



THE EDWARD R. BYRNE SCHOOL

Jared Rosoff, Principal
Brenda McDonagh, Assistant Principal
Leigh Turetsky, Assistant Principal

WELCOME TO 7TH GRADE!



Student Name: _____

Class: _____

****THIS PACKET IS DUE SEPTEMBER 5TH, 2025****



September 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to 7th Grade and welcome back to M.S. 101! We are determined and prepared to meet the challenges that a new school year brings. We look forward to the multitude of daily successes in our classrooms and to a year filled with academics, achieving goals, and learning.

Our expectations for seventh grade are clear: accountability, academic rigor, and personal growth. We expect students to continue following all school rules and regulations every day. As teachers, we are committed to helping in any way we can; however, we expect that students will be responsible for their own education and ask for help. We believe in hard work and having fun while we learn. We insist on good behavior, accountability for actions, honesty, and respect for all. Feedback and participation are the keys to success as well. Nevertheless, students are responsible for ensuring that all assignments are completed on time. If you need to reach us, you can call the school at 718-829-6273, or reach us by email to make an appointment.

Students will have many opportunities to be successful in each marking period. Please support us in ensuring your child is staying up-to-date on all assignments by checking their Google Classroom, and SyncGrades, our primary online parent communication website. We strongly recommend you download the MS101 app to access a hyperlink to SyncGrades to log in using your child's information. This will allow you to see everything that he/she is working on in their classes.

We are committed to ensuring that our seventh graders have a successful year at M.S. 101 and look forward to working closely with you and your child and truly making this a TEAM effort.

Our 7th grade ELA teachers have attached a **required** assignment that will count for the 1st Marking Period. We look forward to a productive and successful year of learning with you and your child.

Sincerely,
7th Grade Team



Grade 7 English Language Arts Summer Assignment 2025-2026 School Year

In preparation for the rigorous curriculum that we will begin during the 2025-2026 academic school year, please ensure you complete the assigned task(s) below. Students must complete this assignment before we return from Summer Break, to ensure readiness for our first unit.

- 1) Read "Heartbeat" a short story by David Yoo. We suggest that you annotate as you read, focusing on what you learn about David throughout the text. For example, how does David feel? What kind of person is David? **Annotating is completely optional** but will help you build a better understanding of your narrator by the end of the short story.
- 2) Complete the 'Assessment Practice' multiple choice questions (page attached).
- 3) Answer the (2) short response questions attached to the packet. You should be using RADEC short response protocol to support and explain your thinking.

*****Suggested Novels for Summer Reading*****

We have compiled a list of suggested (but completely optional) novels for students to read during their summer break and attached it to this packet. This is a great opportunity to keep students engaged in reading while continuing good reading practices.

**This assignment is due the first week
we return for the 2025 – 2026 school year**



Heartbeat

Short Story by David Yoo

For Dave, appearing fit is an extreme exercise.

NOTICE & NOTE



As you read, use the side margins to make notes about the text.

1 **M**y nickname's "Heartbeat," because my friends swear that you can actually see the pulse on my bare chest. I've always been skinny. Everyone assumes I'm a weakling because I'm so thin (I prefer "lean and mean" or "wiry"), despite being a three-sport athlete. I decided to do something about it this fall when Sarah, the girl I have a crush on, said, "Oh my gosh . . . you are so skinny." She was visibly repulsed by my sunken chest as I stepped off the soccer bus after practice. I silently vowed to do everything within my power to become the "after" picture. I was sixteen years old, but looked like I was eleven.

2 For the rest of fall, I did countless push-ups and curled free weights until I couldn't bend my arms. I got ridiculously strong and defined, but I wasn't gaining weight. I wanted to be *thicker*. I didn't care about getting stronger if nobody could tell. I did research, and started lifting heavier weights at lower reps and

ANALYZE CHARACTER

Annotate: In paragraph 1, mark three things that Dave says other people say to him or think about him.

Infer: What does beginning the story with this information suggest about the kind of person Dave is?

