

**MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT
Laureldale, Pennsylvania**

7TH AND 8TH GRADE

NOVEL LISTING

2010-2011 SCHOOL TERM

NOVELS SEVENTH GRADE

The Outsiders, S.E. Hinton

The Outsiders follows the life of a young boy by the name of Pony Curtis. Pony is in a gang made up of uneducated, parentless boys called the Greasers. Despite his underprivileged status, Pony has the potential to be successful in school and life and his brother, Darry, who also raises him, sees this. He is constantly pushing Pony to do better and try harder. However, not until Pony experiences the hardships of a gang life does he actually try to do something with his life. Following a run-in with the town's upper class gang, the Socs, Pony and his friend are forced to go into hiding. Within days, multiple members of both gangs are dead and Pony's life is changed forever. He decides to use his experiences to teach others, thus reaching his true potential.

Violence: yes Profanity: yes Sexual Content: none

White Fang, Jack London

At the center of White Fang are the themes of the "survival of the fittest" and the power of love and hate. White Fang is an aggressive wolf who was born in to the wild, captured and, eventually, tamed by the love of his last masters, Weedon Scott. Before Scott, White Fang was treated cruelly by his masters, regularly being beat and provoked. It made him a very angry beast that would attack other animals and people without hesitation. His tortured life is saved by Scott who saves him after a vicious battle with another dog. Scott nurtures the wolf and, overtime, White Fang seems to take a liking to his new master. He becomes devoted to Scott, even killing a man and sacrificing his own well-being to protect the family. This classic novel is a reflection of the golden rule and how a young wolf cub survives the wild.

Violence: yes Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

Treasure Island, Robert Louis Stevenson

Jim Hawkins documents his travels to Treasure Island starting with a series of strange events and meetings with various people at the Admiral Benbow Inn. Appointed as cabin boy on the Hispaniola, he overhears Long John Silver's plan to take over the ship. In an attempt to find the treasures on the island and eventually help Long John Silver, Jim encounters pirates, is briefly stranded at sea, discovers a marooned sailor, and eventually takes over the ship before returning to Bristol. On Treasure Island, Jim finds more than just treasure as his greatest adventure becomes his journey to adulthood.

Violence: yes Profanity: yes Sexual Content: none

A Midsummer Night's Dream, William Shakespeare

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a favorite among Shakespeare's plays that combines reality with the imagination. The Fairy King, Oberon, wants to trick his Queen, Titania, into relinquishing her servant boy to him. He has his attendant, Puck, find a magic flower and puts its juices on her sleeping eyes. Meanwhile, four Athenian youths are running through the forest. Hermia and Lysander are trying to escape Athens and her fiancé, Demetrius, so they can elope. Helena is chasing Demetrius through the forest to try to convince him to love her. The fairy world and human world collide when Puck mistakenly puts the potion on Lysander's eyes causing him to wake and fall in love with Helena. Until Puck fixes his mistake, the two men follow Helena, both trying to woo her while Hermia is left abandon. In the end, all the wrongs are righted and the new found loves are celebrated with a marriage ceremony.

Violence: none Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

The Call of the Wild, Jack London (McDougal Littell)

Buck, a dog that was taken from his home and sold as a sled dog in the Klondike has his spirit, strength, and will tested. In this novel, he defines the meaning of survival of the fittest.

Violence: yes Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

Tuck Everlasting, Natalie Babbitt (Scholastic)

Given eternal life after drinking from a magic spring, the Tuck family tries to live an inconspicuous life. When ten year old Winnie Foster discovers their secret, the Tucks do their best to explain to her why living forever is such a blessing.

Violence: yes Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

Dogsong, Gary Paulsen (McDougal Littell)

Dogsong is a coming of age story which revolves around an Inuit teenager named Russel who lives on a reservation in Alaska. He has become disheartened with the way his people have gotten away from their traditional roots. He aspires to learn the traditional ways through the elder of the Village, Oogruk. Through Oogruk's teachings Russel learns to survive in the frigid harshness of the Alaskan wilderness. When Oogruk dies Russel takes charge of his dog team and heads them north, further into the wilderness as Oogruk had prescribed. Russel hopes to find himself and become a man.

Violence: yes Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

Novels, Grade 7 (Cont.)

The Upstairs Room, Johanna Reiss (Harper Trophy)

The story takes place in Holland during WWII. Annie de Leeuw was eight years old and Jewish. A Gentile family took in Annie and her sister for two years. They were cramped in the upstairs of a farmhouse. The two sisters survive a long ordeal of missing their family and not feeling the sunlight on their faces.

Violence: yes

Profanity: yes

Sexual Content: none

NOVELS EIGHTH GRADE

A Long Way from Chicago, Richard Peck, (Scholastic)

Each summer over the nine years of the Depression, Joey and Moary Alice make their annual visit to Grandma's in the country. Joey and Mary Alice learn a lot about their not-so-typical Grandma.

Violence: yes

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

Ella Enchanted, Gail Carson Levine, (Harper Trophy)

Ella is given a "gift", the curse of obedience. Driven by the harsh treatment from her stepsisters and her love for the prince, Ella goes on a quest to break the curse - once and for all.

Violence: none

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

Esperanza Rising, Pam Munoz Ryan, (Scholastic)

After the death of her father, Esperanza goes from being a rich "princess" to a migrant field worker. She must give up her old life in order to remain with family and friends.

