

## **Eighth Grade Summer Reading Assignment**

What does it take to be a hero? How can we create a more peaceful and tolerant society? How can courageous individuals from the present and the past inspire us to lead better lives?

These essential questions will be explored as part of the eighth grade English curriculum. This year's summer reading assignment will feature both real people and fictional characters who are a testament to the resilience of the human spirit during times of oppression, violence, and turmoil. By reading a nonfiction piece and a companion fictional text, you will develop a deeper understanding of the discrimination people have faced because of their religion, gender, or ethnic background.

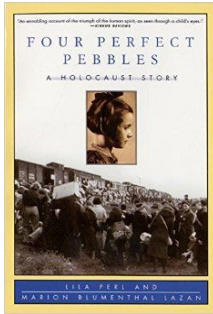
### **Assignment:**

Carefully read the descriptions below. Choose **a pair of texts** to read. You may choose to read the novel or the memoir first. In September, you will be asked to write an essay showing how the author of the nonfiction text AND the main character of the novel relate to the following theme:

***With intelligence, compassion, courage, hope, and determination, ordinary people can overcome extraordinary difficulties.***

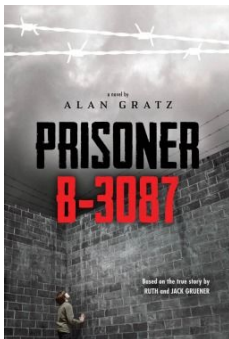
## Choose Pair 1:

### A Triumph of the Human Spirit: Surviving the Horrors of the Holocaust



#### ***Four Perfect Pebbles (nonfiction)***

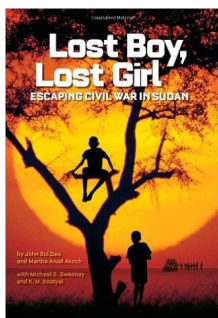
The author tells the story of her family's experiences as Jews in Hitler's Germany, tracing their grim journey from their home country to Holland and back again, living in refugee, transit, and prison camps.



#### ***Prisoner B3847 by Alan Gratz (fiction)***

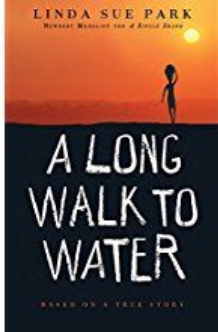
Based on the life of Jack Gruener, this book relates his story of survival from the Nazi occupation of Krakow, when he was eleven, through a succession of concentration camps.

## Choose Pair 2: Holding on to Hope: Surviving the Civil War in Sudan



#### ***Lost Boy, Lost Girl: Escaping Civil War in Sudan by John Bul Dau (nonfiction)***

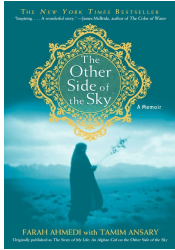
John Bul Dau and his wife, Martha, describe the hardships they experienced, including violence, famine, and war, while growing up in the Sudan and explain how they escaped the region to start a new life.



#### ***A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park (fiction)***

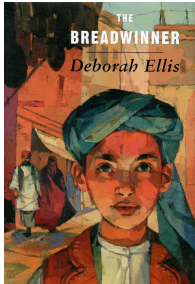
When the Sudanese civil war reaches his village in 1985, eleven-year-old Salva becomes separated from his family and must walk with other Dinka tribe members in search of safe haven.

### Choose Pair 3: Defying Expectations: Living under the Shadow of the Taliban



#### ***The Other Side of the Sky by Farah Ahmed with Tamim Ansary (nonfiction)***

Farah Ahmedi, the victim of a land mine when she was just twelve years old, tells about her childhood in Afghanistan, a country trapped in war her entire life, and discusses the challenges she has faced as a result of losing her leg, and in trying to adapt to living in the United States.



#### ***The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis (fiction)***

Conscious of the strict limitations imposed by the Taliban rulers of Kabul, Afghanistan, on women's freedom and behavior, eleven-year-old Parvana disguises herself as a boy in order to earn money so that her family can survive after her father's arrest.

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