

June 19, 2020

## 7th and 8th Grade Reading Assignment

Dear Students and Parents,

Next year, the emphasis of the 7th and 8th LA/WW curriculum is on literature about the decade of the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement. In September, students will begin with a nonfiction unit centered around the time period, then move to historical fiction book clubs reading novels set in the 1960s, and then, as a whole class, eventually read the play *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry.

### **Summer Reading Requirement**

To prepare students for this journey back in time, we are asking all students this summer to read Congressman John Lewis' powerful graphic memoir trilogy **March**. Amazon writes, "March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights..."

**This summer, all students are required to read the following 3 books:**

**March, Book One:** Spans John Lewis' youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement, and the battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.

**March, Book Two:** After the success of the Nashville sit-in campaign, John Lewis is more committed than ever to changing the world through nonviolence — but as he and his fellow Freedom Riders board a bus into the vicious heart of the deep south, they will be tested like never before. Faced with beatings, police brutality, imprisonment, arson, and even murder, the movement's young activists place their lives on the line while internal conflicts threaten to tear them apart.

**March, Book Three:** By the fall of 1963, Lewis and an army of young activists launch a series of innovative campaigns, including the Freedom Vote, Mississippi Freedom Summer, and an all-out battle for the soul of the Democratic Party waged live on national television. With these new struggles come new allies, new opponents, and an unpredictable new president who might be both at once.

***Parents and students, please note that, in its accurate depiction of racism in the 1950s and 1960s, the March trilogy contains several instances of racist language and other potentially offensive expressions. Unfortunately, these are historically accurate.***

### **Summer Reading Project**

After reading these books, **students are to complete one project based on one of the books -- either Book One, Book Two, or Book Three -- from the attached *choice board*.** In September, students will present their projects for a grade during the first week of school.

### **Suggested Additional Reading**

In addition, we have compiled a list of books that students might want to choose from this summer. These are suggested titles that focus on themes of racial justice and inclusion for students who want to engage in additional reading this summer. See the recommended list attached.

Please feel free to reach out to us during the summer if you have any additional questions or concerns. We are looking forward to a great 2020-2021 school year.

Best,

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