



Little Red School House & Elisabeth Irwin High School

**Summer Reading Assignment
LREI's Incoming Eighth Graders**

**Two Classics
& *Warriors Don't Cry* with Written Reflection**

As you probably know, reading is the best way to improve your writing, vocabulary, and, of course, your reading comprehension. Independent reading will be an integral part of your eighth grade year at LREI. Your assignment for the summer will launch our reading workshop as well as our core curriculum.

Please note that the assignments are separated into two parts:

Part I - Reading Two Classics

Directions:

Read at least two books from the attached list titled **Summer Classics for Seventh and Eighth Grade Students**; select any two that strike you and are the appropriate reading level. Be honest with yourself—choose books that you will enjoy reading. You will do a book talk in the fall on one of the books; you may choose to make notes to prepare, but it is not required.

**Part II - Launching the 8th Grade Language Arts and Social Studies Curriculum:
Reading and Reflecting on *Warriors Don't Cry***

Directions:

- a. **Read *About Warriors Don't Cry* and *Choosing to Participate***
These short readings are attached. Read these carefully, as they will provide important *context* for reading and understanding this novel.
- b. **Read the novel *Warriors Don't Cry*, by Melba Pattillo Beals**
Before you begin reading, take a look at part c below. This will help to focus your thinking as you read. Please note that these books are yours to keep! Therefore, you may underline, highlight, use post-its and take notes in them if you wish.
- c. **Reflection: an Early, Middle and Final Response**
Write three reflections, an *Early Response* (after reading the Author's Note, Introduction chapters 1-5), a *Middle Response* (after chapter reading chapter 12), and a *Final Response* (after completing the book). Your reflections should be no less than six to eight sentences (you are welcome to write more), and should be titled and dated. If you choose to handwrite these assignments please write legibly.



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Use the following prompts to do your writing:

Early Response -

After reading chapters 1-5, write a reaction to the story so far. Use the following guiding questions: What are your thoughts as you have been reading? What have you learned? What did you find surprising? Confusing? Troubling? Interesting?

Middle Response -

When you have finished reading chapter 12, write your second response. Use the following guiding questions: What are your thoughts as you have been reading? What have you learned? What did you find surprising? Confusing? Troubling? Interesting? Has Melba's story so far moved you emotionally? Has reading this book made you think about something that you have not thought of before?

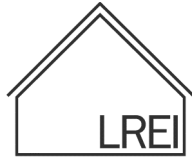
Final Response -

After you have finished the book, write a final response using the guiding questions from the Early and Middle Responses. Include your thoughts about the ending of the book and one example of how your thinking has changed since writing your first response.

About *Warriors Don't Cry*

This book is a powerful memoir that many can't put down. Your written work will be used as the foundation for our discussions of the book when we return to school in September. You may read this book at any point during the summer. Two suggested approaches: if you are dying to read it, go ahead and read it now! Then review your writing and the book before school starts. Or, complete your reading and writing near the end of the summer so that they will be fresh in your mind when school starts. The book is divided into eighteen chapters and an epilogue (be sure to read this last section).

Note: The word "nigger" is used throughout the book. It is upsetting and disgusting, as it should be. It will be difficult for some of you to read over and over and to see how this word has been (and is) used to insult, oppress, and hurt people. You will get a sense of what the word really means; We hope that this will help us all carefully consider what we think about the ways the word is used today.



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From “Choosing to Participate,” Facing History and Ourselves

We have discovered this year that, although our nation was founded over two hundred years ago, our democracy continues to be a work in progress. It is shaped by the choices ordinary people make about themselves and others. Although these choices may not seem important at the time, little by little, they define an individual, create a community, and ultimately forge a nation.

In a democracy, the decisions people make are tested through conversation, discussion, and debate. It is a process that can only be carried out in what Jude Learned Hand once called the “spirit of liberty.” He defined it as the spirit “which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women, and weighs their interests alongside one’s own without bias.”

That spirit is reflected in the Declaration of Independence. It expresses the ideals of the American people. The document boldly states that all people are “created equal.” They also have an “inalienable right” to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” In 1776, no community in the new nation lived up to those ideals. Their efforts often began close to home and gradually expanded to include the entire nation.

