

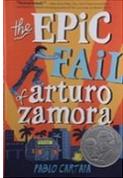
HOUSTON

Sam Houston Math, Science & Technology Center

2018 Summer Reading List for Incoming 9th Graders

Read one, two or more of these books and complete the activities below for cool rewards like bookstore gift cards and high school class credit! Have your activities ready to present to your English teacher in August!

The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora by Pablo Cartaya



In *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora*, Arturo spends the summer working at his beloved Abuela's Cuban restaurant in a Miami neighborhood. When Arturo learns of a greedy land developer's plans to tear down the building, he enlists the help of his friends to save the restaurant. This humorous coming-of-age tale celebrates family, music and poetry, and embraces failure as a springboard to growth.

Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds



Terse, sharp verse depicts a desperate teenager seeking to avenge the shooting death of his brother. Gun tucked into his waistband, he is shocked by the appearance of childhood friends and relatives on a chilling sixty-second elevator ride. Visceral language and raw emotion result in a powerful novel of grief and vengeance.

Piecing Me Together by Renee Watson



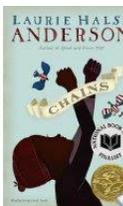
"I am learning to speak. To give myself a way out. A way in." Jade's mixed media collages evolve as she finds her voice. Through artful and poetic language, Watson explores themes of race, class, gender and body image in this dynamic journey.

The Serpent King by Jeff Zentner



Dill has had to wrestle with vipers his whole life—at home, as the only son of a Pentecostal minister who urges him to handle poisonous rattlesnakes, and at school, where he faces down bullies who target him for his father's extreme faith and very public fall from grace.

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson



When her owner dies at the start of the Revolution, a greedy nephew keeps Isabel and her younger sister enslaved and sells them to Loyalists in New York, where Isabel is offered the chance to spy for the Patriots. This novel shows us all how we can cast off our chains, both physical and spiritual.

Students can come by Sam Houston MSTC and pick up a copy of any of these books for summer reading. Books are also available at Houston Public Libraries, local book sellers like Barnes and Noble and Half Priced Books, and online through the HUB: Digital Resources > MackinVIA and Houston Public Library Learning Link.

Summer Reading Activities

Complete the following two activities and present to your English teacher at Sam Houston MSTC in August:

1. Two-Column notes over literary elements of the novel
2. Media presentation over a character or create a book trailer

Two-Column Notes

Directions: Read the novel and keep a dialectical journal (on paper or on a computer) of quotes as you are reading. You must have *at least three significant quotes for each of the following literary concepts*: setting, characters, external conflict, internal conflict, and theme from the beginning, the middle, and the end of the novel. Your journal should consist of two columns. The first column should include the quotes and their page numbers; the second column should provide your detailed explanation/commentary for each quote. Quotes that show specific word choice, contain expressive imagery and striking details, and reflect literary concepts are best. Below is an example:

Quote + page number	Commentary/explanation
Setting (the time and place of a work of literature): "Kino awakened in the near dark. The stars still shone and the day had drawn only a pale wash of light in the lower sky to the east." p. 1	This very romantic and poetic description creates an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. This contributes to the portrayal of a happy life that the main character leads in the beginning of the novel.
Character: "Kino had wondered often at the iron in his patient, fragile wife. She, who was obedient and respectful and cheerful and patient, she could arch her back in child pain with hardly a cry." p.7	This quote suggests that, even though Kino's wife is a quiet and seemingly obedient wife, she has a lot of strength inside. This strength is more transparent under dire circumstances. Kino admires this quality in his wife.
External Conflict (a struggle between the character and opposing force): "'Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for 'little Indians'? I am a doctor, not a veterinary.'" p. 11	Kino's son will die if the doctor doesn't help him, because he was bitten by a scorpion. The doctor looks down upon Kino and his people. When the doctor refuses to help, he creates an external conflict.
Internal Conflict (a struggle within the character): "Kino hesitated for a moment. This doctor was not of his people... And as always when he came near to one of this race, Kino felt weak and afraid and angry at the same time. Rage and terror went together." p. 9	Kino is faced with a tough decision: he resents the doctor, yet he has to ask him for help or his son will die. He has to overcome his hate in order to save his child's life.
Theme (a major, central idea in a work of literature): "In Kino's head there was a song now, clear and soft, and if he had been able to speak of it, he would have called it the Song of the Family." p. 2 "In his mind a new song had come, the Song of Evil, the music of any foe of the family, a savage, secret, dangerous melody, and underneath, the Song of the Family cried plaintively." p. 5	Family is sacred to Kino and his people. It soon becomes obvious that the happiness of Kino's family is threatened. It is the struggle of the main character to save his family that reveals one of the major themes of the novel. "The Song of the Family" and "the Song of Evil" are symbolic because they represent the two opposing forces that are involved in the main conflict of the novel.

Media Presentation (Choose One):

Create a Sway presentation (www.sway.com) by creating an account and making a newsletter or striking presentation about the novel that you read. Be sure to include pictures of scenes from the book that you create or that you find which represent something happening in the novel. Write summaries of the images you include in your presentation – get creative with it!

Go to www.weebly.com and build a website for the novel that you read over the summer! Include your thoughts on the novel (you can even upload your two-column notes). Add links to other sites about the author or links to historical events that are related to your novel. Make your website for the novel meaningful and interesting to check out! Present to your Houston MSTC teacher in August.

Create a Lino Board (www.linoit.com). Use your school home e-mail like a gmail account to set up an account. Create a board for your favorite character in the novel. Post pictures that reflect events or important details about that character and write a caption explaining what is happening in the picture. You may also add a video. Use the notes to title and explain for your audience. You can then present your board during class. The better the media presentation, the more points you can get!

Please email Associate Principal Mr. Niggli at mniggli@houstonisd.org if you have questions!