

Incoming 3rd Grade Families,

Next year in 3rd grade your student has the opportunity to participate in Battle of the Books. Battle of the Books is a great reading incentive program in elementary, middle and high schools across the state. Students read from a list of selected books chosen by the OBOB (Oregon Battle of the Books) committee. Teams of 3-5 participants compete by answering trivia questions about the books in a game show format. It is a great program to encourage children to read different genres and work together as a team. We do not participate in the regional or state OBOB competition, but instead battle within STM and finalists teams then battle another Archdiocesan school (St. Clare). Participation is not required, but all are invited! We discussed Battle of the Books in class this week and started previewing some of the books on the list. We will use our class time next week to continue previewing the books and to answer any questions the kids may have about the program.

If your student is interested in being on a team and participating in the competition next spring they should read about **4 books** from the list **by around January** of next year. Once placed on a team (in January) they will likely be asked to read more to make sure all books have been read by at least one team member. The battles do not take place until spring so there is plenty of time, but we want everyone to have a chance to read from the list over summer if they choose. Keep in mind the list is geared toward 4th/5th graders so some of the books may be rather difficult or higher level topics. It may be a good idea to preview them with your child. This program is meant to be a fun way to encourage reading and should not be stressful. All are welcome so if the 4 book request is too challenging but your child would like to participate please let us know, we can always work something out. It is also ok for the kids to listen to an audiobook *while* they read along if this is helpful for them, especially for the more challenging titles. All practices and competitions will take place during school hours.

Attached you will find the list of books as well as some links to other lists and searches for recommended reading.

Let us know if you have any questions,
Mrs. Morgan & Mrs. Shields

2023/2024 STM Battle of the Books
3rd - 5th Grade

List is subject to change

Please note, this list is designed for 3rd - 5th graders. It is recommended that parents look over the list with your reader to make sure the books are interesting, engaging, and appropriate for them.

- **Allergic** by Megan Wagner Lloyd
- **Flor and Miranda Steal the Show** by Jennifer Torres
- **From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler** by E. L. Konigsburg *
- **The Jumbies** by Tracey Baptiste
- **The Lion of Mars** by Jennifer L. Holm
- **The Midnight Children** by Dan Gemeinhart
- **Molly and the Twin Towers: A 9/11 Survival Story** by Jessika Fleck
- **New From Here** by Kelly Yang
- **Rez Dogs** by Joseph Bruchac
- **Swim Team** by Johnnie Christmas
- **The Trouble with Chickens** by Doreen Cronin
- **A True Home** by Kallie George
- **Ways to Make Sunshine** by Renée Watson
- **When You Trap a Tiger** by Tae Keller
- **Zeus and the Thunderbolt of Doom** by Joan Holub & Suzanne Williams (*NOT the graphic novel version*)

** The official OBOB edition of From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E Frankweiler is the 1998 edition from Atheneum Books for Young Readers (ISBN: 9780689711817). You may read another edition, but page numbers and content will be taken from this edition. No questions will be created from any prefaces, introductions, afterwards, etc.*

Battle of the Books Reading Notes

Title:	
Author:	

	Main Characters	Character Traits
1		
2		
3		

Other Characters (List Names)

Setting:

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Main Events:

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Other usefule info:

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3rd Grade Recommended Reading Lists

2023-2024 Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.oregonbattleofthebooks.org/2023-2024-obob-partial-title-list/>

America Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.battleofthebooks.org/book-list/>

Past Oregon Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.oregonbattleofthebooks.org/obob-archives/>

Goodreads

<https://www.goodreads.com/list/tag/3rd-grade>

Great Schools

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/book-lists/favorite-books-for-third-graders/>

Common Sense Media

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/best-books-for-third-graders>

Other Helpful Resources

Search by Reading Level or Grade

<https://hub.lexile.com/find-a-book/search>

STM School Library Search

<https://stmpdx.follettdestiny.com>

Multnomah County Summer Reading

<https://multcolib.org/summer-reading>

Incoming 4th Grade Families,

This year we had a few students in 3rd grade participate in Battle of the Books, we are hoping others may be interested in participating as 4th graders! Battle of the Books is a great reading incentive program in elementary, middle and high schools across the state. Students read from a list of selected books chosen by the OBOB (Oregon Battle of the Books) committee. Teams of 3-5 participants compete by answering trivia questions about the books in a game show format. It is a great program to encourage children to read different genres and work together as a team. We do not participate in the regional or state OBOB competition, but instead battle within STM and finalists teams then battle another Archdiocesan school (St. Clare). Participation is not required, but all are invited!

