

Summer Reading & Essay Assignment for Incoming 8th Graders

Summer Required Reading: *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson

Your assignment is to read the novel, *Chains* and then answer ONE of the two essay prompts below.

Your typed essay should follow MLA format:

- 1" margins - top, sides and bottom
- Centered title for your essay
- Double-spaced
- 12 pt. Font
- Times New Roman font style
- In-text citations with a Works Cited page

Your essay should include the following:

- a solid introduction, which includes a “hook”
- a bold thesis statement
- body paragraphs (which support your thesis with text evidence)
- a conclusion that gives your reader a fresh perspective on your thesis statement

Your essay should be approximately 2 pages (~ 500 words). Your goal for this assignment is to write an in-depth essay that provides evidence (direct quotes) for your claim.

Basic writing conventions count, so you must have correct spelling, proper punctuation and correct grammar usage. Please double check your work before turning it in.

Choose **ONE** of the following prompts to write about:

1. **Symbolism:** Isabel says, “I was chained between two nations.” There are several references to chains throughout the novel. Discuss the symbolism of the word “chains”- when and how it is used. How does it relate to Isabel? How is “chains” used as the opposite of “freedom?”

2. **Themes:** Bravery and courage are big themes in this book. Discuss how Isabel becomes braver as the novel progresses and why she becomes braver. You may want to discuss her fears, since they help fuel her bravery.

Please have your essay ready to hand in the first day of school.

Have a great summer!