Violence: none

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

Freak the Mighty, Rodman Philbrick, (Scholastic)

Max is large and awkward. Kevin is small and powerful. When the two outcasts become friends, they are "Freak the Mighty", an unstoppable force.

Violence: yes

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

Great Expectations, Charles Dickens, (Signet Classic)

Charles Dickens' Great Expectations is the story of a poor orphan names Pip who lives in Victorian England and who has no hope of ever being educated. He seems destined to become a blacksmith until one day a lawyer, Mr. Jaggers, tells Pip that he has an anonymous benefactor who has provided great expectations for him. At the same time Pip meets Miss Havisham and her beautiful niece, Estelle. Pip believes Miss Havisham is his secret benefactor and he hopes that someday he'll marry Estelle.

Violence: yes

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

The Merchant of Venice, William Shakespeare, (Washington Square Publication)

The Merchant of Venice is about love, marriage and tolerance. In one plot strand Bassanio, a close friend of the merchant Antonio, has lived beyond his means and has depleted his inheritance. Now Bassanio wishes to marry Portia, the incredibly wealthy and much sought after heiress of Belmont.

Since all of his cash is tied up in his merchant ships which are currently at sea, Antonio borrows the money Bassanio needs from Shylock the Jewish money lender. Instead of charging interest which Antonio abhors, the men agree that Antonio will forfeit a pound of flesh if he fails to pay the bond on time. When the bond comes due and Antonio's ships have not returned, the intelligent Portia, disguised, steps in to try to help Antonio.

Violence: yes

Profanity: yes

Sexual Content: yes

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, Mildred D. Taylor, (Penguin Books)

The Logans, an African-American family living in Mississippi during the Depression of the 1930's, are faced with prejudice and discrimination. It tells the story of their fight to stay together and to keep their land. Newberry Medal 1977

Violence: yes

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

Stargirl, Jerry Spinelli, (Scholastic)

Susan Caraway is unique. She dresses differently, plays a ukulele, has a pet rat, and goes by the name Stargirl. When Leo falls for her, he has a tough decision to make: love the girl everybody hates or give in to peer pressure and break up with her.

Violence: none

Profanity: none

Sexual Content: none

Novels, Grade 8 (Cont.)

The Pearl, John Steinbeck, (Penguin Books)

What happens when a poor pearl diver suddenly discovers "the pearl of the world"? Kino and Juana learn the answer when they need money to pay a doctor's bill for their infant son. The attitude of their whole village seems to shift as the couple attempt to get a fair price for their find. Kino finally decides to take his young family on a journey that changes their lives forever.

Violence: yes Profanity: yes Sexual Content: yes

To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee, (Warner Books)

To Kill a Mockingbird has two major plot strands. The first involves the childhood experiences of Scout and Jem Finch who grow up in the sleepy Southern town of Maycomb, Alabama. As narrator, Scout describes their adventures, particularly as they relate to trying to make "Boo" Radley come out of his house. The reader also glimpses her insight into the array of human behaviors as she observes the adults around her.

The second thread involves prejudice in the deep South during the 1930's as experienced by Tom Robinson, a kind, gentle African American man, who suddenly finds himself facing serious accusations which could cost him his life.

Sharing life with the Finch children, their father and friends helps readers of all ages evaluate the choices they make.

Violence: yes Profanity: yes Sexual Content: yes

A Year Down Yonder, Richard Peck, (Scholastic)

Mary Alice, a city, girl, comes to live with her Grandma in the country after the Great Depression. She learns a lot about independence and the value of family.

Violence: none Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

Homecoming, Cynthia Voigt (Atheneum)

Abandoned by their mother, four children begin a search for a home and an identity. They travel hundreds of miles to find that the Aunt they thought they could live with has died. Their cousin agrees to take them in, but the children are not happy there. Their perseverance leads them to a grandmother they never knew.

Violence: none Profanity: none Sexual Content: none

The Giver, Lois Lawry (McDougal Littell)

The Giver is a soft science fiction novel published in 1993. It is set in a future society which is at first presented as a utopia and gradually appears more and more dystopic. The novel follows a boy names Jonas through the twelfth year of this life. Jonas's society has eliminated pain and strife by converting to "Sameness", a move which has also eradicated emotional depth from their lives. Jonas is selected to inherit the position of "Receiver of Memory," the person who stores all the memories of the time before Sameness, in case they are ever needed. As Jonas receives the memories from his predecessor – the Giver-he discovers how shallow his community's life has become.

Violence: yes Profanity: none Sexual Content: yes

Things Not Seen, Andrew Clements (Follett)

Fifteen-year-old Bobby thinks he knows what it's like to be invisible-he's used to being ignored by the popular kids at school (especially the girls). Even his parents hardly seem to notice whether he's home or not. Then one morning, Bobby wakes up to find that he IS invisible. For real. He can't stop wondering if he'll ever reappear-especially when his parents wreck their car and wind up in the hospital. Now Bobby is all alone. How can he survive in a world where he can't be seen? One thing's for sure: Bobby's not going to just wait around to see if his body will decide to show up again on its own. He's got to take action. Fast. He and his parents and his new blind friend Alicia try to find out what caused his condition and how to reverse it.

Violence - none Profanity - none Sexual content - none