

Odyssey – Summer Reading Packet: Grade 8

Throughout your summer vacation, you will need to read one of the following books and complete the attached assignments. Read the directions and assignments **before** you start reading your book. This summer work will be due in your Language Arts Class on the first day of school.

Instead of reading *The Giver*, which most rising Odyssey 8th graders studied in 6th grade, you must select a text that you have not read before. Your text must be a dystopian novel that centers on one protagonist. You are responsible for acquiring your text. Here are some possible titles:

Life as We Know It (trilogy) (Susan Pfeffer)

The Maze Runner (trilogy) (James Dashner)

Genesis of Shannara (Terry Brooks)

House of the Scorpion (Nancy Farmer)

Unwind (Neal Schusterman)

Feed (MT Anderson)

Brain Jack (Brian Falkner)

Ship Breaker (Paolo Bacigalupi)

Chaos Walking (trilogy) (Patrick Ness)

Uglies (series) – Scott Westerfield

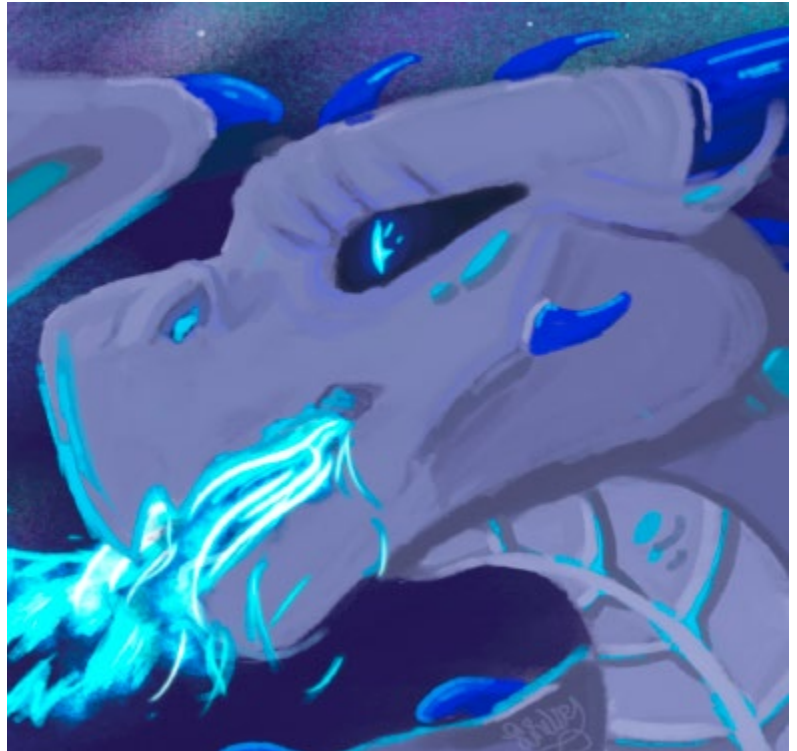
Matched (series) – Ally Condie

Divergent (series) – Veronica Roth

Forest of Hands and Teeth (Carrie Ryan)

Gone (series) (Michael Grant)

Dark Life (Kat Falls)



You may pick another text that: you have not read before, is a dystopian novel that centers on one protagonist, is at or slightly above your reading level, AND is appropriate for your maturity level.

Summary of Reading Assignments:

- Activity 1: The Concept of Heroism – Defining Heroism
- Activity 2: Challenges and Character Traits – Maintaining a Dialectical Journal
- Activity 3: Is the Protagonist a Hero? – Paragraph Reflecting on the Definition of a Hero
- Activity 4: Personal Narrative - Reflect on a Personal Challenge in a Narrative Response

Grade 8 Accelerated Summer Assignment

Activity 1 The Concept of Heroism

Defining Heroism

Student Target: To reflect on statements about heroes and create a definition of heroism

Instructions: At the beginning of the school year, you will explore the concept of heroism. Read the following statements. Mark down whether you agree or not with the statement. Go with your first thought.

	Agree/Disagree
1. All heroes are brave.	_____
2. Heroes are created by the events around them.	_____
3. You cannot fail and still be considered a hero.	_____
4. You must decide to be a hero.	_____
5. If you perform a heroic deed, then you are a hero.	_____
6. A hero overcomes physical challenges.	_____
7. To be a true hero, a person would have to risk his or her life.	_____
8. Heroes deserve fame and fortune.	_____

1. How do you define a hero? When you hear the word “heroes,” what images and thoughts come to your mind?

2. Name at least three of your heroes. They can be fictional or nonfictional. They can be someone from real life such as a well-known historical figure, or a character from a book, movie or TV show. Write down at least three reasons why you consider these people heroes.

