

Greetings!

I hope you all are having a wonderful and restful summer break! After weeks of distance learning, I know you are all clamoring to dive into the summer reading, and I wanted to put your worries to rest by going ahead and giving you some clarity about what we are going to be reading together. The goal is to read one book as a class- a shared text, if you will-that will form the basis of our first weeks of learning and exploration when we return in August; also a book of your own choice (BOC) that you have not read before, and that is what one would consider at least the length of a novella. Graphic novels and serial young adult wizardry tales are all ripe for the picking, just so long as you have not read said book yet.

For our shared text, I would ask you to read Jewell Parker Rhode's *Ghost Boys* (**ISBN: 9780316262286**). Without giving too much away, I believe it will give us plenty of things to talk about and work with in 8th Grade Humanities as we tackle some of the ways in which our current American experience is shaped by narratives that we hear and see within the novel. I would ask that you visit [our flipgrid](#), where you will be posting very brief video responses to the prompts given below. If recording videos is not your cup of tea, you may choose to write down your responses and we will share/document them via Google Drive on the first day of class.

Of course, we will be reading more books of your choice as the year goes on, so if you would like to read ahead and front-load those novels while you have some idle summer days, you are more than welcome to do that. If you have any questions, or would like some reading recommendations, please reach out and I can provide suggestions (and if you have books to recommend, I am always excited to hear of a new book/author/series). I cannot tell you how excited I am to get to work with you this year, and I hope you have a fantastic break.

Sincerely,

Mr. Oden
zoden@pardesschool.org

Prompt 1 (Book of Choice): Promote your free-choice summer reading by giving the viewer a brief (spoiler-free) description of the characters, plot, writing style, and themes of the book. Feel free to reference other works you have read, ("If you love epic YA world-building like *Percy Jackson* and *Harry Potter*, then you are in for a treat with *Mr. Oden's Minotaurs...*", etc.) and end with a call to action (either we have to go get this book right now, or avoid it at all costs, etc.). Make sure you have a copy of the book in hand so we can reference the cover, and don't forget to mention the author's name/info! Tip: Don't forget to have a copy of the book in hand!

Prompt 2 (Ghost Boys): Discuss ONE thing you ENJOYED about Jewell Parker Rhodes' *Ghost Boys*, and ask ONE QUESTION that you had after you finished reading the novel that you would like to pose to the class (this can cover character actions, narrative devices such as the non-chronological story-telling, narrative themes, plot, and possible author intention in writing the work).