June 12, 2014

14 Sivan 5774

Greetings Soon-to-Be 6th, 7th, and 8th Graders:

While many of you are thinking about school ending for the summer, your middle school teachers are already looking forward to starting back up in the fall! One of our favorite September experiences is talking about what we did over the summer, especially all the great books we read. As you probably know, PJA’s middle school has a very special summer reading program; not only does our program promote literacy and a love of literature, but it also allows us, as a community, to be reading and experiencing selections that dig deep into our Jewish Studies and Humanities themes.  This year’s summer reading selections are based on the first part of Rabbi Hillel’s important quote: “If I am not for myself, who will be for me?” We will be focusing on *Finding One’s Voice* as we explore the theme of personal identity.  
  
For the summer reading program, you are required to read **AT** **LEAST ONE BOOK** from the attached list. You are expected to select a book that **YOU HAVE NOT YET READ**.   We have included descriptions of each title to help in the decision-making process. In addition to reading at least one selection from the fiction or non-fiction list, you are also welcome to watch any of the films we have included.  Please note that some selections are mature in nature (as indicated by an asterisk).  We suggest that parents be involved in the selection process, and we hope that your entire family will enjoy many of these texts and films together.

Upon our return in September, the entire middle school will be coming together to share ideas, questions, comments, insights, etc. about these texts in their Humanities class and in other classes.  Therefore, **YOU ARE REQUIRED TO KEEP A JOURNAL AS YOU READ THIS SUMMER**. Your journal should include thoughts and questions that come up while you’re reading, as well as specific phrases, sentences, or longer excerpts from the books that relate to “Identity,” including page numbers. Try to bring a copy of the book to school during your first week back.

Happy Reading Everyone!!! We look forward to the fall when we can share our impressions of these books and explore how the theme of identity plays out in literature and in our own lives.

*L’Shalom*,

The PJA Middle School Team