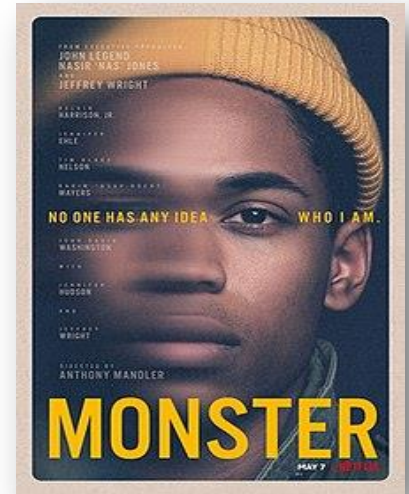




Stephenson Middle School
Rising 8th Grade Students
2023 Summer Reading Packet



Dear S.M.S. Students and Parents/Guardians,

Happy Summer Break! Welcome Back 8th Grade Jaguars! It is time to complete your enrichment novels. We are certainly sure that you are basking in the sun in the ambience of your peace, and it is truly well deserved. Yet, we must stay on track. This summer all rising 8th graders must read at least three books. Students must complete the **Summer Reading log** and are strongly encouraged to complete the guided reading questions for *Monster* as they will be given graded assignments using the novel at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year.

Required Reading *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers is a story about Steve Harmon, a black 17-year-old boy who is on trial for a felony murder he may or may not have committed. He decides to look through the court system and jail time as if it were a movie, and as if everyone saw him for what he truly was.

Please complete the guided reading questions and vocabulary activity in this packet for the novel *Monster*. Additional reading titles are listed in this packet as well. Please read **two** additional novels of your choice. Remember to log all novels read this summer including *Monster*. Let's get Jaguar ready for the Fall!

Enjoy your Jag reading time,

S.M.S. 8th Grade ELA Teachers and Supporting Staff



8th Grade Reading Novel Study
Monster by Walter Dean Myers

You may print this page and write on it or write the questions and your answers in complete sentences on notebook paper neatly.

Guided Reading Questions

Introduction

Why is the best time for Steve to cry at night?

How does Steve feel about being in jail?

What does he compare being in jail to?

How is Steve "recording" his movie?

Why does he name the movie "Monster"?

Monday, July 6th

How does Steve describe the setting?

What do you think that Sunset means on page 11 by, "He's up for the big one"?

What is Steve on trial for?

How does Steve describe his lawyer, Kathy O'Brien?

Who else is on trial for the crime?

How is Steve feeling right before the trial starts?

How does Steve describe the judge?

What does Steve recall in his flashback to high school?

Describe the murder that Steve and James are on trial for.

Why do you think O'Brien crossed out every "Monster" that Steve writes on his paper?

Who is the first witness on the stand?

What was missing from the store when José got back?

Why do you think that Briggs asks José if he immediately took inventory of the store?

Why did Sal Zinzi talk to Detective Gluck about what he hears about the robbery?

How do Briggs and O'Brien try to ruin the jury's opinion of Zinzi?

What does Steve's next flashback show us about the environment he grew up in?

Tuesday, July 7th

What is a specific example that Steve gives to show how horrible jail is?

Why won't they rob a bank?

Based on the close-up of the jury member, how can we assume the jury is feeling at this point?

Wednesday, July 8th

What do you think Steve means on page 59 by, "I guess making you live is part of the punishment"?

Why do you think that Sunset says he's going to get "Monster" tattooed on his forehead?

Why doesn't Steve speak to the preacher that visits the jail?

What does Steve's dream represent about how he's feeling in the courtroom?

Thursday, July 9th

What is Steve's minimum potential sentence if he gets 25 years to life?

Why do you think that Osvaldo lies about being in a gang?

What do the details of the gang initiation show us about Osvaldo?

In the flashback to the night of the crime, why do you think that people in the neighborhood aren't more shocked?

How did Steve act when he is taken for questioning? How is this different from how his mom acted?

