

## Summer 2009

Dear Rising Eighth Grader,

Welcome to eighth grade! This year we will be reading works of literature that explore the theme of identity. We will also continue to improve your reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. In order for you to prepare for the upcoming year, you must complete some work over the summer.

The purposes of our summer literacy program for BPCPS students are to promote continuous reading habits, to encourage reading for pleasure, to maintain writing skills, and to establish a springboard for class discussion in the fall. Our goal is to develop independent readers and writers who will continue good literacy habits because they find personal value in reading and sharing books. The skill of being able to read and write independently is an important one for anyone who is going to succeed in college.

**All eighth graders will read one of the following books:**

- o *Go and Come Back* by Joan Abelove
- o *I Am The Cheese* by Robert Cormier
- o *Witness* by Karen Hesse
- o *Jacob Have I Loved* by Katherine Paterson

**-OR-**

- o *The Land* by Mildred Taylor

**In addition to reading one of these books, you will complete the attached writing assignment.**

Please put the same effort into these assignments as you would put into your everyday work at BPCPS. Remember, this is your first graded English assignment of the eighth grade! Make it SPECTACULAR!

This is a required assignment; it is due on **THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**. No late work will be accepted.

See you in the fall!

Ms. Bacon & Ms. Reed

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***8<sup>th</sup> Reading: Summer Reading Assignment***

### **PART I**

Select the book you want to read! Use the descriptions below to help you decide which book you would like to read.

#### ***Go and Come Back* by Joan Abelove**

When two young anthropologists come to live in the Peruvian jungle village of Poincushmana, everyone makes a fuss – everyone but Alicia, who is baffled by the reaction of her tribe, the Isabo. But as the days pass, she too is drawn in by the ladies because they are stingy, stupid, and fun to watch. They don't understand the Isabo and someone needs to set them straight. And that someone, surprisingly, is Alicia.

#### ***I Am the Cheese* by Robert Cormier**

Imagine discovering that your whole life has been a fiction, your identity altered, and a new family history created. Suddenly nothing is as it once seemed; you can trust no one, maybe not even yourself. It is exactly this revelation that turns 14-year-old Adam Farmer's life upside down. As he tries to ascertain who he really is, Adam encounters a past, present, and future too horrible to contemplate. Suspense builds as the fragments of the story are assembled--a missing father, government corruption, espionage--until the shocking conclusion shatters the fragile mosaic.

#### ***Witness* by Karen Hesse**

It is 1924, and a small Vermont town finds itself under siege--by the Ku Klux Klan. Using free verse, Newbery Medal-winning author Karen Hesse (*Out of the Dust*) allows 11 unique and memorable voices to relate the story of the Klan's steady infiltration into the conscience of a small, Prohibition-era community.

***Jacob Have I Loved* by Katherine Paterson**

Sara Louise Bradshaw is sick and tired of her beautiful twin Caroline. Ever since they were born, Caroline has been the pretty one, the talented one, the better sister. Even now, Caroline seems to take everything: Louise's friends, their parents' love, her dreams for the future.

For once in her life, Louise wants to be the special one. But in order to do that, she must first figure out who she is . . . and find a way to make a place for herself outside her sister's shadow.

***The Land* by Mildred Taylor**

This epic-scaled novel set in the post-Civil War time, delineates the childhood and young manhood of Paul Edward Logan, son of a white slave owner and a slave woman. Taylor's masterful skills in portraying the landscape, creating deep and vivid characters, and telling a most compelling story won her the Coretta Scott King Award of 2002, and is one of the top 10 best books for young adults.

***\*\*Note:* Consider selecting the same book with several friends, with whom you form a book club over the summer, discussing the book together. If you choose to do this, the written assignment must be completed independently. \*\***

## Part II

Respond to the questions below in complete, thoughtful sentences on a separate piece of paper.

**\*\*DON'T wait until you've finished your book to begin working on this assignment. Think about these questions as you read and take notes in whatever format works for you (sticky notes, underlining, making a chart, etc.).\*\***

1. Describe each **main character** in your book. Write **at least 3-4 sentences for each character.**
2. **Sell your book to your peers**, giving them enough information to know what the book will be about (i.e. plot summary—don't give away the end!, themes, setting, etc.) but not so much information that you give it away. **(1-2 paragraphs)**
3. What makes this book **interesting and engaging** to read? **(1 paragraph)**
4. What makes this book **challenging** to read (i.e. vocabulary, background knowledge, narrative style, etc.)? **(1 paragraph)**
5. To whom would you **recommend** this book? **Why?** Would you recommend it to some people, but not to others? **Why? (at least 1-2 paragraphs)**

**\*\*\*NOTE: One paragraph is 8-10 sentences. \*\*\***