The push to end slavery in the United States was one of many movements that began in churches and other small community-based groups. The first successes of these groups were at the local and state levels. In time, they organized nationally and then internationally. The Civil War was fought, at least in part, to advance the democratic ideals they advocated. Although the War ended slavery in the nation, it did not end discrimination.

In 1896, an African American named Homer Plessy challenged in court practices that discriminated against blacks. The case, known as *Plessy v. Ferguson*, went to the Supreme Court. The justices ruled that separate facilities for blacks do not violate the Constitution as long as they are equal to those of whites. The decision permitted the growth of “Jim Crow” laws – a system of state and local laws that established racial barriers in almost every aspect of life. In many places, black and white Americans could not publicly eat, drink, or travel side by side. Churches, movie theatres, even cemeteries were segregated.

By the early 1900s, writes historian Lerone Bennett, Jr; “America was two nations – one white, one black separate and unequal. He likens segregation to “a wall, a system, a way of separating people from people. The wall did not go up in a single day. It was built – “brick by brick, bill by bill, fear by fear.”

In the 1940s and early 1950s, when Melba Pattillo Beals, the author of *Warriors Don’t Cry*, was growing up in Arkansas, that wall seemed almost impenetrable. Yet during those years, a number of Americans, both black and white, were chopping away at the wall – little by little, brick by brick.

In May of 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. the Board of Education* that racial segregation in the nation’s public schools is unconstitutional. *Warriors Don’t Cry* is a first-person account of one attempt to turn that ruling into a social reality. Melba Pattillo Beals was one of nine African American students chosen to desegregate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in the fall of 1957. Her memoir chronicles the terror and fear that marked her experiences and those of the other eight African American students who attended the high school during that year.



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Summer Classics for Seventh and Eighth Grade Students

Alcott, Louisa May. Little Women

Little Women is the heartwarming story of the March family that has thrilled generations of readers. It is the story of four sisters--Jo, Meg, Amy and Beth--and of the courage, humor and ingenuity they display to survive poverty and the absence of their father during the Civil War.

Anaya, Rudolfo. Bless Me, Ultima

Ultima, a curandera, one who cures with herbs and magic, comes to Antonio Marez's New Mexico family when he is six years old, and she helps him discover himself in the magical secrets of the pagan past. Besides winning the Premio Quinto Sol national Chicano literary award, this novel of a young boy in New Mexico in the 1940s has sold more than 300,000 copies in paperback since its 1973 debut.

Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

In this first of five volumes of autobiography, poet Maya Angelou recounts a youth filled with disappointment, frustration, tragedy, and finally hard-won independence. Marvelously told, with Angelou's "gift for language and observation," this "remarkable autobiography by an equally remarkable black woman from Arkansas captures, indelibly, a world of which most Americans are shamefully ignorant."

Balakian, Peter. Black Dog of Fate

The author describes his life as the child of Armenian immigrants in America and discusses his family's struggles, and the struggles of other Armenians, during 1915 when the Ottoman Turkish government put over one million Armenians to death.

Bradbury, Ray. The Illustrated Man

This is one of the classics from the golden age of sci-fi--sixteen tales of horror and terror in the tattoos on an "illustrated" man's body. Even though most were written in the 1940s and 1950s, these 18 classic stories will be just as chillingly effective 50 years from now.

Bradbury, Ray. The Martian Chronicles

In this science fiction classic, the first Earth people to attempt the colonization of Mars try to build their new world in the image of the civilization they left behind.

Bronte, Charlotte. Jane Eyre

A headstrong heroine, a dashing gentleman, a dark and brooding house with a terrible secret in the attic. A classic novel written in the very best Gothic tradition.

Burnett, Frances H. The Secret Garden

Ten-year-old Mary comes to live in a lonely house on the Yorkshire moors and discovers an invalid cousin and the mysteries of a locked garden in this classic story of loss, friendship and redemption.