Friday, July 10th

What is Petrocelli's "cheap trick" on page 127?

Why does Steve freak out when mopping the prison floors?

What is significant about the murder weapon?

What does it mean to "chalk" a body?

Saturday, July 11

What is different between Sunset and Steve's crimes?

How did Ernie, the new guy, get caught and end up in jail?

What is the passage that Steve's mom marked in The Bible about?

What does it mean to do a "calendar" in jail?

What new information do we learn in Steve's flashback to King introducing the crime?

Sunday, July 12th

Why does Steve believe there are so many fights in jail?

Why is it ironic that they don't allow kids in the visiting area of the jail Steve is in?

Why do you think that Steve's mom is already "mourning" him?

What event is happening tomorrow?

Monday, July 13th

Who is the first witness called to the stand?

Why was Mrs. Henry in the drugstore right on the night of the murder?

Why is Bobo wearing his orange prison jumpsuit?

Who does Bobo accuse of actually shooting the old man?

Why is it important for O'Brien to point out that Bobo never spoke to Steve about the robbery?

Tuesday, July 14th

How does O'Brien feel about Bobo's testimony?

Why does O'Brien think that Steve needs to testify? How will it help him?

Why can't King testify?

Why do you think that Petrocelli is trying to connect Steve to everyone else in the crime by labeling them as "acquaintances"?

Why does Petrocelli argue that Steve had an equal role in Mr. Nesbitt's death?

Why does King say he isn't scared?

Friday, July 17th

What does awaiting the verdict make Steve realize about some of the guys in jail?

Why do you think that Steve already planning his appeal?

What does Steve say is the only thing that is real right now?

What is King's verdict?

What is Steve's verdict?

Why do you think that O'Brien does not hug Steve after his verdict is read?

December

What was King's sentence?

What happened to Osvaldo and Bobo?

What has Steve been focusing on since the trial?

Why does Steve feel like there is distance between him and his father?

What is the point of Steve making so many films of himself?

Vocabulary from Novel

Word	Definition	Sentence
1. compost		
2. yew tree		
3. vindaloo		
4. massive		
5. encompass		
6. preserve		
7. countenance		
8. endeavored		
9. reluctance		
10. treachery		
11. apothecary		
12. enlightened		

13. concoctions		
14. Pax foil		
15. ratcheted		
16. morphine		
17. impenetrable		
18. lurching		
19. abyss		
20. battering		

Suggested Summer Reading Novels

These books may be available in the public library system, Barnes and Noble, and Amazon.com.

Bayron, Kalynn. *Cinderella is Dead*

It's 200 years after Cinderella found her prince, but the fairy tale is over. Teen girls are now required to appear at the Annual Ball, where the men of the kingdom select wives based on a girl's display of finery. If a suitable match is not found, the girls not chosen are never heard from again.

Sixteen-year-old Sophia would much rather marry Erin, her childhood best friend, than parade in front of suitors. At the ball, Sophia makes the desperate decision to flee, and finds herself hiding in Cinderella's mausoleum. There, she meets Constance, the last known descendant of Cinderella and her stepsisters. Together they vow to bring down the king once and for all—and in the process, they learn that there's more to Cinderella's story than they ever knew . . .

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *The War That Saved My Life*

A young disabled girl and her brother are evacuated from London to the English countryside during World War II, where they find life to be much sweeter away from their abusive mother.

Bruchac, Joseph. *Code Talker*

Sixteen-year-old Ned enlists in the U.S Marines during World War II. He calls upon his Navajo language, traditions, and consciousness to survive the battlefield and radio top secret information by code.

Esplin, J. L. *96 Miles*

During a massive blackout in rural Nevada, two brothers struggle to survive without their self-reliance-obsessed dad and without enough water to cross the desert for help.

Evans, Richard Paul. *Michael Vey: The Prisoner of Cell 25*

Fourteen-year-old Michael discovers he has special electric powers, and with the help of his best friends, realizes there are other teens with similar powers. Then his mother gets kidnapped, and Michael and his friends begin a quest to rescue his mom and save themselves.