ANALYZE CONFLICT

Annotate: In paragraph 2, mark Dave's motivation for exercising.

Draw Conclusions: Does Dave mainly struggle with an external conflict or an internal conflict? Explain.



metabolism

(mī-tāb'ə-līz'əm) *n.* A living thing's *metabolism* is the chemical processes that give it energy and produce growth.

moot

(mōōt) *adj.* Something that is *moot* is unimportant or irrelevant.

futile

(fyōōt'l) *adj.* When something is *futile*, it has no useful or meaningful result.

supplemented my meals with weight-gainer shakes, egg whites, boiled yams, and tubs of cottage cheese. I forced myself to swallow the daily caloric intake equivalent of three overweight men and still wasn't able to increase my mass. (I have a ridiculously fast **metabolism**.) Over Christmas break I cut out all useless movement, like Ping-Pong and staircases, because I'm like a sieve—the 83 calories in a mini-Snickers bar is **moot** because I waste 90 chewing it.

3 I returned to school in January depressed, because I was still Heartbeat in everyone's eyes. I constantly weighed myself. At least once an hour, no matter where I was, I'd find a bathroom so I could take off my shirt and flex in the mirror for a couple of minutes. I was so frustrated that nothing was working—but the frustration didn't last. I was sitting in study hall two weeks ago when Sarah said the magic words: "Have you been working out, Dave? You look bigger." I couldn't tell if she was being sarcastic. I went home and inspected myself in the mirror. I did look bigger!

4 But then I realized the reason: I'd accidentally worn *two* T-shirts under my rugby shirt that day. It was just an illusion. I was **futilely** stuffing my face and religiously pumping iron and failing to alter my appearance, and now I'd stumbled on the simplest solution to looking bigger. I felt like I was reborn.

5 I went to school the next day wearing two T-shirts under my turtleneck. I felt solid. By the end of last week, I was wearing three T-shirts under my rugby shirt. This Monday I tucked four T-shirts under my plaid button-down. It gave me traps that didn't exist. My Q-tip-sized shoulders transformed

into NBA-grapefruit deltoids.¹ I could tell my classmates subtly regarded me differently. It was respect. Sarah gave me a look I'd never seen before, as if she felt . . . *safer* around me. I was walking down the hallway at the end of the day and must have twisted awkwardly because suddenly my zipper literally exploded, and all my T-shirts spilled out of my pants. Luckily, the hallway was empty and I was wearing a belt.

6 I realized I had artificially outgrown my clothes. My buttondowns were so tight that a few seconds after jamming the extra layers into my pants, the pressure would suddenly bunch the cloth up in random places so it looked like I had a goiter² on my shoulder or something. I complained to my parents over dinner last night. "I don't fit into anything anymore," I said. "It reflects poorly on you guys. You could get arrested."

7 "What are you talking about? You look the same as always. You're still my little boy," my dad replied, putting me in a headlock and giving me a noogie. I glared at him.

8 "I need a new ski jacket," I said. It was true. I could barely clap my hands with all the layers I was wearing. I was getting out of control at this point. The four T-shirts under my wool sweater were smushing my lungs together like a male girdle. It was a small price to pay; nobody called me Heartbeat anymore, I reminded myself.

9 After dinner I went to a party. Even though it was winter, I opted to hang out on the back porch as much as possible because it was so hot inside. Being indoors was like a sauna, but Sarah was in the basement so I headed that way. We were talking and she noticed that I was dripping with perspiration. "You're trembling," she said, touching my shoulder. She thought I was nervous talking to her and probably thought it was cute, but in reality I was on the verge of passing out because I was wearing four tight T-shirts and two long-sleeves under my wool sweater, not to mention the sweatpants tucked into my tube socks to add heft to my (formerly chicken-legs) quads. She squeezed my biceps.³

10 "Jeez, Dave, how many layers are you wearing?"

11 I couldn't even feel her squeezing them.

12 "I have to go," I said, excusing myself to another corner of the basement. Everyone was smushed together. It was so hot everyone except me was hanging out in T-shirts and tank tops.

