



Grade 7: My Hero Self

Summer Reading and Experience List

"Any topic you want to be able to read about is a topic you must become knowledgeable about." ~E.D. Hirsch Jr. and Lisa Hansel

"...what students already know about the content is one of the strongest indicators of how well they will learn new information relative to the content." (Marzano) Building background knowledge both helps students engage with complex texts and ensures that learning sticks. Independently selecting and reading texts, along with engaging in dynamic experiences connected to upcoming topics or themes builds this important content knowledge. When students head into the school year armed with knowledge about upcoming content, they are better able to access and develop a deeper understanding of complex texts in curriculum.

Tips for Summer Reading

- Encourage active engagement by participating in a local library's [summer reading incentive](#).
- Get your child hooked onto a [great series](#). Entertaining, or suspenseful, series are often the launchpad for a lasting love of reading.
- Reading with your child sets a powerful example and is a great way to connect.
- Take advantage of literacy apps. Interactive, engaging research-based programs can offer additional ways for students to rack up minutes reading.



This compilation of texts and experiences is designed to provide students with guided choices as they engage in independent summer reading. Lists include a range of genres, "reading levels" and types of experiences; students should be encouraged to read texts that are interesting and explore exciting opportunities in DC.

Course Overview

Course Theme

In their 7th grade ELA class, students are empowered to see themselves as heroes who are resilient warriors and evolving survivors. Students will spend the entire year studying current social justice issues that affect their communities, and at the end of the course, they will present what they have learned about a cause they are willing to be heroes for.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Unit 1: My Resilient Self

How does storytelling help us develop resilience?

Unit 2: My Warrior Self

How does one become a warrior in his or her own life?

Unit 3: My Survivor Self

What does it mean to follow your instincts?

Unit 4: My Evolving Self

How am I a hero?



Suggested Summer Reading and Experience List

Students should research all suggested (optional) texts and select a few interesting texts to read over the summer!

	Suggested Texts	Suggested Experiences
Unit 1: My Resilient Self	<p><i>Hush</i> by Jacqueline Woodson (F) <i>Life of Pi</i> by Yann Martel (F) <i>Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution</i> by Ji-Li Jiang (NF) <i>The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir</i> by Thi Bui (NF) <i>Mother to Son</i> by Langston Hughes (P)</p>	<p>'Helping Others Can Fosters Resiliency'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Helping Babies ▪ Capital Area Food Bank ▪ Grit Ted Talk: Angela Lee Duckworth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Telling the African American Story: Carter G. Woodson Home
Unit 2: My Warrior Self	<p><i>Hunger Games Series</i> by Suzanne Collins (F) <i>Gods and Warriors</i> by Michelle Paver (F) <i>The Chronicles of Avandia</i> by Adam Blade (F) <i>Warriors! True Stories of Combat, Skill and Courage</i> by Jim Eldridge (NF) <i>A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier</i> by Ishmael Beah (NF) <i>Peace Warriors</i> by Andrea Pinkney (NF)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture Exhibit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Defending Free, Defining Freedom ▪ Mary McLeod Bethune Council House ▪ Women Fight for the Vote: Thomas Jefferson Building
Unit 3: My Survivor Self	<p><i>Endangered</i> by Eliot Schrefe (F) <i>Maze Runner Series</i> by James Dashner (F) <i>My Side of the Mountain</i> by Jean George (F) <i>A Long Walk to Water</i> by Linda S. Park (NF) <i>Williwaw</i> by Tom Bodett (NF) <i>Lost in the Antarctic</i> by Todd Olson (NF)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Museum of Natural History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outbreak: Survivors of Infectious Disease ▪ Survivors of the Holocaust
Unit 4: My Evolving Self	<p><i>Gathering Blue</i> by Lois Lowry (F) <i>We All Looked Up</i> by Tommy Wallach (F) <i>Gone</i> by Michael Grant (F) <i>Freak the Mighty</i> by Rodman Philbrick (NF) <i>I Am Malala</i> by Malala Yousafzai (NF) <i>The Struggle to Be Strong</i> by A. Desetta & S. Wolin (NF) <i>Bilbo's Last Song</i> by J.R. Tolkien (P)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial ▪ Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad ▪ Law Enforcement: What Would You Do Interactive Experience

**Fiction (F), Non-Fiction (NF), Poetry (P)*

Talk About It!

Consider using any of the following questions to spur discussion:

- Unit 1: How does storytelling help give someone a voice?
- Unit 1: In what ways are resilience and bravery connected?
- Unit 2: What qualities do warriors share?
- Unit 3: How can someone get motivated to do what seems impossible?
- Unit 3: How can a struggle to survive affect one's choices for the rest of one's life?
- Unit 4: Is such thing as a 'typical' hero?