Freeman, Megan. *Alone*

Twelve-year-old Maddie had schemed to host a harmless sleepover, but instead finds herself in a nightmare adventure when she wakes up all alone--not just without her friends, but without anyone in her town at all. Not knowing why everyone was evacuated, Maddie and her only companion--George the Rottweiler--forage for food and find out what happened. Her solitude is broken by wild animals, looters, and natural disasters in the months to come, and her only solace and hint at what happened is her stepbrother's left-behind book report on loneliness.

Gephart, Donna. *Lily and Dunkin*

Lily Jo McGrother, born Timothy McGrother, is a girl. But being a girl is not so easy when you look like a boy. Especially when you're in the eighth grade. Norbert Dorfman, nicknamed Dunkin Dorfman, is bipolar and has just moved from the New Jersey town he's called home for the past thirteen years. This would be hard enough, but the fact that he is also hiding from a painful secret makes it even worse. One summer morning, Lily Jo McGrother meets Dunkin Dorfman, and their lives forever change.

Gratz, Alan. *Ground Zero*.

It's September 11, 2001. Brandon, a 9-year-old boy, goes to work for the day with his dad . . . at the World Trade Center in New York City. When two planes hit the towers, Brandon and his father are trapped inside a fiery nightmare as terror and confusion swirl around them. Can they escape -- and what will the world be like when they do?

In present-day Afghanistan, Reshmina is an 11-year-old girl who is used to growing up in the shadow of war, but she has dreams of peace and unity. When she ends up harboring a wounded young American soldier, she and her entire family are put in mortal danger. But Reshmina also learns something surprising about the roots of this endless war.

Green, Tim. *Left Out*.

Landon Dorch has always felt left out due to his deafness that affects his speech and requires him to have cochlear implants. He finally secures a place on the seventh-grade football team, but it proves harder than he thought. Then Landon gets some help from star players who know all about being different, and he digs deep into himself to fight his way off the bench.

Hiranandani, Veera. *The Night Diary*

It's 1947, and India, newly independent of British rule, has been separated into two countries: Pakistan and India. The divide has created much tension between Hindus and Muslims, and hundreds of thousands are killed crossing borders. Half-Muslim, half-Hindu twelve-year-old Nisha doesn't know where she belongs, or what her country is anymore. When Papa decides it's too dangerous to stay in what is now Pakistan, Nisha and her family become refugees and embark first by train but later foot to reach her new home. The journey is long, difficult, and dangerous, and after losing her mother as a baby, Nisha can't imagine losing her homeland, too. But even if her country has been ripped apart, Nisha still believes in the possibility of putting herself back together.

Keller, Tae. *When You Trap a Tiger*

Some stories refuse to stay bottled up...

When Lily and her family move in with her sick grandmother, a magical tiger straight out of her halmoni's Korean folktales arrives, prompting Lily to unravel a secret family history. Long, long ago, Halmoni stole something from the tigers. Now they want it back. And when one of the tigers approaches Lily with a deal--return what her grandmother stole in exchange for Halmoni's health--Lily is tempted to agree. But deals with tigers are never what they seem! With the help of her sister and her new friend Ricky, Lily must find her voice...and the courage to face a tiger.

Koja, Kathe. *Buddha Boy*

Justin's life at Edward Rucher High changes dramatically when he befriends the bizarre Buddha Boy, who is rejected by the popular kids in the school. Justin is exposed to a new world and a unique way of looking at life, as he is forced to choose between genuine friendship and social acceptance.

Liparulo, Robert. *The House of Dark Shadows*

Fifteen-year-old Xander and his family move into an old, abandoned house in the middle of a dense forest outside of a small California town. They soon discover that not only are some of the rooms portals into other places, but that malevolent forces are also at work.

Lu, Marie. *Skyhunter*

Talin is a Striker, a member of an elite fighting force that stands as the last defense for the only free nation in the world: Mara.