¹ traps . . . deltoids: traps (short for trapezius) are large, flat upper-back muscles; deltoids are triangular muscles that connect the top of the shoulder to the arm.

² goiter: swollen thyroid gland often visible at the bottom of the neck.

³ quads . . . biceps: quads (short for quadriceps) are long muscles in the front of the thigh; biceps are the large muscles in the front of the upper arm.

Don't forget to
Notice & Note as you
read the text.



delirious

(dī-līr'ē-əs) *adj.* Someone who is *delirious* is temporarily confused, often because of fever or shock.

NOTICE & NOTE AHA MOMENT

When you notice a sudden realization that shifts a character's actions or understandings, you've found an **Aha Moment** signpost.

Notice & Note: Mark what Dave suddenly realizes in paragraph 12.

Infer: How might this realization change things for Dave?

I was sopping and **delirious** and felt claustrophobic. My chest was cold because I had four drenched T-shirts underneath my sweater. It looked like I was breaking out with Ebola⁴ or something. When I coughed people turned away from me in fear. *Abandon ship, abandon ship!* I had no choice but to take some layers off. I lurched to the bathroom. My arms were ponderously heavy as I pulled off the sweater. Just lifting my arms exhausted me, and I had to stop midway and take a rest by sitting on the edge of the tub, gasping. I slowly peeled off the layers, one at a time. I took off my pants and peeled off my sweatpants, too, down to my undies. I dried myself off with a wash cloth. My red T-shirt had bled onto the three white Ts because of the sweat, so they now were faded pink tie-dyes. I hoisted the bundle of clothes and was shocked at the weight. I jammed them into the closet. I'd retrieve them later, before I left. I put my sweater back on without anything underneath. After two weeks of constricting my air supply and range of motion by wearing upwards of six layers, I was amazed at how much freedom I had with my arms. I felt like dancing for the first time in my life. I suddenly realized what I really looked like at this party: a padded, miserable, and frustrated puffball, burning up in all my layers. All this because I hated my nickname?

13 I got home and realized I'd left my bundle of wet clothes back at the party. I took this as a sign. My days of wearing extra layers was officially over. Had Sarah fallen for the padded me, she'd be falling for someone else. Besides, winter wasn't going to last forever, and I couldn't just revert back to wearing just one set of clothes like a normal human being come spring. The change in my outward appearance would be the equivalent of a sheared sheep. From now on, I was going to just be me.

14 That was last night. *I'm not disgustingly thin*, I constantly remind myself. I am wiry. I'm lean and mean.

15 Outside it's snowing again. There's a party tonight, and my friends are on their way to pick me up. I don't know what to wear, so I lay out four different outfits on the floor as if they're chalk outlines of people. A car horn honks ten minutes later and I still haven't decided on an outfit. Maybe I'll just wear all of them.

⁴ Ebola: a deadly virus that causes high fever and bleeding.



TURN AND TALK

What is your response to Dave's last statement? Share your response with a partner.



ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

***How do actions
define us?***

Review your notes and
add your thoughts to your
Response Log.

Assessment Practice

Answer these questions before moving on to the **Analyze the Text** section on the following page.

1. This question has two parts. First answer **Part A**, then **Part B**.

Part A

What do Dave's actions in the story suggest? Select the best answer.

- (A) He wants quick results in spite of his natural thinness.
- (B) He is disciplined and determined to reach his goal.
- (C) He is strong and healthy but not very athletic.
- (D) He cares about his health as much as his image.

Part B

Select **two** sentences that support the answer to Part A.

