

**STEINWAY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL 141Q**  
**A NASA Explorer School**  
**MAGNET FOR ADVANCED MATHEMATICS, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING**  
Miranda Pavlou, Principal

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Dear Parents,

Your child has done a lot of hard work this year and has learned so much. In the summer months ahead, we encourage you to help your child retain what he or she has learned by providing ongoing opportunities to continue learning and practicing essential skills. Research has shown that young people who do not engage in educational activities during the summer months experience learning loss that can put them at a great disadvantage. At Steinway, we strive to make sure this won't happen. With your cooperation, your children will return to school in September refreshed and ready to learn!

All incoming seventh graders are responsible to read *The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen. *The Devil's Arithmetic* opens on the first day of Passover in modern-day New York City. Twelve-year-old Hannah complains to her mother about attending Passover dinner at her grandparents' home because she finds their constant emphasis on remembering the past, particularly the Nazi's treatment of the Jews during World War II, embarrassing and irritating. During dinner, Hannah is transported back in time to a Polish village in the 1940s. She is captured by the Nazis and experiences first-hand the horrors that her grandparents spoke about. Will Hannah make it back to her family? Will she learn the importance of remembering the Holocaust? Read the story to find out!

In addition to reading the novel, students are responsible to complete the attached book report handout. The report should be turned into the English Language Arts teacher on the **first day of school** and will be **the first major grade of the marking period for ELA class**. Moreover, this novel **will be discussed in class** during the first weeks of school. As such, students should take **detailed chapter notes that will be referenced during class**. Many of the classroom activities and homework assignments, as well as your child's overall participation grade, will be based on this novel, so it is imperative that it is read **prior to September 7**.

There are a lot of additional things you can do to support your child's learning this summer:

1. Visit your local library often. Most local libraries conduct summer reading programs where children can receive rewards for reading done over the summer. Join your local library's summer reading program and make reading part of your summer routine.
2. Keep your child writing. Letter writing to school friends, pen pal programs, and fan letters are all great ideas for getting children writing this summer. Give your child an address book and a letter writing kit filled with stamps, envelopes, and paper. He or she can collect addresses of friends to keep in touch with as well as addresses of athletes and movie stars. Most fan mail addresses can be found online.
3. Play card and board games that will help stimulate complex thinking and keep young and older minds sharp.
4. Help your child keep a summer travel journal for long and short trips.
5. In addition to reading aloud to your child on a regular basis, introduce family reading time. Schedule a half hour in each day for quiet independent reading. Catch up on your reading while your child uses books of his or her own to practice the reading strategies taught in school this year.

For additional ideas, check out [www.summerlearning.org](http://www.summerlearning.org). Have a wonderful and enriching summer.

Best,  
The Seventh Grade ELA Team

**Suggestions for optional reading this summer (Read at your own risk!):**  
*Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli  
*Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell