

## Summer Reading 2011 • 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

This summer you will be required to read *two* books—one that everyone will read and another that you can select from three choices. I hope you enjoy them!

### Everyone will read:

- ***Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls**

In this unforgettable classic American novel, Billy Coleman tells the story of his boyhood days roaming the Ozark Mountains with his beloved coonhounds Old Dan and Little Ann. Together they train to hunt raccoons, track the elusive Ghost Coon, enter the championship coon hunt, fend off a mountain lion, and learn about determination, love, loyalty, and faith. Pay special attention to the hunter's "whoop" because we'll be having a contest in class!

You will take **a test** on this novel on Wednesday, August 31. Because we will be working with this book upon your return to school, I suggest you read it—or at least review it—closer to the end of summer vacation so it's fresh in your mind. You also will complete the project detailed on the reverse of this paper; it's due Wednesday, August 31, also.

### Also choose *one* of the following novels to read:

- ***The Grimm Legacy* Polly Shulman**
- ***So B. It* by Sarah Weeks**
- ***Silent to the Bone* by E. L. Konigsburg**

***The Grimm Legacy*** Elizabeth works in a library that lends objects instead of books. When the magical items of the Grimm collection begin to lose their magic she and her new friends try to figure out what's happening.

***So B. It*** Twelve-year-old Heidi lives with her mentally challenged mother and next door to Bernadette—an agoraphobic—who gives her love and guidance. Heidi struggles with knowing nothing about her family history. Then she finds an old camera with film intact; this prompts her quest to learn the identity of the people in the photographs and to discover her past.

***Silent to the Bone*** What happened on Wednesday, November 25 at 2:43 P.M. EST to cause Branwell Zamborska to become mute? All anyone knows is that he called 911 for help but was unable to speak to the operator. Strange...

### For the book you choose to read, you will keep simple notes in your novel:

- On the inside cover or a blank page at the front of the book, list the characters with a brief explanation of each.
- At the end of each chapter, write a summary, in bullet points, of the major events that happened in the chapter. These should have a good level of detail. As a guideline, you should have about 5-6 bullet points per chapter. You'll use these notes in literary circles when you return to school. Notes are due Monday, August 30, and they will be graded.

Summer Reading Interview Project  
***Where the Red Fern Grows • A Gift of Age***

You will interview a grandparent—or another relative or friend who is more than 50 years old. Your objective is to discover their gift of age: the wisdom they have gained through their life experiences. Your final project may be made into a poster or it can be submitted as a standard 8-1/2 x 11 report. **All text must be typed**, and your project must include the following components:

- An introductory paragraph that tells who you chose to interview and why. Talk about your relationship with this person and describe the setting of your interview (it can be a phone interview if that's the only way it can happen, but face-to-face is better).
- Fifteen (15) questions/topics for discussion that you prepare, plus the interviewee's responses. These should be presented ***in full sentences using the format shown below***. Take time to craft questions that are open-ended and about which the person you interview can *elaborate*. Consider asking about childhood, teen years, careers, achievements, regrets, favorite memories, and funny/embarrassing moments—be creative. Here's an example:
  - **Question/Topic:** Tell me about any pets you had when you were a child.
  - **Answer:** I had two dogs when I was a young teenager whose names were Little Ann and Old Dan. They were both redbone coonhounds, and I trained them to hunt raccoons. The dogs and I had a very special bond; sometimes I think they could read my mind! Once Little Anne even saved me from getting caught in the undercurrent of a river I fell into while we were hunting.
- A concluding paragraph that is a reflection of your experience interviewing your special person. For example, you can write about the things you found out about the person's life that surprised you, made you happy or sad, or that helped you to understand that person better. You can write about what you might have done differently to better prepare for the interview. Tell whether the setting was conducive to a good interview and, if not, what kind of setting you would choose the next time you have heart-to-heart chat with someone. Use this paragraph to sum up your interview experience.
- Include a drawing or photograph of you with the person you interview.

*I hope you enjoy getting to know your grandparent or special person a little better!*