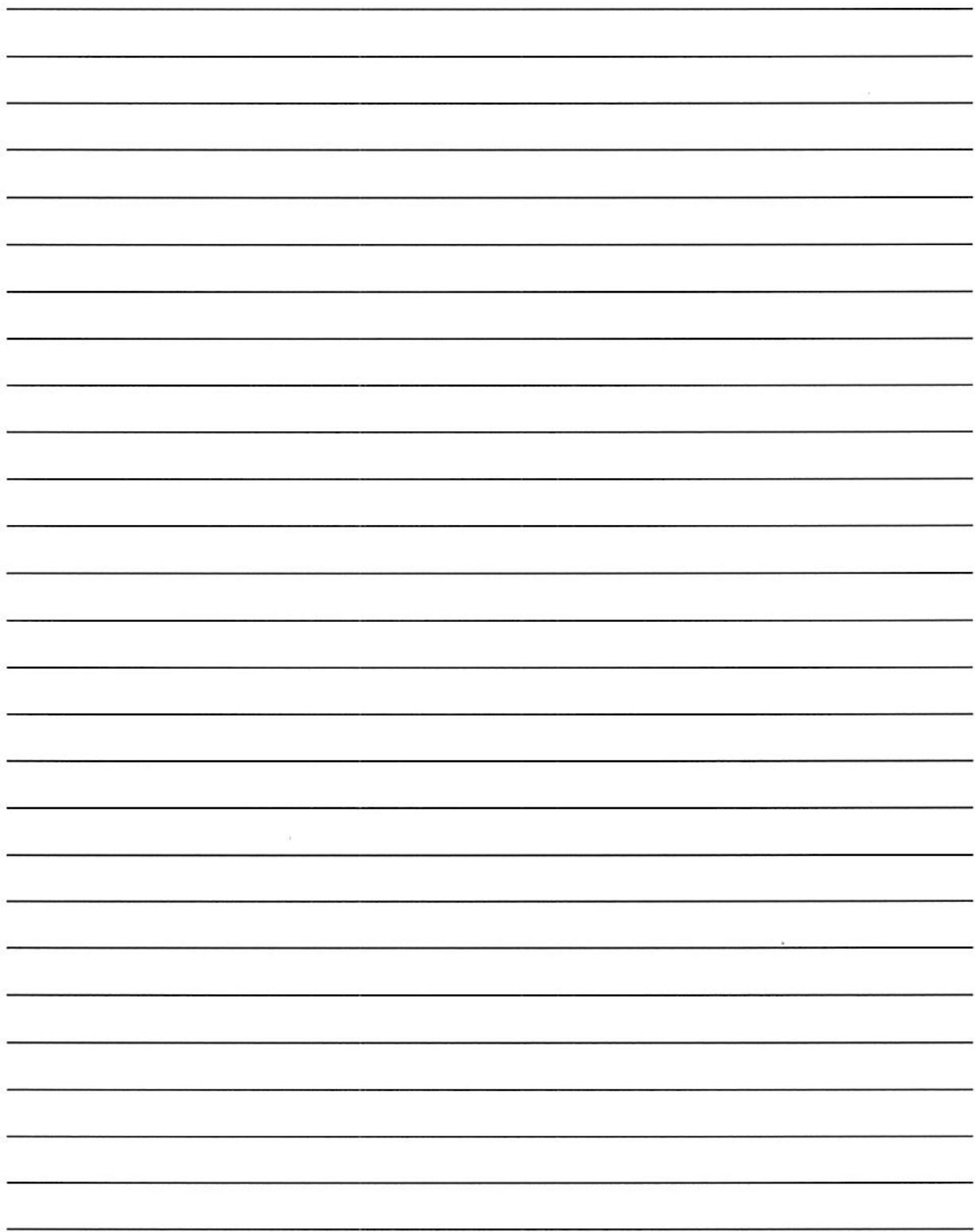
- (A) "For the rest of fall, I did countless push-ups and curled free weights until I couldn't bend my arms." (paragraph 2)
- (B) "... I'd find a bathroom so I could take off my shirt and flex in the mirror for a couple of minutes." (paragraph 3)
- (C) "I couldn't even feel her squeezing them." (paragraph 11)
- (D) "My buttondowns were so tight ... it looked like I had a goiter on my shoulder or something." (paragraph 6)
- (E) "I've always been skinny." (paragraph 1)



