

Summer reading for incoming 8th grade students

June 2007

Dear Parents and Students:

Is it June yet?! I, like you, am looking forward to a relaxing summer. This is the season when I can catch up on books that I haven't had time to read during the busy school year. So, like me, you too will be reading by the pool, at the beach, during vacation or prior to bedtime. Again, all I ask is for you to read one book, *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls. I expect this assignment to be complete and submitted the first week of school. This is one of my favorite books, and I know you will enjoy reading it as well. We will discuss WTRFG during the first few weeks of classes, so it is imperative that you finish the book. The following is required:

- * The twenty assigned reading questions are neatly and thoroughly answered on loose leaf. You know my expectations when it comes to answering essays.
- * Submit an original book cover with a brief synopsis about the book. A piece of 8 by 11 folded white paper will be fine. On one side will be the cover and the inside or back will have the synopsis. Again, be original with the cover and don't forget the title and author. I am not grading you on your artwork per se, but on the effort and detail you put into the illustration. Again, you know my expectations. I prefer pencil, crayons and/or colored pencils; markers tend to appear messy. Make sure your synopsis is neatly written and it entices one to want to read the book.

The twenty essay questions will be your first grade for the trimester, as well as, the book cover and synopsis together. That's it! I want you to relax and enjoy your summer so that you will be rested and eager to begin another exciting school year.

Take care,

Mrs. McNutt

Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls

Answer the following questions neatly and thoroughly on loose-leaf.

Chapters 1-5

1. In the first chapter, what causes the narrator of the story to remember his childhood?
2. List the ways in which Billy earns money for his dogs.

Chapters 6-9

1. Why does Billy choose the names Old Dan and Little Ann for his dogs?
2. What are the reasons Billy's parents have for wanting to move to town?
3. Why is it so important for Billy to chop down the big sycamore tree to get the treed raccoon?
4. What finally causes the big sycamore to fall?
5. If you were Billy, would you have left the tree or chopped it down? Justify your choice.

Chapters 10-13

1. What does Billy do with all the money he earns from his coon hunting?
2. In Chapter 10, Old Dan has quite an adventure in tree-climbing. Describe the adventure.
3. In Chapter 11, Little Ann has quite an adventure on ice. Describe this adventure.
4. Describe the personalities of the Pritchard brothers.
5. How does the ghost coon earn his name?

Chapters 14-18

1. If you were Billy, would you choose to stay in severe weather to try to find your dogs, or return to camp to help ease the pain of the men? Why?
2. How much money does Billy win in the jackpot? If you won the money Billy did, would you have turned it over to your father? Explain your answer and your reasoning.

Chapters 19-20

1. What beast is referred to as "the devil cat of the Ozarks"?
2. What other incident is Billy reminded of when he looks at his ax covered with the blood of the mountain lion?
3. Why does Little Ann die?
4. How does Billy's father explain the reason for the deaths of Old Dan and Little Ann?
5. What part does a belief in God and the answering of prayers play in *Where the Red Fern Grows*?
6. How does seeing the red fern help Billy?

Remember: All questions and book covers with a synopsis are due the first week of school.