

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

ENTERING GRADE 8

Ms. Pfister, Ms. McGuire, Mr. Dickinson

In preparation for 8th grade, you are assigned to read *Uprising*, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, to fulfill your summer reading requirement. You will be expected to complete various interdisciplinary activities related to *Uprising* upon your return to school in September. These activities will take place in your reading, English, and social studies classes.

Here are some tips that will help you in your reading:

- Use an index card as a bookmark. Create a character list as you read to help you keep track of the main characters throughout the book.
- Revisit the *Uprising* websites on the 7th grade eBoard to clarify information you read in the book or to look up historical parts that may be confusing to you.
- Keep a reading log for every few chapters. There is a lot of information in the book that may be difficult to recall if you read it early in the summer.

You are encouraged to read more than one book to get a head start on next year's "Meeting the Reading Challenge." This is a program, in both English and reading, which requires all students to read and keep track of ten outside reading books each year. Students will show proof of having read four books in the form of quarterly projects/presentations.

Happy summer and happy reading!





Synopsis: UPRISING, by Margaret Peterson Haddix

UPRISING, by prolific author Margaret Peterson Haddix, opens with a young woman named Harriet pleading with a Mrs. Livingston to tell her about the long-ago fire at the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. The reader soon learns that three good friends were there, and only "Mrs. Livingston" survived. Harriet is the daughter of one of the factory's owners; she was five when she lived through this ordeal. Mrs. Livingston begins her story, remembering the tale of three young girls whose fate will include the tragic fire.

Bella is new at the factory. She came to New York alone at age 15 in order to send money home to her starving family in Italy and lives in a filthy, crowded boarding house. Her distant cousin, Pietro, is her only joy. As she suffers through her daily 10 or 12 brutal hours of work, locked into the workroom and abused by the factory's foreman, she falls in love with Pietro.

One day Pietro vanishes. Unable to make her way home without his guidance, two factory workers --- sisters Rahel and Yetta --- assist Bella. The girls are Jewish, and Bella only speaks Italian. The sisters are activists, hoping to help form a union to help the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory employees.

Jane is not a factory worker; she is the coddled, sheltered daughter of a wealthy businessman. Her life is all about learning the social niceties while knowing she will be forced into a marriage of her father's choosing. She feels smothered and worthless until she meets Eleanor, a college student who invites Jane to attend lectures on women's rights and to walk the Shirtwaist Factory picket line with the strikers.

During the strike, Yetta is right in the middle of the action, picketing in front of the factory. Soon, street women beat her up, and Yetta is arrested for disorderly conduct. Instead of defeating Yetta, this ignites a passion to fight for fair treatment. Jane, Yetta and Bella are destined to meet, become close friends and face the worst disaster of their time. Only one will live. Which girl will be the surviving Mrs. Livingston?

This is a gripping page-turner about true events. The Shirtwaist Factory strike of 1909-1910 actually happened, as did the horrendous fire of March 25, 1911 in which 146 workers died. History comes alive for readers through the eyes of the three young girls, who are fully real despite being fictional characters. The skillful intertwining of fiction and actual events make for a haunting tale, one that (as Haddix points out in her notes) resonates even today. The ending packs a few unforeseen twists and manages to be not too tidy yet quite satisfying.