Chris D'Lacey. College student David Rain rents a room in an unusual boarding house full of clay dragons, not realizing that they, along with some lively squirrels, will help jumpstart his writing career. This title is followed by Icefire, Fire Star, and Fire Eternal.

**The Graveyard Book** by Neil Gaiman. The orphan Bod, short for Nobody, is taken in by the inhabitants of a graveyard as a child of eighteen months and raised lovingly and carefully to the age of eighteen years by the community of ghosts and otherworldly creatures.

**What Would Joey Do** by Jack Gantos. The sweetest, funniest kid on meds you'll ever meet, has enough trouble trying to keep his "active" self together. How can he win in his new, self-assumed role as "Mr. Helpful" when his divorced parents are out of control, his Grandma is surly and morbid, and Olivia, the mean blind girl he's forced to home school with, calls him a "hyper retard"?

**Blood Red Horse** by K.M. Grant. Book one in The De Granville Trilogy. A special horse named Hosanna changes the lives of two English brothers and those around them as they fight with King Richard I against Saladin's armies during the Third Crusades. Sequels include Green Jasper and Blaze of Silver.

**Gone** by Michael Grant. In a small town on the coast of California, everyone over the age of fourteen suddenly disappears, setting up a battle between the remaining town residents and the students from a local private school, as well as those who have "The Power" and are able to perform supernatural feats and those who do not.

**The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate** by Jacqueline Kelly. In central Texas in 1899, eleven-year-old Callie Vee Tate is instructed to be a lady by her mother, learns about love from the older three of her six brothers, and studies the natural world with her grandfather, the latter of which leads to an important discovery.

**Schooled** by Gordon Korman. Cap lives in isolation with his grandmother, a former hippie; but when she falls from a tree and breaks her hip, Cap is sent to a foster home where he has his first experience in a public school.
Gemini Summer by Iain Lawrence. Danny’s grief over the death of his older brother Beau is eased when a stray puppy adopts him, but he soon realizes that Beau is somehow in the dog, and sets out to make his brother’s dream of seeing a rocket launch at Cape Kennedy come true.

Rules by Cynthia Lord. Frustrated at life with an autistic brother, twelve-year-old Catherine longs for a normal existence but her world is further complicated by a friendship with an young paraplegic. (A 2007 Newbery Honor book)

Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah. The author tells the story of her painful childhood in China where she lived until the age of fourteen with her father, stepmother, and siblings, all of whom considered her bad luck because her mother died shortly after giving birth to her. (non-fiction)

The Exiles by Hilary McKay. Guardian Children's Book Award and first in the highly acclaimed Exiles series. The Conroy children (all girls) are packed off to Big Grandma’s home on the coast for the summer. Their usual life of lying about reading comes to an immediate halt. Everybody learns something about themselves before the summer’s done.

Know Your Brain: Feed It, Test It, Stretch It by Nicola Morgan. Learn how to work with your brain and make it work for you. (non-fiction)

Arthur, the High King of Britain by Michael Morpurgo. A twelve-year-old boy comes across Arthur Pendragon, who has just awakened from his long sleep beneath the earth, and hears from him some of the exciting stories of his past. These are the traditional tales told by a master storyteller.

Eragon by Christopher Paolini. In Aagaesia, 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. The author is an astonishing 19 years old. See also the sequels Eldest and Brisingr

The Angel Experiment by James Patterson (Book 1 of 6 in the Maximum Ride series). After the mutant Erasers abduct the youngest member of their group, the “birdkids,” who are the result of genetic experimentation, take off in pursuit and find themselves struggling to understand their own origins and purpose.

The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan. After learning that he is the son of a mortal woman and Poseidon, god of the sea, twelve-year-old Percy is sent to a summer camp for demigods like himself, and joins his new friends on a quest to prevent a war between the gods. This first book in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series is followed by Sea of monsters, Titan’s curse, Battle of the Labyrinth and The Last Olympian.

The Alchemyst: The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel by Michael Scott. Fifteen- year-old twins, Sophie and Josh, find themselves caught up in the deadly struggle between rival alchemists, Nicholas Flamel and John Dee, over the possession of an ancient book that holds the secret formulas for alchemy and everlasting life. Sequels include The Magician and The Sorceress.

The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trent Lee Stewart. After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. Three sequels including The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Perilous Journey.

Elsewhere by Gabrielle Zevin. After fifteen-year-old Liz Hall is hit by a taxi and killed, she finds herself in a place that is both like and unlike Earth, where she must adjust to her new status and figure out how to “live”.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak. Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel—a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

Favorite Authors to Investigate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Horowitz</td>
<td>Alex Rider series, Power of Five series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Muchamore</td>
<td>CHERUB series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeline L’Engle</td>
<td>Wrinkle in Time, Wind in the Door, A Swiftly Tilting Planet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Ryan</td>
<td>Alpha Force series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eoin Colfer</td>
<td>Artemis Fowl series, Airman, Half-Moon Investigations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Pullman</td>
<td>His Dark Materials trilogy, Sally Lockheart series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.L. Konigsburg</td>
<td>View from Saturday, A Proud Taste of Scarlet and Miniver, The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Creech</td>
<td>Walk Two Moons, Ruby Holler, The Wanderer, Absolutely Normal Chaos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madeline L’Engle</td>
<td>Wrinkle in Time, Wind in the Door, A Swiftly Tilting Planet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.L. Konigsburg</td>
<td>View from Saturday, A Proud Taste of Scarlet and Miniver, The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Creech</td>
<td>Walk Two Moons, Ruby Holler, The Wanderer, Absolutely Normal Chaos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>