Test-Taking Strategies

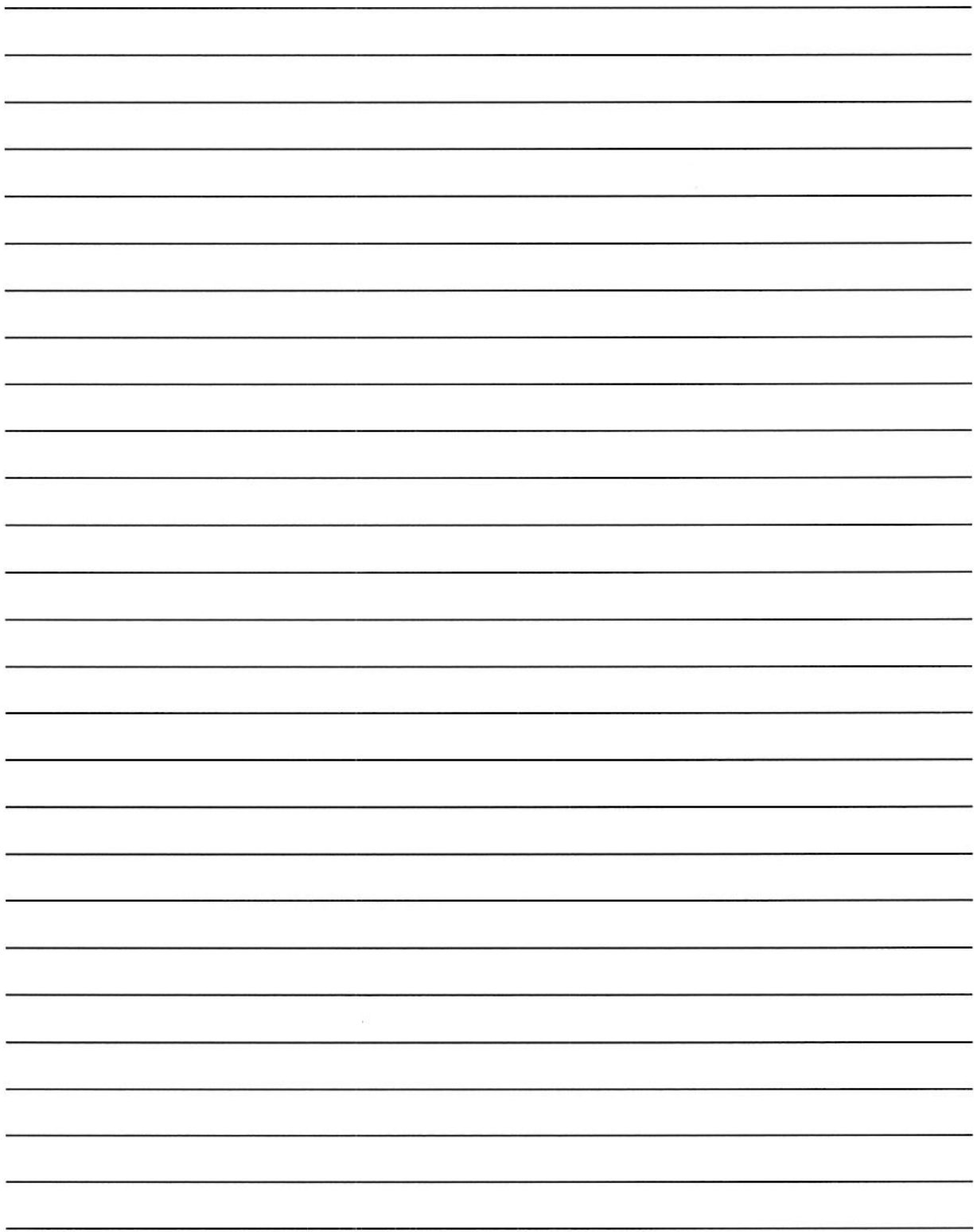
Class: _____

TASK: After reading the short story, “Heartbeat” by David Yoo, reread paragraph 2. How can you tell Dave is motivated by other people’s opinions of him? Use at least 2 pieces of evidence to support your answer.