Card, Orson Scott. Ender's Game

Young Ender Wiggin may prove to be the military genius Earth needs to fight a desperate battle against a deadly alien race that will determine the future of the human race.

Carroll, Jim. The Basketball Diaries

A diary of the author's early teen years in the mid-1960s, telling how he progressed from sniffing glue to shooting heroin while playing basketball for Trinity High School in Manhattan.



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Carroll, Lewis. [Alice in Wonderland](#)

Lewis Carroll's classic story about a little girl who falls down a rabbit hole and discovers a world of nonsensical and amusing characters.

Cather, Willa. [My Antonia](#)

A successful lawyer remembers his boyhood in Nebraska and his friendship with an immigrant Bohemian girl named Antonia.

Christie, Agatha. [Murder on the Orient Express](#)

Detective Hercule Poirot has a wealth of suspects to choose from when a wealthy American is stabbed to death en route to Paris on the Orient Express.

Cormier, Robert. [The Chocolate War](#)

Does Jerry Renault dare to disturb the universe? You wouldn't think that his refusal to sell chocolates during his school's fundraiser would create such a stir, but it does; it's as if the whole school comes apart at the seams. To some, Jerry is a hero, but to others, he becomes a scapegoat—a target for their pent-up hatred. And Jerry? He's just trying to stand up for what he believes, but perhaps there is no way for him to escape becoming a pawn in this game of control...

Dahl, Roald. [Skin and Other Stories](#)

"These bizarre, fascinating, and sophisticated short stories, selected from Dahl's body of adult writings, are...full of irony and unexpected twists, they smack of the master's touch—every word carefully chosen, characters fully fleshed out in only a few pages, the sense of place immediate."--Booklist

Dickens, Charles. [Oliver Twist](#)

One of Dickens's most popular novels, this is the story of an orphan raised in a workhouse, who runs away to London only to be captured by thieves from whom he eventually escapes. This novel is a morality tale and a detective story rolled into one and presents some of Dickens's darkest characters: Bill Sikes, the murderer; Fagin, the master thief; and the leering Artful Dodger.

Dorris, Michael. [Yellow Raft in Blue Water](#)

A saga of three generations of Indian women, beset by hardship and torn by angry secrets, yet joined by the indissoluble bonds of kinship.

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. [The Hound of the Baskervilles](#)

What's the truth behind the legend of the hound of the Baskervilles? Is it really a devil-beast that's haunting the lonely moors? Enter Sherlock Holmes to find the answer, in this, the only full-length novel ever written by the creator of one of the most popular and enduring detective series ever written.

Erdrich, Louise. [Love Medicine](#)

Presents the story of the Kashpaws and the Lamartines, two extended families who live on and around a Chippewa reservation in North Dakota and of Lipsha Morrissey, a young man who attempts to bring his wandering grandfather back to his long-suffering grandmother with a love medicine made from goosehearts.

Flagg, Fannie. [Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café](#)

A folksy, funny and endearing story of life in a small town in Alabama in the Depression and in the 1980s. It is the tale of a fierce friendship between two women from the 1920's and 30's, Idgie and Ruth, and how their story inspires a modern woman who has almost given up on life. Among revelations big and small, Fannie Flagg mixes direct and empowering confrontations with racism, sexism, and ageism with the colorful and endearing language of the depression-era South and the cafe's recipes for grits, collard greens, and, of course, fried green tomatoes.



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Frank, Anne. The Diary of a Young Girl

A beloved classic since its initial publication in 1947, this vivid, insightful journal is a fitting memorial to the gifted Jewish teenager who died at Bergen-Belsen, Germany, in 1945.

Fugard, Athol. "Master Harold"--And the Boys

"Master Harold," or Hally, learns that his alcoholic father is to be released from the hospital and struggles with his emotions during a confrontation with the two black men who help in the family's restaurant in 1950s South Africa.

Gallman, Kiki. I Dreamed of Africa

At the age of 25, Kuki Gallmann moved to Kenya with her future husband, where they established a vast ranch. But Africa's beauty doesn't come without a price, and when tragedy struck, Kuki found herself pregnant and alone with her young son and 90,000 acres of Africa to oversee.