If your student is interested in being on a team and participating in the competition next spring they should read about **4 books** from the list **by around January** of next year. Once placed on a team (in January) they will likely be asked to read more to make sure all books have been read by at least one team member. The battles do not take place until spring so there is plenty of time, but we want everyone to have a chance to read from the list over summer if they choose. It is also ok for the kids to listen to an audiobook **while** they read along if this is helpful for them, especially for the more challenging titles. All practices and competitions will take place during school hours.

Attached you will find:

- * STM Battle of the Books List
- * Optional reading notes template
- * Other recommended reading lists

Let us know if you have any questions,
Mrs. Morgan & Mrs. Shields

2023/2024 STM Battle of the Books
3rd - 5th Grade

List is subject to change.

- **Allergic** by Megan Wagner Lloyd
- **Flor and Miranda Steal the Show** by Jennifer Torres
- **From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler** by E. L. Konigsburg *
- **The Jumbies** by Tracey Baptiste
- **The Lion of Mars** by Jennifer L. Holm
- **The Midnight Children** by Dan Gemeinhart
- **Molly and the Twin Towers: A 9/11 Survival Story** by Jessika Fleck
- **New From Here** by Kelly Yang
- **Rez Dogs** by Joseph Bruchac
- **Swim Team** by Johnnie Christmas
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- **A True Home** by Kallie George
- **Ways to Make Sunshine** by Renée Watson
- **When You Trap a Tiger** by Tae Keller
- **Zeus and the Thunderbolt of Doom** by Joan Holub & Suzanne Williams (*NOT* the graphic novel version)

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Battle of the Books Reading Notes

Title:	
Author:	

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1		
2		
3		

Other Characters (List Names)

Setting:

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Main Events:

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Other usefule info:

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4th Grade Recommended Reading Lists

2023-2024 Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.oregonbattleofthebooks.org/2023-2024-obob-partial-title-list/>

America Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.battleofthebooks.org/book-list/>

Past Oregon Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.oregonbattleofthebooks.org/obob-archives/>

Goodreads

<https://www.goodreads.com/list/tag/4th-grade>

Great Schools

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/book-lists/favorite-books-for-fourth-graders/>

Common Sense Media

<https://www.common Sense Media.org/lists/best-books-for-fourth-graders>

Other Helpful Resources

Search by Reading Level or Grade

<https://hub.lexile.com/find-a-book/search>

STM School Library Search

<https://stmpdx.follettdestiny.com>

Multnomah County Summer Reading

<https://multcolib.org/summer-reading>

Incoming 5th Grade Families,

This year we had two teams of 4th graders participate in Battle of the Books and are hoping for continued interest in 5th grade! Battle of the Books is a great reading incentive program in elementary, middle and high schools across the state. Students read from a list of selected books chosen by the OBOB (Oregon Battle of the Books) committee. Teams of 3-5 participants compete by answering trivia questions about the books in a game show format. It is a great program to encourage children to read different genres and work together as a team. We do not participate in the regional or state OBOB competition, but instead battle within STM and finalists teams then battle another Archdiocesan school (St. Clare). Participation is not required, but all are invited!

If your student is interested in being on a team and participating in the competition next spring they should read about **4 books** from the list **by around January** of next year. Once placed on a team (in January) they will likely be asked to read more to make sure all books have been read by at least one team member. The battles do not take place until spring so there is plenty of time, but we want everyone to have a chance to read from the list over summer if they choose. It is also ok for the kids to listen to an audiobook **while** they read along if this is helpful for them, especially for the more challenging titles. All practices and competitions will take place during school hours.

