

**Summer Reading for Incoming On-Level 8<sup>th</sup> Graders**  
**Summer 2008**

**Read *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury.** Then **read one book from each of the following lists below (A and B).** **Answer the questions** at the bottom of this assignment for each of your three books. **Bring** the answers to class on the **first day of school typed and ready to discuss.**

**REQUIRED:**

***Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury**

Fahrenheit 451 is the temperature at which book paper burns. *Fahrenheit 451* is a novel set in the (perhaps near) future when "firemen" burn books forbidden by a totalitarian "brave new world" regime. The hero, according to Mr. Bradbury, is "a book burner who suddenly discovers that books are flesh-and-blood ideas and cry out silently when put to the torch." Today, when libraries and schools in this country and all over the world are still "burning" certain books, *Fahrenheit 451* remains a brilliantly readable and suspenseful work of even greater impact and timeliness. (Summary from Barnesandnoble.com)

**LIST A:**

**1. Multicultural Literature**

***Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya**

Antonio Marez is six years old when Ultima enters his life. She is a curandera, one who heals with herbs and magic. Ultima comes to live with Antonio's family in New Mexico. Soon Tony will journey to the threshold of manhood. She graces him with the courage to face childhood bigotry, diabolical possession, the moral collapse of his brother, and too many violent deaths. Under her wise guidance, Tony will probe the family ties that bind him, and he will find in himself the magical secrets of the pagan past—a mythic legacy equally as palpable as the Catholicism of Latin America in which he has been schooled. At each turn in his life there is Ultima who will nurture the birth of his soul. (Summary from Barnesandnobel.com)

**2. Biography/Non Fiction**

***Woodson* by Gary Paulsen**

Gary Paulsen, three-time Newbery Honor author, is no stranger to adventure. He has flown off the back of a dogsled and down a frozen waterfall to near disaster, and waited for a giant bear to seal his fate with one slap of a claw. Here, in vivid detail, Paulsen recounts several of the remarkable experiences that shaped his life and inspired his award-winning writing. (Summary from Simonsays.com)

**3. Historical Fiction**

***A Girl Named Disaster* by Nancy Farmer**

*A Girl Named Disaster* is the humorous and heart wrenching story of young girl who discovers her own courage and strength when she makes the dangerous journey from Mozambique to Zimbabwe. Nhamo is a Shona girl living in a traditional village in Mozambique in 1981. When her family tries to force her into a marriage with a cruel man, she flees. What was supposed to have been a short boat trip across the border into Zimbabwe, where she hoped to find her father, turns into an adventure filled with challenges and danger that lasts a year. (Summary from Barnesandnoble.com)

## LIST B:

### 1. *Profiles in Courage* by John F. Kennedy

"This is a book about that most admirable of human virtues—courage. 'Grace under pressure,' Ernest Hemingway defined it. And these are the stories of the pressures experienced by eight United States Senators and the grace with which they endured them."—John F. Kennedy

### 2. *For King and Country: The Maturing of George Washington* by Thomas Lewis

*For King and Country* is a portrait of an ordinary young man enmeshed in extraordinary events: the young George Washington caught up, and striving to excel, amid the bitter rivalry between the French and British for control of the American colonial frontier in the mid-eighteenth century. Drawing heavily on Washington's own diaries, letters, and dispatches, the author follows the future president's remarkable rise from a callow young man with no inheritance, no trade, and few prospects to the respected commander-in-chief of the military forces of British America's foremost colony.

### 3. *Behind Rebel Lines: The Incredible Story of Emma Edmonds, Civil War Spy* by Seymour V. Reit

In 1861, when war erupted between the States, President Lincoln made an impassioned plea for volunteers. Determined not to remain on the sidelines, Emma Edmonds cropped her hair, donned men's clothing, and enlisted in the Union Army. Posing in turn as a slave, peddler, washerwoman, and fop, Emma became a cunning master of disguise, risking discovery and death at every turn behind Confederate lines.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Title of the book
2. Author of the book
3. Date the book was written
4. Approximate date in which the story took place
5. How does this story relate to your life? Have you experienced anything similar to what the characters in the novel experienced? Do you know anyone who has? What does this story mean to you? (You don't have to answer all of these questions in #5; they're just here to help you think. Please write at 5-10 sentences.)
6. How is the main character's life different from yours? How is the culture in the story different from our culture? What are some things that happened in the story that do not happen in your town/family/country? For example, one story talks about the grandmother who heals people with "magic" and herbs. In our culture, we go to doctors and pray to God for healing. (You don't have to answer all of these questions in #6; they're just here to help you think. Please write 5-10 sentences.)

I look forward to meeting you and helping you grow as a person and a learner! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at [Kristen.Dory@princeofpeace.org](mailto:Kristen.Dory@princeofpeace.org). I will be out of the country from July 31 to August 12, so keep that in mind when you're deciding when to do the assignment.

Blessings,  
Ms. Dory