

## Summer Reading List – Students Entering Grade 8

### Fiction:

#### **Half Brother** by **Kenneth Oppel**

For thirteen years, Ben Tomlin was an only child. But all that changes when his mother brings home Zan, an eight-day-old chimpanzee. Ben's father, a renowned behavioral scientist, has uprooted the family to pursue his latest research project: a high-profile experiment to determine whether chimps can acquire advanced language skills. Soon Ben is forced to make a critical choice between what he is told to believe and what he knows to be true--between obeying his father or protecting his brother from an unimaginable fate.

#### **If You Come Softly** by **Jacqueline Woodson**

For 15-year-old Jeremiah, who is black, and Ellie, who is Jewish, the love they find is special and rare. But can it withstand the prejudice and elitism of their prep-school world?

#### **The Testing** by **Joelle Charbonneau**

It's graduation day for 16-year-old Malencia Vale, and the entire Five Lakes Colony (the former Great Lakes) is celebrating. All Cia can think about – hope for – is whether she'll be chosen for The Testing, a United Commonwealth program that selects the best and brightest new graduates to become possible leaders. When Cia is chosen, her father tells her about his own nightmarish memories of The Testing. Armed with his dire warning, she bravely heads off to Tosu City, far away from friends and family, perhaps forever. Danger, romance---and sheer terror---await.

#### **Dead End in Norvelt** by **Jack Gantos**

Jack Gantos's mom has him help a feisty old neighbor typewrite obituaries filled with stories about the people who founded his utopian town. As one obituary leads to another, Jack is launched on a strange adventure involving molten ash, Eleanor Roosevelt, twisted promises, a homemade airplane, Girl Scout cookies, a man on a trike, a dancing plague, voices from the past, Hells Angels – and possibly murder.

### Nonfiction:

#### **Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different** by **Karen Blumenthal**

From the start, his path was never predictable. Steve Jobs was given up for adoption at birth, dropped out of college after one semester, and at the age of twenty, created Apple in his parents' garage with his friend Steve Wozniack. This book takes us to the core of this complicated and legendary man while simultaneously exploring the evolution of computers. Framed by Jobs's inspirational Stanford commencement speech and illustrated

throughout with black and white photos, this is the story of the man who changed our world.

**The President Has Been Shot: The Assassination of John F. Kennedy**  
**by James L. Swanson**

Swanson's title reads like a thriller, with intense pacing and an engaging narrative. The event is not depicted as dry, textbook history, but rather as a horrifying and shocking crime. Full- and double-page photographs of President Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald, which capture the assassination in real time---breathe emotion into the work. Kennedy's and Oswald's backgrounds are illuminated as the narrative descends toward their tragic connection.