Garden, Nancy. Annie on My Mind

The modern classic of two girls who dared to love each other despite social taboos. Looking back on her high school experiences, the now mature Liza narrates a story of friendship, betrayal and loss between she and Annie, her first love.

Gibbons, Kaye. Ellen Foster

Having suffered abuse and misfortune for much of her life, a young child searches for a better life and finally gets a break in the home of a loving woman with several foster children.

Greene, Bette. Summer of My German Soldier

When her small hometown in Arkansas becomes the site of a camp housing German prisoners during World War II, 12-year-old Patty Bergen learns what it means to open her heart. Although she's Jewish, she begins to see a prison escapee, Anton, not as a Nazi--but as a lonely, frightened young man with feelings not unlike her own, who understands and appreciates her in a way her parents never will. And Patty is willing to risk losing family, friends--even her freedom--for what has quickly become the most important part of her life.

Guevara, Ernesto. The Motorcycle Diaries

Latin American revolutionary Che Guevara chronicles his 1952 adventure on motorbike throughout South America with friend Alberto Granado, during which he came face-to-face with the realities of poverty throughout the continent.

Hansberry, Lorraine. A Raisin in the Sun

A three-act play concerned with the tensions in a middle-class African American family living on Chicago's Southside in the 1950s.

Hemingway, Ernest. The Old Man and the Sea

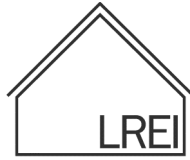
An old fisherman battles the sea and sharks to bring home the giant marlin he caught. Deceptively short and deep as the ocean.

Hesse, Karen. Witness

This contemporary classic is made up of a series of poems that express the views of various people in a small Vermont town, including a young black girl and a young Jewish girl, during the early 1920s when the Ku Klux Klan is trying to infiltrate the town.

Hinton, S.E. Tex

The love between two teen-age brothers helps to alleviate the harshness of their usually parentless life as they struggle to grow up. Jen Hubert-Swan's favorite of S.E. Hinton's titles.



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Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki. Farewell to Manzanar

Biography of Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston relating her experiences of living at the Manzanar internment camp during World War II and how it has influenced her life.

Huxley, Aldous. Brave New World.

Originally published in 1932, Huxley's terrifying vision of a controlled and emotionless future "Utopian" society is truly startling in its prediction of modern scientific and cultural phenomena, including test-tube babies and rampant drug abuse.

Jackson, Shirley. The Haunting of Hill House

Five strangers meet at Hill House--a notorious estate in New England to take part in a paranormal science experiment. Hill House is a foreboding structure of towers, buttresses, Gothic spires, gargoyles, strange angles, and rooms within rooms--a place "without kindness, never meant to be lived in...." Shirley Jackson's book has unnerved readers since its original publication in 1959. A tale of subtle, psychological terror, it has earned its place as one of the significant haunted house stories of our time.

Kesey, Ken. One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

A rebel named Randle Patrick McMurphy is committed to a mental ward and challenges the authority of its dictatorial head nurse.

Keyes, Daniel. Flowers for Algernon

In this classic story that inspired the hit movie Charlie, Charlie Gordon, a mentally challenged adult who cleans floors and toilets, becomes a genius through an experimental operation. But when his new intelligence begins to wane, Charlie must confront the loss of all he has learned.

Knowles, John. A Separate Peace

The volatile world of male adolescence provides the backdrop for John Knowles' engrossing tale of love, hate, war, and peace. Sharing a room at Devon, an exclusive New England prep school, in the summer prior to World War II, Gene and Phineas form a complex bond of friendship that draws out both the best and worst characteristics of each boy and leads ultimately to violence, a confession, and the betrayal of trust.

Le Carre, John. Tinker, Tailor, Solider, Spy

In this familiar contemporary classic, George Smiley, an agent at the very highest level of British Intelligence, enters the twilight world of espionage and his own past when he is assigned to discover which of his four closest colleagues is a double agent.