A refugee, Talin knows firsthand the horrors of the Federation, a world-dominating war machine responsible for destroying nation after nation with its terrifying army of mutant beasts known only as Ghosts.

But when a mysterious prisoner is brought from the front to Mara's capital, Talin senses there's more to him than meets the eye. Is he a spy from the Federation? What secrets is he hiding?

Only one thing is clear: Talin is ready to fight to the death alongside her fellow Strikers for the only homeland she has left . . . with or without the boy who might just be the weapon to save—or destroy—them all.

Marshall, Kate Alice. *I Am Still Alive*

After a car crash kills her mother, Jess goes to live with her survivalist, off-the-grid father--whom she hasn't seen in a decade--in the Canadian wilderness. But just as the two begin to reconnect, a secret from his past arrives leaving him dead and the cabin burned to the ground. Suddenly, Jess finds herself abandoned in the cold Canadian wilderness. With only her dog for company, Jess must find a way to survive the harsh environment if she is to seek revenge on the person who killed her father.

Mass, Wendy. *A Mango-shaped Space*

Teenaged Mia has a secret ability that makes her feel like a freak. She embarks on an intense journey of self-discovery, but by the time she realizes she has isolated herself from everyone who cares about her, it's almost too late. This is realistic fiction with an unusual twist.

Morrison, Laura. *Up for Air*

Thirteen-year-old Annabelle struggles in school, no matter how hard she tries. But as soon as she dives into the pool, she's unstoppable. She's the fastest girl on the middle school swim team, and when she's asked to join the high school team over the summer, everything changes. Suddenly, she's got new friends, and a high school boy starts treating her like she's somebody special—and Annabelle thinks she'll finally stand out in a good way. She'll do anything to fit in and help the team make it to the Labor Day Invitational, even if it means blowing off her old friends. But after a prank goes wrong, Annabelle is abandoned by the older boy and can't swim. Who is she without the one thing she's good at? Heartwarming and relatable, *Up for Air* is a story about where we find our self-worth.

Palacio, R.J. *Pony*

****Challenging read not similar to *Wonder*. ****

Twelve-year-old Silas is left scared and shaken by himself after three mysterious horsemen take his father away in the night. Left with no companionship except that of Mittenwool, a ghost, Silas decides to wait, as instructed, for his father to return in a week. However, when a strange pony one of the men was riding shows up at his door, Silas sees it as a sign from his father to go find him, Silas mounts up and sets out on a journey across the Western American landscape to find his father and help him make sense of the mysterious ghosts he sees and the changing world around him.

Priest, Cherie. *I Am Princess X*

Years after writing stories about a superheroine character she created with a best friend who died in a tragic car accident, 16-year-old May is shocked to see stickers, patches and graffiti images of the superheroine appearing all over town.

Riordan, Rick. *Daughter of the Deep- Lexile*

As a freshman at the prestigious marine and aquatics science high school Harding-Pencroft, fourteen-year-old orphan Ana Dakkar and her classmates find themselves the school's only survivors when an attack destroys their school while they were in route to their end-of-year trials. Regrouping on a hidden island outpost, the freshmen learn from their teacher that the attack was perpetrated by their rival school, the Land Institute, and that the key to their survival lies in unlocking the technology of Captain Nemo's "Nautilus."

Rowling, J.K.- *The Ickabog*

Once upon a time there was a tiny kingdom called Cornucopia, as rich in happiness as it was in gold, and famous for its food. From the delicate cream cheeses of Kurdsburg to the Hopes-of-Heaven pastries of Chouxville, each was so delicious that people wept with joy as they ate them.

But even in this happy kingdom, a monster lurks. Legend tells of a fearsome creature living far to the north in the Marshlands... the Ickabog. Some say it breathes fire, spits poison, and roars through the mist as it carries off wayward sheep and children alike. Some say it's just a myth...

And when that myth takes on a life of its own, casting a shadow over the kingdom, two children — best friends Bert and Daisy — embark on a great adventure to untangle the truth and find out where the real monster lies, bringing hope and happiness to Cornucopia once more.