Attached you will find:

- * STM Battle of the Books List
- * Optional reading notes template
- * Other recommended reading lists

Let us know if you have any questions,
Mrs. Morgan & Mrs. Shields

2023/2024 STM Battle of the Books
3rd - 5th Grade

List is subject to change

- **Allergic** by Megan Wagner Lloyd
- **Flor and Miranda Steal the Show** by Jennifer Torres
- **From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler** by E. L. Konigsburg *
- **The Jumbies** by Tracey Baptiste
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Author:	

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1		
2		
3		

Other Characters (List Names)

Setting:

--

Main Events:

--

Other usefule info:

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5th Grade Recommended Reading Lists

2023-2024 Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.oregonbattleofthebooks.org/2023-2024-obob-partial-title-list/>

America Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.battleofthebooks.org/book-list/>

Past Oregon Battle of the Books Lists

<https://www.oregonbattleofthebooks.org/obob-archives/>

Goodreads

<https://www.goodreads.com/list/tag/5th-grade>

Great Schools

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/book-lists/favorite-books-for-fifth-graders/>

Common Sense Media

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/best-books-for-fifth-graders>

Other Helpful Resources

Search by Reading Level or Grade

<https://hub.lexile.com/find-a-book/search>

STM School Library Search

<https://stmpdx.follettdestiny.com>

Multnomah County Summer Reading

<https://multcolib.org/summer-reading>

Hello Incoming 6th-8th Grade Families!

This year we only had one middle school team competing in Battle of the Books. We would love to have more for next year! Battle of the Books is a great reading incentive program in elementary, middle and high schools across the state. Students read from a list of selected books chosen by the OBOB (Oregon Battle of the Books) committee. Teams of 3-5 participants compete by answering trivia questions about the books in a game show format. It is a great program to encourage children to read different genres and work together as a team. We do not participate in the regional or state OBOB competition, but instead battle within STM and finalists teams then battle another Archdiocesan school (St. Clare). Participation is not required, but all are invited!

If your student is interested in being on a team and participating in the competition next spring they should read about **4 books** from the list **by around January** of next year. Once placed on a team (in January) they will likely be asked to read more to make sure all books have been read by at least one team member. The battles do not take place until spring so there is plenty of time, but we want everyone to have a chance to read from the list over summer if they choose. It is also ok for the kids to listen to an audiobook **while** they read along if this is helpful for them, especially for the more challenging titles. All practices and competitions will take place during school hours.

Attached you will find:

- * STM Battle of the Books List
- * Optional reading notes template

Let us know if you have any questions,
Mrs. Morgan & Mrs. Shields

2023/2024 STM Battle of the Books

6th - 8th Grade Division

This list is subject to change.

- **Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna** by *Alda P. Dobbs*
- **The Benefits of Being an Octopus** by *Ann Braden*
- **The Blackbird Girls** by *Anne Blankman*
- **The Boys in the Back Row** by *Mike Jung*
- **Focused** by *Alyson Gerber*
- **The Girl and the Ghost** by *Hanna Alkaf*
- **A High Five for Glenn Burke** by *Phil Bildner*
- **The Hobbit** by *J. R. R. Tolkien**
- **Invisible** by *Christina Diaz Gonzalez and Gabriela Epstein*
- **Katie the Catsitter** by *Colleen AF Venable and Stephanie Yue*
- **Other Words for Home** by *Jasmine Warga*
- **Partly Cloudy** by *Tanita S. Davis*
- **Powerless** by *Matthew Cody*
- **Stowaway** by *John David Anderson*
- **Wink** by *Rob Harrell*
- **Yusuf Azeem is Not a Hero** by *Saadia Faruqi*

*The official OBOB edition of *The Hobbit* is the 2012 edition from Mariner Books (ISBN: 9780547928227). You may read another edition, but page numbers and content will be taken from this edition. No questions will be created from any prefaces, introductions, afterwards, etc.

Battle of the Books Reading Notes

Title:	
Author:	

	Main Characters	Character Traits
1		
2		
3		

Other Characters (List Names)

Setting:

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Main Events:

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Other usefule info:

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7th Grade English Language Arts Summer Assignment

Good morning! My name is Mr. Molnar and I will be your 7th Grade Language Arts and History teacher at St. Thomas More for the upcoming school year. I am looking forward to getting to know you all, as well as working with each and every one of you.

As we are getting through the summer, all of the good study habits that you cultivated during the school year disappear unless you use them. Reading is a fantastic way to keep your brain active. The more students read, the stronger their skills are in all subject areas.