London, Jack. White Fang

In the desolate, frozen wilds of northwest Canada, a wolf cub soon finds himself the sole survivor of his litter. Son of Kiche--half-wolf, half-dog--and the aging wolf One Eye, he is thrust into a savage world where each day becomes a fight to stay alive. This adventure set in the wild Yukon about a wild dog who learns to live with humans is not to be missed.

Markandaya, Kamala. Nectar in a Sieve

A traditional peasant woman in early twentieth-century India struggles with poverty and the changes arriving in her agrarian village, particularly the tanning factory that takes her son's life.

Marshall, James Vance. Walkabout

Mary and Peter are stranded in the wilderness of the Australian outback. They meet an Aboriginal youth on a walking journey and he helps them to undergo a journey of their own in order to survive.



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McBride, James. The Color of Water

An African-American male tells of his mother, a white woman, who refused to admit her true identity. A now classic memoir.

McCourt, Frank. Angela's Ashes

The author chronicles his impoverished childhood in Limerick, Ireland in the 1930s and 1940s, describing his father's alcoholism and talent for storytelling; the challenges and tragedies his mother faced, including the loss of three children; and his early experiences in the Catholic church, and balances painful memories with humor.

McCullers, Carson. A Member of the Wedding

Frankie Addams, a motherless twelve-year-old raised by her father and the family's African-American cook, struggles with conflicting feelings about her brother's upcoming wedding.

McKissack, Patricia. The Dark Thirty

The Newbery award-winning collection of ghost stories with African-American themes, designed to be told during the Dark Thirty--the half hour before sunset.

Mathabane, Mark. Kaffir Boy

The author recalls his personal experiences growing up under South African Apartheid during the 1970s, the poverty and oppression of living in the ghettos of Alexandra, and of those who helped him escape from it.

Montgomery, L.M. Anne of Green Gables

Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her.

Paton, Alan. Cry the Beloved Country

Stephen Kumalo, a Zulu pastor, and his son, Absalom, experience the joys and tragedies of a South African community struggling with the injustice of apartheid

Potok, Chaim. The Chosen

Recounts the story of Reuven Malter and Danny Saunders--one an orthodox Jew, the other the son of a Hasidic rabbi--and the course of their friendship as they grow up in Brooklyn.

Rawls, Wilson. Where the Red Fern Grows

Billy and his precious coonhound pups romp relentlessly through the Ozarks, trying to "tree" the elusive raccoon. In time, the inseparable trio wins the coveted gold cup in the annual coon-hunt contest, capture the wily ghost coon, and bravely fight with a mountain lion. But tragedy is waiting right around the corner...

Read, Piers Paul. Alive

Discusses the now classic ordeal of the survivors of an airplane crash in 1972 in the Andes wilderness.

Remarque, Erich. All Quiet on the Western Front

Depicts the experiences of a group of young German soldiers fighting and suffering during the last days of World War I.

Saint-Exupery, Antoine de. The Little Prince

Translation of Le Petit Prince. An aviator whose plane is forced down in the Sahara Desert encounters a little prince from a small planet who relates his adventures in seeking the secret of what is important in life.

Sewell, Anna. Black Beauty

A horse in nineteenth-century England recounts his experiences with both good and bad masters, an important title as the animal rights movement came to prominence.



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Smith, Dodie. I Capture the Castle

A reprint of the 1948 novel recounting the story of Cassandra Mortmain, a young woman living on the edge of poverty in a crumbling castle with her somewhat eccentric family, whose prospects begin to improve when new neighbors arrive from America. Reportedly J.K. Rowling's favorite book.

Smith, Betty. A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

Francie Nolan, avid reader, penny-candy connoisseur, and adroit observer of human nature, has much to ponder in colorful, turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. Betty Smith's poignant, honest novel created a big stir when it was first published over 50 years ago. Her frank writing about life's squalor was alarming to some of the more genteel society, but the book's humor and pathos ensured its place in the realm of classics.

