

8th Grade:

Welcome to 8th Grade!

Hello everyone! My name is **Ms. Rai** (pronounced Ray, like a sun ray) and I am so excited to meet with you and get to learn more about you and your interests! Over the next year I want us to explore more about the world around us and how history very much ties into the decisions we make as individuals, as a nation, and within the world today! The books I have chosen for our summer reading can be found in bookstores, online, as digital copies, or in libraries. Please choose one of the following books to read to help us prepare for next year!

Over the course of the next year we will be examining political and global issues facing our world today. The books I have selected below have been arranged by topic area of themes we will cover and discuss throughout our time together. Many of these topics have been under widespread debate and have been interwoven throughout the history of our nation and our world. The effects of climate change have caused widespread natural disaster in many countries leaving many, especially youth activists, wondering how we can sustain our global population. Immigration and division, a hotly contested subject, has left some families unsure of their place in a world with ever changing physical and legal boundaries. Indigenous culture and activism are finally on the global stage after centuries of erasure and silencing, but activists are still fighting for cultural and legal representation. Issues with law enforcement have been visibly on the rise with the invention of the cell phone camera as more and more footage has come to light, causing widespread outrage and argument over equality and order. Understanding global issues, as well as those that impact our daily lives in the United States will be key to understanding how our voices can impact the future of our world.

8th Grade Summer Reading List: (Choose ONE)

Climate Change:

- *World Without Fish* by [Mark Kurlansky](#)
- *Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans* by [Don Brown](#)

Immigration/Division:

- *The Night Diary* by [Veera Hiranandani](#)
- *American Street* by [Ibi Zoboi](#)
- *A Night Divided* by [Jennifer A. Nielsen](#)
- *I Lived on Butterfly Hill* by [Marjorie Agosin](#)

Indigenous Voices:

- *The Marrow Thieves* by [Cherie Dimaline](#)
- *My Name Is Not Easy* by [Debbi Dahl Edwardson](#)

Law Enforcement and Current Events:

- *All American Boys* by [Jason Reynolds](#)
- *Dear Martin* by [Nic Stone](#)

8th Grade Guiding Questions: (Follow only the Guiding Questions that align with the topic you have chosen)

You do **NOT** have to answer these questions writing, but please think about them and keep them in mind as you read.

Climate Change:

- Why is climate change essential to our survival as humans in the future?
- Who does and does not experience the immediate effects of climate change? Why?
- Why is global warming and climate change not given more importance in society and in our political arenas?
- What steps should we make to give more importance to climate change in our society?

Immigration/Division:

- What causes or forces people to immigrate?
- What would be some possible benefits and drawbacks to immigration policies?
- How are families from all over the world experiencing immigration?
- Should our nation and our world rethink/update it's immigration policies given the effects of climate change, governmental oppression, and our current global epidemic crisis?

Indigenous Voices:

- Why is Indigenous history often forgotten about, silenced, or misrepresented?
- In what ways have Indigenous cultures and voices been mistreated or underrepresented?
- How has the United States in particular worked on it's relationship with Indigenous nations?
- How can we work to amplify Indigenous voices and activists globally?

Law Enforcement and Current Events:

- What issues do you know exist around law enforcement today?
- In what ways do our policing systems benefit and harm different communities?
- How do our experiences consciously and unconsciously shape how we see and act in the world?
- Historically we have lived in an unequal world, what steps should we take in our government to ensure the voices and lives of minorities are given equal importance in our world?

6th Grade:

Welcome to 6th grade and middle school!

Hello everyone! My name is **Ms. Rai** (pronounced Ray, like a sun ray) and I am so excited to meet with you and get to learn more about you and your interests! Over the next year I want us to explore more about the world around us and how history very much ties into the decisions we make as individuals, as a nation, and within the world today! The books I have chosen for our summer reading can be found in bookstores, online, as digital copies, or in libraries. Please choose one of the following books to read to help us prepare for next year!

History shapes and builds all the parts of the life we know right now, making connections from past to present is an essential part of being a historian. Over the course of the next year we will be examining the Ancient World. The books I have chosen below have been arranged by topic area of themes we will uncover as we survey ancient civilizations. Studying how these ancient civilizations planned water systems, valued resources, and shaped agriculture can give us a better understanding on how to discuss and plan for the effects of climate change today. The movements of nomadic people to hunt and gather resources and form boundaries within their communities might help us comprehend issues in immigration. The effects of colonialism and the ability of ancient civilizations to adapt or fall ill to new diseases can give us more insight into the pandemics of the 20th and 21st century. The evolution, explosion, and destruction of these civilizations laid the foundations for our world and brought forth a system of power and representation that not only exists for Indigenous voices but also minority voices today. Understanding how global issues have developed over time will help us better understand our world and the ancient world.

6th Grade Summer Reading List: (Choose ONE)

Climate Change:

- *Life As We Knew It* by [Susan Beth Pfeffer](#)
- *Hoot* by [Carl Hiaasen](#)

Immigration:

- *Orange for the Sunsets* by [Tina Athaide](#)
- *Inside Out and Back Again* by [Thanhha Lai](#)

Epidemics:

- *Auma's Long Run* by [Eucabeth Odhiambo](#)
- *The Island at the End of Everything* by [Kiran Millwood Hargrave](#)

Indigenous and Minority Voices:

- *The Ugly One* by [Leanne Statland Ellis](#)
- *How I Became A Ghost* by [Tim Tingle](#)
- *Ghost Boys* by [Jewell Parker Rhodes](#)
- *A Good Kind of Trouble* by [Lisa Moore Ramée](#)

6th Grade Guiding Questions:

(Follow only the Guiding Questions that align with the topic you have chosen)

You do **NOT** have to answer these questions writing, but please think about them and keep them in mind as you read.

Climate Change:

- What do you already know about climate change? What new things have you learned after reading?
- How is climate change impacting our world? What sort of events are happening because of climate change?
- Why is climate change a problem for many communities right now and how will it be a problem for all communities in the future?
- What steps should we take to work together to help slow down climate change? What will happen if we don't take these necessary steps?

Immigration:

- What do you already know about immigration? What new things have you learned after reading?
- Why do some people immigrate to other countries? What causes or forces them to move?
- What experiences do immigrants have on their journey to a new place and once they have settled into their new homes?
- How might immigration benefit and hurt countries around the world?

Epidemics:

- What do you already know about epidemics/pandemics? What new things have you learned after reading?
- Why are epidemics a global problem not just a national problem?
- Why do epidemics impact some communities more than others?
- How can we work together in the world to make sure all people are given equal access to medicine and healthcare?

Indigenous Voices:

- What do you already know about Indigenous people? What new things have you learned after reading?
- Why are Indigenous people sometimes left out of conversation in society?
- How does the United States treat Indigenous people in our society today?
- Do you think it is fair that Indigenous people are often misrepresented, turned into cartoons, or used as mascots for sports teams? Why or why not?