For your summer assignment, I would like you to read **two books this summer** to complete the assignment. Don't forget that summer should still be fun! Summer reading is an opportunity for students to relax and enjoy themselves. If you get to pick your books, you will be more likely to spend more time reading, not because you have to, but because you want to. You can read any books you want this summer, they must be age appropriate for you, as well as school appropriate for class. Readers should pick books that appeal to them, not books that frustrate them. If you have to check the dictionary every 5 minutes, how can you get lost in a book? Use the five-finger rule: find a book that looks good, open it to any random full page, and hold up a finger every time you find a word you don't know. At the end of the page, if you have 4 or 5 fingers up, you're in the wrong book. When you have selected your books, please email me at gmolnar@stmpdx.org for me to give you the "ok."

Writing about a book can help you understand it better, and if we write about the books we read, we can share our experiences with other people. When you finish each book this summer, you can write about it in any of the following ways:

Option A: Write a book review. Do you recommend this book to other readers? Why or why not? A standard Book Review has a short description of the plot (1 paragraph), analysis and opinion on one thing you liked and one thing you would improve the book. using specifics from the book (1 paragraph, each) and a conclusion paragraph of the review "selling your opinion" to someone else. (Check newspapers, in print or online, and magazines like [Time](#), [New Yorker](#), [Amazon](#), for examples of book reviews).

Option B: Do some creative writing. Your creative work (one page in length) can be anything that relates to the book: a song, a poem, a short story, a play, a film, or any combination of genres. You can rewrite a scene from the perspective of another character. You could re-imagine the plot in a different setting. You could rewrite the ending. You could write a poem that deals with a theme or a character in the book. Whatever kind of text you write, include an explanation that links your creative work back to the book you read. Explain how your work is related to the author's work.

Option C: Write a letter to the author about the book (one page). The content of the letter is up to you. You can talk about your favorite parts of the book. You can ask the author how he came up with the idea for the book or why she chose to develop the plot or characters or theme in a certain way. You can explain ways you think the book relates to your own life, or you can make connections between the book and the real world.

Option D: Select an interesting issue raised in the book. Write a one-page explanation of how the issue was raised in the book, and why you find it interesting. Research the topic further, using one academic source, and write about your research, citing the information you used from the source.

Option E: Create a multimedia presentation about the book. This can be a PowerPoint presentation, a digital story, a series of film clips, or any other multimedia form, and it can document any of the ways the text connects with you, with other texts, or with the world around you.

Option F: I recognize that many of you like to think “outside the box,” so if you have another idea for a project, please share it with me prior to beginning it. **You will need my authorization in order to receive credit.**

You must choose one project per book. Do not duplicate projects. This assignment will be **due** at the end of the first full week of school when we return, **Monday September 11th**. If you have any questions regarding this assignment, you can contact me through my school email, gmolnar@stmpdx.org. As we are on summer break, I will respond to your email as soon as I can. Enjoy your break, and I am really looking forward to working with you all this year.

8th Grade History Summer Project

Greetings!! My name is Mr. Molnar and I will be your 8th Grade Language Arts and History teacher at St. Thomas More. I am looking forward to continuing to work with you for your 8th-grade year. A major theme that we will play with over the next school year is this notion of “American Identity.” Where did we get it? When did we realize it? What does it mean to you? What is an *American*? We will look at this question from multiple perspectives, from different groups looking from within and from outside.

When we return to school, we will be putting together an argumentative essay that attempts to answer the following prompt:

How do we define “American Identity?” What does it mean to be an American? Choose 3 adjectives you could use that helps define the American Identity. Look for examples in the summer text that support your argument on why your particular adjective applies to your answer.

In order to aid you in your paper, you will use **one of the following books**:

April Morning by Howard Fast

Or

Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes

These books are available in both the public library or for purchase on Amazon.

Assignment:

When you are writing this essay follow the brainstorming format we have practiced and used in class. 5-paragraph essays follow a basic design. The first paragraph, your introduction, includes your thesis (remember $A=B$ b/c x , y , and z) and a brief description of your 3 main points. Paragraphs 2,3, and 4 go into detail on why each point helps define “American Identity” for you. In each of these paragraphs, please include 1 citation from the book and how they help your definition. Paragraph 5 is your conclusion, where you put together your definition of “American Identity.” The Rough Draft will be due in class **Friday, September 9th**, where we will complete a peer edit in class. The Final Draft of this paper is due on the first day of the second week of school, **Monday, September 12th**.

If you have any questions regarding this assignment, you can contact me through my school email, gmolnar@stmpdx.org. As we are on summer break, I will respond to your email as soon as I can. Enjoy, and I am really looking forward to working with you all this year.