



2017 BFMA Middle School Summer Reading Assignments

EVERYONE attending the Bay Farm Middle School is required to read:

"Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream"

Multiple copies are available at local libraries; you will not need to have a copy of this text to bring to class in September.

After reading, students should answer 10 of the following questions using complete sentences. **Each answer should be a well-supported paragraph of 4-6 sentences.** Feel free to use multiple astronauts as examples in each question.

1. How did these women develop their early passion for flight? Did family and friends encourage or discourage their early interests in aviation? Why?
2. How did their peers treat the female pilots? What kind of discrimination did these women experience at work?
3. How did the women become involved with the Lovelace Project? What kinds of physical and psychological tests did the women participate in as part of the Lovelace Project?
4. Why was the training program canceled? How would you have reacted if you received such shocking news?
5. What kind of discrimination did these women experience from NASA and government officials?
6. What of personal and professional sacrifices did these women make for their dreams? Do you think you would have made the same decisions? Yes or no? Why or why not? Be sure to take into account the social expectations of the time (not just how you might feel in 2017).
7. What opportunities were available to the women after the project was canceled?
8. What were the differences in attitudes between the first men and first women who were trained for space flight?

9. Do these women remember their training fondly or with bitterness? How do you know?
 10. How do the women of Mercury 13 feel about Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space?
 11. What impressed/shocked you most about the experiences of the Mercury 13?
 12. What questions would you like to ask the Mercury 13 if you had the chance?
 13. What did you learn about how politics and government were involved in the Space Program?
 14. What major economic factors influenced decision making during the story? You should mention specific individuals and groups involved.
 15. Which astronaut's story stood out most to you? Why? Give a personal example of a story that helped connect you to that particular person.
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Please also choose one of the following books to read this summer. (If you have already read either of these books, you must choose the other 😊.)

Students should purchase a copy of the book and bring the novel to school in September.

While reading, students should mark up the text, use sticky notes, and employ other previously learned reading strategies.

A Long Walk to Water – Linda Sue Park

“The *New York Times* bestseller *A Long Walk to Water* begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours’ walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the “lost boys” of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya’s in an astonishing and moving way.

OR

Star Girl – Jerry Spinelli

A modern-day classic and *New York Times* bestseller that celebrates the power of individuality and personal expression from beloved Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli.

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.

“Spinelli is a poet of the prepubescent. . . . No writer guides his young characters, and his readers, past these pitfalls and challenges and toward their futures with more compassion.” —*The New York Times*

After reading the novel, students should complete the following assignment:

Create a map of one of the main character’s journey throughout the book.

YOU must include at least five events that cover the course of the novel.
(At least one from the **beginning**, one from the **middle**, and one from the **end**)

Each event should include

- A quotation and page number from the book
- A paragraph long description of the event
- An explanation of why the event was significant to the story/ character.

You may choose how you visually display this map. No matter what you choose, make sure you include lots of pictures and colorful ways to display your scenes/events.

Possible options might include (but should not be limited to):

You can make a physical map of the country or school on a poster board or tri-fold **or** you might choose to create a prezzi or iBook.