Salisbury, Melinda. *Hold Back the Tide*

When Alva was nine, her father killed her mother, but lack of evidence prevented him from being convicted. Alva has kept a low profile around her father until she can run away, helping him with his duties monitoring the water levels of Loch Lake. When water levels drop too low, deadly creatures emerge from the caves, and her father does nothing to stop them, leaving Alva to warn the villagers and find a way to destroy them.

Sanderson, Brandon. *Steelheart*

At age eight, David watched as his father was killed by an Epic, a human with superhuman powers, and now, ten years later, he joins the Reckoners- the only people who are trying to kill the Epics and end their tyranny.

Schwab, Victoria. *Gallant*

Even though she's lived there her whole life, the Merilance School for Independent Girls has never felt like home to fourteen-year-old Olivia. The other girls ridicule her because she speaks with sign language, and the teachers treat her as though she's stupid, just because she's mute. And for just as long, she's been seeing the ghouls prowling the school. When a letter arrives from her uncle Arthur Prior, inviting her to live with him at his manor Gallant, Olivia is thrilled and imagines her life will only get better. When an old, abandoned garden calls to her, she enters and finds a shadow world mirroring the real one, leading her to discoveries about Gallant, her parents, and her destiny.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie*

When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, 13-year-old Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, his school life, and his desire to support his family. Readers will love both brothers, laughing, crying, and rooting for both!

Spinelli, Jerry. *Milkweed*

This is a historical, fictionalized account of a street child known only as Stop thief. Stop thief finds a community when he is taken in by a band of orphans in the Warsaw ghetto, and they help him to weather the horrors of the Nazi regime.

Standish, Ali. *The Ethan I Was Before*

Twelve-year-old Ethan Truitt and his family have relocated from Boston to a small town in Georgia after a tragic accident involving his best friend Kacey—an incident that leaves him haunted by guilt. He thinks he might never find joy again until he meets Coralee, a daring girl who helps him feel alive again. But there's more to Coralee than meets the eye—and her secrets could put both their lives at risk.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Runaway*

After running away from her fifth foster home, Holly, a twelve-year-old orphan, travels across the country, keeping a journal of her experiences and struggle to survive.

Williams, Alicia. *Genesis Begins Again*

Thirteen-year-old Genesis keeps a list of all the things she hates about herself--she's up to ninety-six--the last of which is her very dark skin. Her gambling-addict father has once again lost their rent money, so Genesis moves in with her grandmother who claims that none of this would've happened if her mother had married a light-skinned man. At school, Genesis tries out for the talent show, but is ashamed of her dark skin, so she tries several skin-lightening techniques to no avail. She is now faced with either getting that list to 100 and beyond or learning to love the skin she has.

Wolk, Lauren. *Echo Mountain*

A young heroine in Depression-era Maine is navigating the rocky terrain of her new life on Echo Mountain.

After the financial crash, Ellie and her family have lost nearly everything--including their home in town. They have started over, carving out a new life in the unforgiving terrain of Echo Mountain. Though her sister Esther, especially, resents everything about the mountain, Ellie has found more freedom, a new strength, and a love of the natural world that now surrounds them. But there is little joy, even for Ellie, as they all struggle with the sorrow and aftermath of an accident that left her father in a coma. An accident for which Ellie has accepted the unearned weight of blame.

Urgent for a cure to bring her father back, Ellie is determined to try anything. Following her heart, and the lead of a scruffy mutt, Ellie will make her way to the top of the mountain, in search of the healing secrets of a woman known only as "the hag." But the mountain still has many untold stories left to reveal to Ellie, as she finds her way forward among a complex constellation of strong women spanning generations.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Brown Girl Dreaming*

The author shares her childhood memories and reveals the first sparks that ignited her writing career in free-verse poems about growing up in the North and South.

Additional Novel suggestions taken from Orchard Park Middle School in New York