

8th Grade Required Summer Reading Assignments

Dear Incoming 8th Graders,

I am looking forward to meeting you all in August and beginning your 8th grade year together. Please review the two required summer reading assignments below. We will begin utilizing the novels for discussions and required class work beginning on day one, so please make sure all reading and assignments are completed by the first day of school.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Enjoy the summer,
Mr. Oden

Assignment 1:

READ *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes.

READ the short story "[Don't Call the Dead If You're Not Serious](#)" by Jewell Parker Rhodes.

REFLECT on the following question:

"Both the novel and short story deal with the concept of being haunted by loved ones, bearing witness to the hard truths of the past, and trying to listen to the lessons of the dead. How do you think the last lines of the short story ("When your soul aches, speak to the dead/Ancestors who loved you, still do...they're always listening/if you let yourself hear, they will guide you.") reflect these themes and issues in the novel (*Ghost Boys*)?"

WRITE a four to five paragraph essay based on the reflection question. Use examples from both the texts to support your ideas.

Essays will be **due on the first day of school** and will help guide our discussion on the novel.

Assignment 2:

READ any book of your choice.

POST a one minute book review video to our [summer reading recommendation Padlet](#).

Be sure to include the name of the book/author, genre, a spoiler-free plot synopsis, other books it reminds you of ("If you liked Mr. Oden's *School of Wizard Children Not Called Harry Potter*, you'll love..."), and why you enjoyed reading it!