

Eighth Grade Summer Reading Assignment 2021-2022

What does it take to be a hero? How can we create a more peaceful and tolerant society? How can courageous individuals from the present and the past inspire us to lead better lives?

These essential questions will be explored as part of the eighth grade English curriculum. This year's summer reading assignment will feature both real people and fictional characters who are a testament to the resilience of the human spirit during times of oppression, violence, and turmoil. By reading a nonfiction piece and a companion fictional text, you will develop a deeper understanding of the discrimination people have faced because of their religion, gender, or ethnic background.

Assignment:

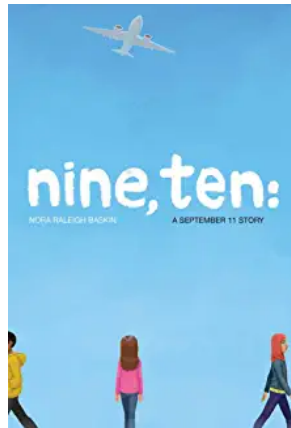
Carefully read the descriptions below. Choose **a pair of texts** to read. You may choose to read the novel or the memoir first. In September, you will be asked to write an essay proving how the author of the nonfiction text AND the main character of the novel relate to the following theme:

With courage, hope, and determination, ordinary people can overcome extraordinary difficulties.

Choose one pair from the following:

Pair 1: Remembering 9/11

September 11 is now known as "Patriot Day" in the United States and is observed as the National Day of Service and Remembrance of the victims of the 9/11 attacks. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of 9/11.



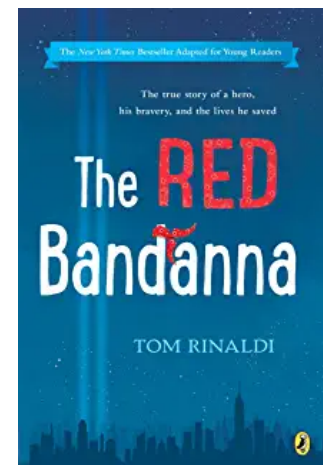
Nine, Ten: A September 11 Story by Nora Raleigh Baskin (Fiction)

A look at the days leading up to the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and how that day impacted the lives of four middle schoolers. Sergio is struggling to come to terms with the absentee father he hates and the grandmother he loves. Will's father was killed in a car accident that has left the family reeling. Naheed has never before felt uncomfortable about being Muslim, but at her new school she's getting funny looks because of her head scarf. Aimee is starting a new school in a new city and missing her mom, who has to fly to New York on business.

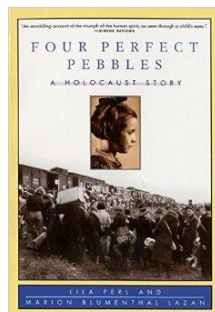
The Red Bandana: Young Readers Adaptation by Tom Rinaldi (nonfiction)

Welles Crowther did not see himself as a hero. He was just an ordinary kid who played sports, volunteered at his local fire department, and eventually headed off to college and then Wall Street to start a career. Throughout it all, he always kept a red bandanna in his pocket, a gift from his father. On September 11, 2001, Welles was working on the 104th floor of the South Tower of the World Trade Center when the Twin Towers were attacked. That day, Welles made a fearless choice and in doing so, saved many lives.

The survivors did not know his name, but one of them remembered a single detail clearly: the man was wearing a red bandanna. Welles Crowther was a hero.



Pair 2: Surviving the Horrors of the Holocaust

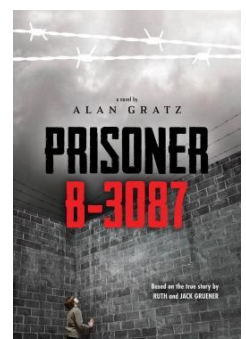


Four Perfect Pebbles by Lila Perl and Marian Blumenthal Lazan (nonfiction)

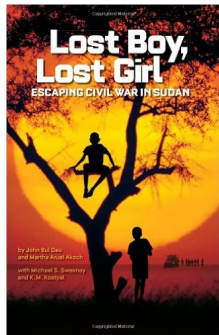
The author tells the story of her family's experiences as Jews in Hitler's Germany, tracing their grim journey from their home country to Holland and back again, living in refugee, transit, and prison camps.

Prisoner B-3087 by Alan Gratz (fiction)

Based on the life of Jack Gruener, this book relates his story of survival from the Nazi occupation of Krakow, when he was eleven, through a succession of concentration camps.

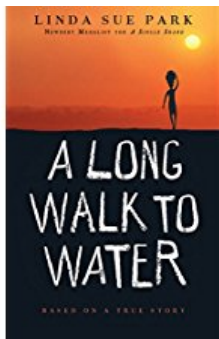


Pair 3: Escaping the Civil War in Sudan



Lost Boy, Lost Girl: Escaping Civil War in Sudan by John Bul Dau (nonfiction)

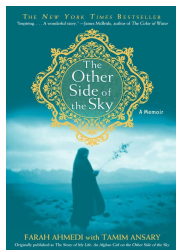
John Bul Dau and his wife, Martha, describe the hardships they experienced, including violence, famine, and war, while growing up in the Sudan and explain how they escaped the region to start a new life.



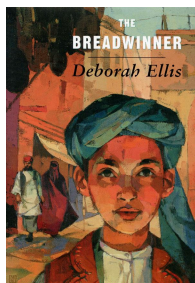
A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park (fiction)

When the Sudanese Civil War reaches his village in 1985, eleven year-old Salva is separated from his family and must walk with other Dinka tribe members in search of safe haven.

Pair 4: Living under the Shadow of the Taliban



The Other Side of the Sky by Farah Ahmed with Tamim Ansary (nonfiction)
Farah Ahmedi, the victim of a land mine when she was just twelve years old, tells about her childhood in Afghanistan, a country trapped in war her entire life, and discusses the challenges she has faced as a result of losing her leg, and in trying to adapt to living in the United States.



The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis (fiction)

Conscious of the strict limitations imposed by the Taliban rulers of Kabul, Afghanistan, on women's freedom and behavior, eleven year-old Parvana disguises herself as a boy in order to earn money so that her family can survive after her father's arrest.

You can purchase these titles on Amazon or from any bookstore. You may also borrow these books from the Verona Public Library.