CONTENT AREA: ENGLISH

OBJECTIVES: ALL STUDENTS WILL:
❖ Choose one (1) of the books from the list below.
❖ Take notes on the reading (requirements listed below) that will be used to complete the assessment of the summer reading at the beginning of the school year.

BOOK LIST: Slam! by Walter Dean Myers

Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko

Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper

Full Cicada Moon by Marilyn Hilton

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

YOUR NOTES: While reading your book, you need to take notes on your reading. Your notes should address the following components in the novel. They can be typed or handwritten:

*plot
*setting
*characters
*conflict
*resolution

THE ASSESSMENT: During the first 2 weeks of school, you will complete an assessment for the summer reading book. You will be allowed to use your notes during the assessment, so be sure to come prepared!
Grade 7 Choices: Summaries of Books

Description from the inside cover of Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko

“1935. I want to be on Alcatraz like I want poison oak on my private parts. But apparently nobody cares, because now I'm Moose Flanagan, Alcatraz Island Boy all so my sister can go to the Esther P. Marinoff School, where kids have macaroni salad in their hair and wear their clothes inside out and there's not a chalkboard or a book in sight. Good Moose. Obedient Moose. I always do what I'm supposed to do.”

When Moose's family moves to Alcatraz so his father can work as a guard and his sister can attend a special school in San Francisco, Moose has to leave his friends and his winning baseball team behind. But it's worth it, right? If his sister, Natalie, can finally get help, maybe his family will finally be normal.

But as it turns out, life on Alcatraz is much more complicated than even Moose would have predicted.

His dad is so busy, he's never around. His mom's preoccupation with Natalie's condition (today it would be called autism) is even worse now that there's no extended family to help with her tantrums and constant needs. And of course, there's never enough money.

When Moose meets Piper, the cute daughter of the Warden, he knows right off she's trouble. But she's also strangely irresistible. All Moose wants to do is protect Natalie, live up to his parent's expectations, and stay out of trouble. But on Alcatraz, trouble is never very far away.

Description from the back of the paperback copy of Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper

Eleven-year-old Melody has a photographic memory. Her head is like a video camera that is always recording. Always. And there's no delete button. She's the smartest kid in her whole school—but no one knows it. Most people--her teachers and doctors included--don't think she's capable of learning, and up until recently her school days consisted of listening to the same preschool-level alphabet lessons again and again and again. If only she could speak up, if only she could tell people what she thinks and knows . . . but she can't, because Melody can't talk. She can't walk. She can't write.

Being stuck inside her head is making Melody go out of her mind--that is, until she discovers something that will allow her to speak for the first time ever. At last Melody has a voice . . . but not everyone around her is ready to hear it.

Description from scholastic.com Slam! By Walter Dean Myers

Greg "Slam" Harris is 17 and can do it all on the basketball court. He's seen ballplayers come and go, and he knows he could be one of the lucky ones. Slam's grades aren't so hot though, and when his teachers jam his troubles in his face, he blows up. Slam never doubted himself on the court until he found himself going one-on-one with his own future, and he didn't have the ball. Sixteen-year-old Greg "Slam" Harris can really play the game of basketball. At six-three, he has the quickness to handle the point guard position and, as his tag implies, he can slam-dunk at will. Slam is doing poorly academically, a fact his teachers remind him of constantly. Slam is painfully aware of his own shortcomings, but when he's told the obvious truths, he reacts angrily. Yes, he's in trouble, but he doesn't want it rubbed in his face. On one hand, Slam knows that he could be one of the lucky ones, playing his way out of the inner city playgrounds and into a new beginning. But he could also be one of the hordes of young players who fall by the wayside. When his coach decides to make another player the point guard and the star of the team, Slam realizes that his destiny might not be in his own hands.
It's 1969, and the Apollo 11 mission is getting ready to go to the moon. But for half-black, half-Japanese Mimi, moving to a predominantly white Vermont town is enough to make her feel alien. Suddenly, Mimi's appearance is all anyone notices. She struggles to fit in with her classmates, even as she fights for her right to stand out by entering science competitions and joining Shop Class instead of Home Ec. And even though teachers and neighbors balk at her mixed-race family and her refusals to conform, Mimi's dreams of becoming an astronaut never fade—no matter how many times she's told no. This historical middle-grade novel is told in poems from Mimi's perspective over the course of one year in her new town, and shows readers that positive change can start with just one person speaking up. Winner of the 2015-2016 APALA Literature Award in the Children's category!

Josh Bell, aka Filthy McNasty, is a solid basketball player. His brother, Jordan, isn't too bad himself. The twin boys, both middle schoolers, have been playing for a long time. Their dad wasn't too bad a ball player himself back in the day either — in fact, he played professionally and earned some good money and good jewelry. But he quit playing, and when Josh tries to broach the question about why his dad stopped and why his dad doesn't take up coaching, dad dodges the questions. On the surface, Kwame Alexander's verse novel The Crossover looks simple. It's about a boy and his brother who play basketball. But it's a much deeper, more complex novel about the challenges that exceptionally “average” characters can have. Josh is a relatable character, with two parents who are happily married. He and his brother get along. They're passionate about the game. But things become more complex. The Crossover makes exceptionally smart use of the verse format, without once feeling overdone or leaving the reader with the feeling a lot was lost because of the style. Alexander plays with the format visually in tense action scenes, and Josh’s voice comes through. He loves rap and he plays around with rap himself, so the poetry and the beat of this story are authentic, natural, and memorable.