Steinbeck, John. Of Mice and Men

The plot of this well-known classic centers on George Milton and Lennie Small, itinerant ranch hands who dream of one day owning a small farm. George acts as a father figure to Lennie, who is large and simple minded, calming him and helping to rein in his immense physical strength. When a terrible accident involving Lennie takes place, George has an equally terrible decision to make concerning his friend.

Steinbeck, John. The Pearl

Terrible events follow the discovery of a magnificent pearl by a poor Mexican fisherman in this classic tale of destiny and fate.

Steinbeck, John. The Red Pony

Ten-year-old Jody learns about life and death through her ownership of a beautiful red pony.

Stevenson, Robert Lewis. Treasure Island

Climb aboard for the swashbuckling adventure of a lifetime. Treasure Island has enthralled (and caused slight seasickness) for decades. With its dastardly plot and motley crew of rogues and villains (including the famous Long John Silver) it seems unlikely that anyone who ever reads this exciting classic will ever forget it (just ask Phil)!

Stoker, Bram. Dracula

This is the classic, hypnotic story of the undead creatures of the night--and the human lives they touch—as they relentlessly seek to satiate an accursed craving for their only sustenance: human blood. A Gothic novel of immense proportions, Dracula has only strengthened its grip on the public over the course of the last century.

Tan, Amy. The Joy Luck Club

In 1949 four Chinese women began meeting in San Francisco to play mah jong. They called their gathering the Joy Luck Club. Forty years later they look back and remember.

Taylor, Mildred D. Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

An African-American family living in Mississippi during the Depression of the 1930s is faced with prejudice and discrimination which its children do not understand. A powerful contemporary classic.

Thomas, Piri. Down These Mean Streets

As a dark-skinned Puerto Rican, born in 1928, Piri Thomas faced with painful immediacy the absurd contradictions of America's racial attitudes (among people of all colors) in a time of wrenching social change. Three decades have not dimmed the luster of his jazzy prose, rich in Hispanic rhythms and beat-generation slang.

Tolkien, J.R.R. The Hobbit

Bilbo Baggins loves his cozy hobbit hole and hopes to never have to go farther than his front door. No such luck, however; soon 13 fortune-seeking dwarves arrive on his doorstep in search of a burglar, and before he can even grab his hat or an umbrella, Bilbo Baggins is swept out his door and into a dangerous adventure. Prequel to The Lord of the Rings.



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Van der Post, Laurens. [A Story Like the Wind](#)

Young Francois Joubert, living in the remote region bordering the Kalahari Desert, thrills to the wonder of the still-primitive land until his idyllic world is shattered by the political violence of contemporary Africa.

Wilson, August. [The Piano Lesson](#)

Winner of the 1990 Pulitzer Prize for drama. Dramatizes the struggles of an African-American family as they consider selling a prized possession, an ornate upright piano, in order to buy the tract of land upon which they were once enslaved.

Wolff, Tobias. [This Boy's Life](#)

Wolff's account of his boyhood and the process of growing up includes paper routes, whiskey, scouting, fistfights, friendship, betrayal, and America in the fifties.

Wright, Richard. [Black Boy](#)

This classic of American autobiography is a subtly crafted narrative of Richard Wright's journey from innocence to experience in the Jim Crow South. An enduring story of one young man's coming of age during a particular time and place, *Black Boy* remains a seminal text in our history about what it means to be a man, black, and Southern in America.

Wright, Richard. [Native Son](#)

Widely acclaimed as one of the finest books ever written on race and class divisions in America, this powerful novel reflects the forces of poverty, injustice, and hopelessness that continue to shape our society. The plot charts the decline of Bigger Thomas, a young African-American imprisoned for two murders--the accidental smothering of his white employer's daughter and the deliberate killing of his girlfriend to silence her. In his cell Thomas confronts his growing sense of injustice and concludes that violence is the only alternative to submission to white society.

Yolen, Jane. [The Devil's Arithmetic](#)

Hannah resents the traditions of her Jewish heritage until time travel places her in the middle of a small Jewish village in Nazi-occupied Poland. A thought-provoking contemporary classic.

(These annotations are an amalgamation of the Library of Congress's Cataloging in Publication notes, and the passionate scribbles of several middle school faculty members.)