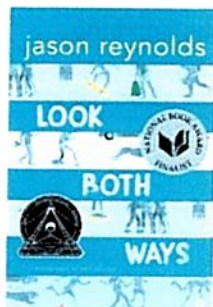
Class: _____

Hint: What did Dave think of Sarah at first? How is it different now?



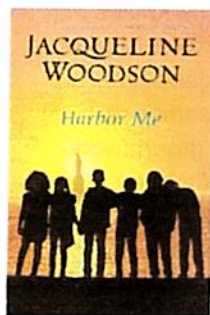
Suggested Reading List - Seventh Grade

Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks - Jason Reynolds



Summary: This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy: talking about boogers, stealing pocket change, skateboarding, wiping out, braving up, executing complicated handshakes, planning an escape, cracking jokes, getting greasy, braving up some more, but mostly, too busy walking home. In *Look Both Ways*, Jason Reynolds weaves ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, in one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson



Summary: It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat—by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them—everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli



Summary: *Stargirl*. From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first.

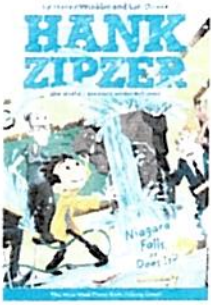
Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal. In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love.

The Marvellers - Dhonielle Clayton



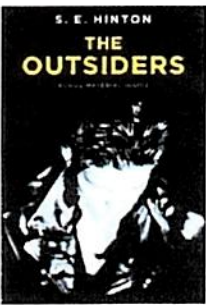
Summary: Eleven-year-old Ella Durand is the first Conjuror to attend the Arcanum Training Institute, a magic school in the clouds where Marvellers from around the world practice their cultural arts, like brewing Indian spice elixirs and bartering with pesky Irish pixies. Despite her excitement, Ella discovers that being the first isn't easy—some Marvellers mistrust her magic, which they deem "bad and unnatural." But eventually, she finds friends in elixirs teacher, Masterji Thakur, and fellow misfits Brigit, a girl who hates magic, and Jason, a boy with a fondness for magical creatures. When a dangerous criminal known as the Ace of Anarchy escapes prison, supposedly with a Conjuror's aid, tensions grow in the Marvellian world and Ella becomes the target of suspicion. Worse, Masterji Thakur mysteriously disappears while away on a research trip. With the help of her friends and her own growing powers, Ella must find a way to clear her family's name and track down her mentor before it's too late.

Niagara Falls (Or Does It?) Hank Zipzer #1 - Henry Winkler & Lin Oliver



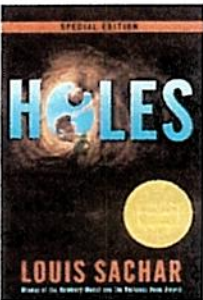
Summary: It's science project time in Ms. Adolf's class. This is good news and bad news for Hank—he loves science, but he hates the report part. So Hank turns to TV to take his mind off things. But when the program directory scrolls by too quickly for Hank to know what's on, he decides to take apart the cable box to try to slow down the crawl. Great! Now Hank has found the perfect science project! But what he wasn't counting on was his sister's pet iguana laying eighteen eggs in the disassembled cable box. How is Hank going to get out of this one?

The Outsiders by SE Hinton



Summary: Over 50 years of an iconic classic! The international bestseller—a heroic story of friendship and belonging. No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends—true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on "greasers" like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect—until the night someone takes things too far. *The Outsiders* is a dramatic and enduring work of fiction that laid the groundwork for the YA genre. S. E. Hinton's classic story of a boy who finds himself on the outskirts of regular society remains as powerful today as it was the day it was first published.

Holes by Louis Sachar



Summary: Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnatses. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the boys build character by spending all day, every day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something. But what could be buried under a dried-up lake? Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment—and redemption.