

## Rising 8th Graders: Summer Reading

My dear CGLA students,

Happy Summer, and congratulations on a successful seventh grade year! I know you're eager to get some rest and relaxation over the next few months, but it's important to keep your minds sharp, too. To help prepare you for your last year of middle school, I have selected both a *required* reading book and several recommended books. Some of the recommended books are old favorites of mine, while others were suggested by this year's eighth graders. I hope you'll give one or two a try, and discover a new book (or series) you really love!

**Your required summer reading book is *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson.** It tells the story of Isabel, an enslaved teenager living during the American Revolution of 1776. Isabel is faced with difficult choices - does she follow her Master's orders and stay out of trouble, become a spy for the Patriots and fight for American liberty, or does she try to escape with her little sister Ruth? This engrossing story is not only an excellent example of the kind of literature we'll be reading in ELA next year, but it also gives you some important background knowledge so you'll be ready to tackle American History with Mr. Hutchison.

A few copies of *Chains* will be available at CGLA in July. You can also purchase a copy at McKay's on Lee Highway or borrow a copy from the Chattanooga Library. If you want to buy a copy at McKay's, I would suggest visiting ASAP because summer reading books sell quickly there.

In addition to reading *Chains*, you need to complete one of the projects in the list below. All of these projects take a more personal or creative approach to exploring a book. You read that right, folks: no essay required! With that said, this *is* going to be my very first impression of you as a student, so take the time to make your project high quality.

I'm so excited to see you in August. I hope you have a wonderful summer!

Happy Reading,  
Mrs. Dougherty

### ***Chains* Project Options**

1. Pretend to be one of the main characters from your book and write 3 page-long diary entries from his or her point of view. Explain how this character is thinking/feeling about the major decisions s/he makes over the course of the story.
2. Write a letter to the author of your book. Ask any questions that you might have about events in the book. Mention at least one thing you will always remember and why. Your letter must be 1-2 pages.
3. Create a storyboard that is based on your book. It may focus on a series of pivotal events or

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summarize the entire novel in chronological order. You may use an online storyboard creator for this option, or draw scenes by hand.

4. Create a collage depicting a theme or idea in the book. Explain how this collage depicts the theme. Use colorful pictures from magazines or draw your own pictures. Your explanation must be 1-2 pages.

5. Choose a chapter from the book that involves a conflict between the protagonist and antagonists. Rewrite the chapter from the perspective of the antagonist. Write it in such a way that the audience will feel some sympathy for the antagonist.