

Kelly Mill Middle School

Dear Seventh Grade Parents and Students,

Reading is the most important lifelong skill that we can help our students to learn and to practice. Along with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Commission on Reading, we believe that reading is not just a skill learned and practiced at school, but a developmental and continual process throughout life.

Kelly Mill Middle School encourages students to maintain the reading skills and strategies taught and practiced throughout the school year by having a summer reading list that offers students choices in their reading selections. Students are asked to read one book from the grade-leveled list provided. We encourage parents and students to choose books according to interests and the Lexile scores (reading level) provided for each selection. Parents should refer to their student's Lexile score that was reported on the spring MAP score report.

Every child is encouraged to create a journal responding to the story as he or she reads it. Responding to literature is an important part of the reading process and allows students to explore their ideas, impressions, and reactions to the literature. Journal entries include a brief summary of the section along with a personal response. Responses might include:

- Questions about the reading
- Predictions about what will happen next
- Interesting or surprising quotes
- Personal opinions about characters and their actions

When the school year begins, students will be asked to respond to a writing prompt about the novel he or she read over the summer. Students will be required to write a literary essay in response to the prompt. The aforementioned journal can be to use as a reference when responding to the written prompt.

The Kelly Mill Middle School Summer Reading Committee, comprised of language arts teachers, the curriculum specialist, the principal, and media specialist, has provided a list of summer reading choices for rising 7th graders (attached). In order to assist you in finding copies of the books, local book stores and local branches of the Richland County Public Library have been provided with a copy of the list. Other good resources for finding books are Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble at bn.com.

Happy Reading!

***The Rag and Bone Shop* by Robert Cormier.....730**

A 7-year-old girl has been battered to death, and there are no suspects, no leads. The police, under political pressure to make an arrest, bring in Trent, a cold, ambitious professional interrogator who prides himself on his ability to extract confessions. His victim is 12-year-old Jason--the last person to see the girl. We know that Jason is innocent, and halfway through the interrogation Trent realizes it, too, in "a blazing moment." But like a medieval torturer, his goal is confession, not truth, and so he stifles his impulses for good and proceeds with the job, with deeply ironic consequences.

***The Young Man and the Sea* by Rodman Philbrick.....800**

Twelve-year-old Skiff Beaman's mom just died, and his fisherman dad is too depressed to drag himself off the couch and go to work. So these days Skiff has to take care of everything himself. But when his dad's boat sinks, Skiff discovers it will cost thousands to buy a new engine. Skiff's lobster traps won't earn him enough, but there are bigger fish in the sea -- bluefin tuna. If he can catch one of those monster fish, Skiff just might save the boat -- and his family.

***Elephant Run* by Roland Smith.....750**

In 1941, bombs drop from the night skies of London, demolishing the apartment Nick Freestone lives in with his mother. Deciding the situation in England is too unstable, Nick's mother sends him to live with his father in Burma, hoping he will be safer living on the family's teak plantation.

But as soon as Nick arrives, trouble erupts in the remote Burmese elephant village. Japanese soldiers invade, and Nick's father is taken prisoner. Nick is left stranded on the plantation, forced to work as a servant to the new rulers. As life in the village grows more dangerous for Nick and his young friend, Mya, they plan their daring escape. Setting off on elephant back, they will risk their lives to save Nick's father and Mya's brother from a Japanese POW camp.

***Double Identity* by Margaret Peterson Haddix.....810**

Thirteen-year-old Bethany's parents have always been overprotective, but when they suddenly drop out of sight with no explanation, leaving her with an aunt she never knew existed, Bethany uncovers shocking secrets that make her question everything she thought she knew about herself and her family. Bethany's only clue is a few words she overheard her father tell her aunt: "She doesn't know anything about Elizabeth." But Aunt Myrlie won't tell Bethany who Elizabeth is, and she won't explain why people in her small town react to Bethany as if they've seen a ghost. And when a strange man shows up asking questions, Bethany realizes she's not the only one who's desperate to unravel the secrets of her past.

***The Liberation of Gabriel King* by K.L. Going.....780**

Gabriel King believes he was born chicken. He's afraid of spiders, corpses, loose cows, and just about everything related to the fifth grade. If it's a choice between graduating or staying in the fourth grade forever, he's going to stay put--only his best friend, Frita Wilson, won't hear of it.

"Gabe," says Frita, "we got to do something about you." When Frita makes up her mind, she's like a locomotive--there's no stopping her. "First, you're going to make a list. Write down everything you're afraid of."

Gabe's list is a lot longer than he'd like Frita to know. Plus, he can't quite figure out how tackling his fears will make him brave. Surely jumping off the rope swing over the catfish pond can only lead to certain death . . . but maybe Frita knows what she's doing. It turns out she's got her own list, and while she's watching Gabe face all his fears, she's avoiding the fear that scares her the most.

***Book of a Thousand Days* by Shannon Hale.....1000**

When Dashti, a maid, and Lady Saren, her mistress, are shut in a tower for seven years for Saren's refusal to marry a man she despises, the two prepare for a very long and dark imprisonment.

As food runs low and the days go from broiling hot to freezing cold, it is all Dashti can do to keep them fed and comfortable. But the arrival outside the tower of Saren's two suitors—one welcome, and the other decidedly less so—brings both hope and great danger, and Dashti must make the desperate choices of a girl whose life is worth more than she knows.

***The Big Field* by Mike Lupica970**

For Hutch, shortstop has always been home. It's where his father once played professionally, before injuries relegated him to watching games on TV instead of playing them. And it's where Hutch himself has always played and starred. Until now. The arrival of Darryl "D-Will" Williams, the top shortstop prospect from Florida since A-Rod, means Hutch is displaced, in more ways than one. Second base feels like second fiddle, and when he sees his father giving fielding tips to D-Will--the same father who can't be bothered to show up to watch his son play--Hutch feels betrayed. With the summer league championship on the line, just how far is Hutch willing to bend to be a good teammate?