

### **Rising 8th grade Summer Reading Assignment (2023)**

To better prepare our students academically, Strong Rock Christian School incorporates a summer reading program to encourage reading and enhance language arts skills. Students will select a single book from the list below. After reading the selected book, students will complete a book project and AR quiz on the book during the first week of school. Please come to school prepared to discuss this book on the first day of school. Please choose a book that you have not read previously.

If you have any questions about the summer reading, please email me ([jandrews@strong-rock.com](mailto:jandrews@strong-rock.com)).

### **Rising 8th Grade Title:**

This summer you will explore the riveting world of historical fiction with Alan Gratz or Jennifer Nielsen.

### **Choose one book from the list below:**

*Prisoner B-3087* by Alan Gratz-Survive. At any cost. Yanek Gruener is a Jewish boy in 1930s Poland where Nazis invade. Everything he has and everyone he loves is brutally taken from him. And then Yanek himself is taken prisoner, his arm tattooed with the number B-3087. Forced from one nightmarish concentration camp to another as World War II rages around him, Yanek encounters evil he could never have imagined—and yet finds surprising glimpses of hope amid the horror. 10 different concentration camps. 10 different encounters with death. Can Yanek make it through the terror without losing his hope, his will, and, most of all, his identity? Based on the astonishing true story of one extraordinary boy.

*Refugee* by Alan Gratz-Three different kids. One mission in common: ESCAPE. Josef is a Jewish boy in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world... Isabel is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety and freedom in America... Mahmoud is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe... All three young people will go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers—from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But for each of them, there is always the hope of *tomorrow*. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, surprising connections will tie their stories together in the end.

*Projekt 1065* by Alan Gratz-Infiltrate. Befriend. Sabotage. World War II is raging. Michael O'Shaunessey, the son of the Irish ambassador to Nazi Germany, lives in war-torn Berlin with his parents. Like the other boys at his school, Michael is a member of the Hitler Youth. But Michael

has a secret: He and his parents are spies. Michael and his family help downed Allied airmen to safety and send the Allies coded messages with the locations of Nazi factories, but when one of the boys in Michael's Hitler Youth group shows him the secret plans to Projekt 1065, a prototype Nazi jet plane that could change the course of the war, Michael knows he has to steal the blueprints. To get close to the boy and the blueprints Michael has to go deeper and deeper into the madness of the Hitler Youth, and to do that, he may just have to sacrifice everything—and everyone—he loves.

*Grenade* by Alan Gratz—Two boys. Two grenades. The day the Americans land on Okinawa during World War II, the Japanese Army pulls Hideki Kaneshiro and all the other boys out of middle school and gives them each two grenades. One grenade, they tell Hideki, is to kill an American soldier. The other grenade is to kill himself. Ray Majors is a newly-minted Marine from Nebraska, hitting the beach on Okinawa for his first action of World War II. He left home to get away from his father, who came back from World War I a broken, angry man. A monster. But how can Ray survive the Typhoon of Steel that is the Battle of Okinawa without becoming a monster himself? Hideki and Ray are destined to meet — and when they do, both their lives will be changed forever.

*A Night Divided* by Jennifer Nielsen—With the rise of the Berlin Wall, twelve-year-old Gerta finds her family suddenly divided. She, her mother, and her brother Fritz live on the eastern side, controlled by the Soviets. Her father and middle brother, who had gone west in search of work, cannot return home. Gerta knows it is dangerous to watch the wall, to think forbidden thoughts of freedom, yet she can't help herself. She sees the East German soldiers with their guns trained on their own citizens; she, her family, her neighbors and friends are prisoners in their own city. But one day, while on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Then, when she receives a mysterious drawing, Gerta puts two and two together and concludes that her father wants Gerta and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. However, if they are caught, the consequences will be deadly. No one can be trusted. Will Gerta and her family find their way to freedom?

*Resistance* by Jennifer Nielsen—Chaya Lindner is a teenager living in Nazi-occupied Poland. Simply being Jewish places her in danger of being killed or sent to the camps. After her little sister is taken away, her younger brother disappears, and her parents all but give up hope, Chaya is determined to make a difference. Using forged papers and her fair features, Chaya becomes a courier and travels between the Jewish ghettos of Poland, smuggling food, papers, and even people. Soon Chaya joins a resistance cell that runs raids on the Nazis' supplies. But after a mission goes terribly wrong, Chaya's network shatters. She is alone and unsure of where to go, until Esther, a member of her cell, finds her and delivers a message that chills Chaya to her core, and sends her on a journey toward an even larger uprising in the works -- in the Warsaw

Ghetto. Though the Jewish resistance never had much of a chance against the Nazis, they were determined to save as many lives as possible, and to live -- or die -- with honor.

*Lines of Courage* by Jennifer Nielsen-World War I stretches its cruel fingers across Europe, where five young people, each from different backgrounds and nations, face the terror of battle, the deprivations of hunger, and all the awful challenges of war. Felix, from Austria-Hungary, longs for the bravery to resist Jewish deportations before his own family can be taken. Kara, from Britain, dreams of someday earning her Red Cross pin and working as a nurse -- or even a doctor. Juliette, of France, hopes her family can remain knitted together, despite her father's imprisonment, as the war's longest battle stretches on and on. Elsa, from Germany, hopes her homing pigeon might one day bring her a friend from out of the chaos. And Dimitri, of Russia, wants only to survive the front, where he's been sent with no weapon. None of them will find exactly what they want. But the winds of fate may cross their paths to give each of them just what they need. And in this remarkable exploration of World War I by critically acclaimed author Jennifer A. Nielsen, they will discover that friendship and courage can light the way through the most frightening of nights.