Hero #1 -

Hero #2 -

Hero #3 -

Grade 8 Summer Assignment

Activity 2 Challenges and Character Traits

Maintaining a Dialectical Journal

Student Target: To critically read a text for the specific purpose and to respond to a specific passage with comments, questions, or insights to foster active involvement with a text.

Instructions: Review the following working definitions of challenges and character traits. Maintain a Dialectical Journal while you read your selected novel. **Have a minimum of twenty journal entries.**

Sample Character Traits:

able	active	courageous	gentle	mean	sharp
adventurous		cowardly	giving	messy	short
affectionate		cross	glamorous	miserable	shy
afraid		cruel	gloomy	mysterious	silly
alert		curious	good	naughty	skillful
ambitious		dangerous	graceful	nervous	sly
angry		daring	grateful	nice	smart
annoyed		dark	greedy	noisy	sneaky
anxious		decisive	grouchy	obedient	sorry
apologetic		demanding	grumpy	obnoxious	spoiled
arrogant		dependable	guilty	old	stingy
attentive		depressed	happy	peaceful	strange
average		determined	harsh	picky	strict
bad		discouraged	hateful	pleasant	stubborn
blue		dishonest	healthy	polite	sweet
bold		disrespectful	helpful	poor	talented
bored		doubtful	honest	popular	tall
bossy		dull	hopeful	positive	thankful
brainy		dutiful	hopeless	precise	thoughtful
brave		eager	humorous	proper	thoughtless
bright		easygoing	ignorant	proud	tired
brilliant		efficient	imaginative	quick	tolerant
busy		embarrassed	impatient	quiet	touchy
calm		encouraging	impolite	rational	trusting
careful		energetic	inconsiderate	reliable	trustworthy
careless		evil	independent	religious	unfriendly
cautious		excited	industrious	responsible	unhappy
charming		expert	innocent	restless	upset
cheerful		fair	intelligent	rich	useful
childish		faithful	jealous	rough	warm
clever		fearless	kindly	rowdy	weak
clumsy		fierce	lazy	rude	wicked
coarse		foolish	leader	sad	wise
concerned		fortunate	lively	safe	worried
confident		foul	lonely	satisfied	wrong
confused		fresh	loving	scared	
considerate		friendly	loyal	secretive	
cooperative		frustrated	lucky	selfish	
		funny	mature	serious	

List from NCTE.org

Dialectical Journal

Student Sample

Book Title:
Character:

Text (page #).	Character Trait	Insight/Reaction/Question/Interpretation
<p>Cite specific examples of challenges faced by a variety of characters. Include page numbers.</p>		<p>Explain how the quote demonstrates the character traits. What does it establish about the character?</p>
<p>"I wanted to follow her down into the darkness. I wanted to see the court of Poseidon. But I looked up at the sunset darkening on the surface. My friends were waiting. We had so little time...I kicked upward toward the shore." (273).</p>	<p>Dependable</p>	<p>Percy is clearly being tempted by the possibly once in a lifetime chance to see Poseidon's Kingdom. Most kids would go and take a quick peek. Unlike most kids, Percy's friend can count on him to remember that they had things to do and they needed him to return.</p>

Grade 8 Summer Assignment

Activity 3 Is the Protagonist a Hero?

Reflecting on the definition of a hero

Student Target: In a paragraph reflect on your definition of a hero and decide if the protagonist of your book is a hero.

Instructions: Review your Dialectical Journal and character traits activity. Based on your work and the reading, do you think that your protagonist is a hero? Did he/she exhibit the qualities of a hero? What challenge(s) defined his/her character? Begin your response with a strong topic sentence that states your answer to the prompt. Then, support your topic sentence with evidence from the text and thoughtful commentary.

Grade 8 Summer Assignment

Activity 4 A Personal Challenge

Reflecting on a Personal Challenge in a Narrative Response

Student Target: To reflect on a personal challenge in a narrative response.

Instructions: In a multi-paragraph essay, describe a time in your life when you faced a significant challenge and include some reflection about which trait(s) within yourself made it possible for you to overcome your challenge.

Brainstorm challenges:

Identify personal traits:

Explain how you overcame the challenge(s):