

# Middle School Summer Reading Challenge

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“Young readers who don’t continue to read over the summer — especially those who are reluctant or at-risk — are likely to lose crucial ground. One summer off can sometimes mean a whole school year of struggling academic performance”  
(Bridging the Summer Reading Gap  
by Anne McGill-Franzen & Richard Allington, 2003)

Just because the end of the school year is upon us does not mean that the learning has to end. Parents and students are encouraged to continue reading throughout the summer so that students don’t lose the valuable reading strategies and skills they have practiced throughout the school year.

For our middle school students in grades 5 through 8, we are introducing a new summer reading challenge. Here is a line-up of the events for all students entering grades 5 through 8 in the fall of 2014:

- On **June 17<sup>th</sup>**, local author Jim Mastro will visit current 4<sup>th</sup> grade to 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. At this time, each student will receive a signed copy of his book **The Talisman of Elam**, the first installment in the Children of Hathor series.
- Over the summer, all incoming 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are asked to read **The Talisman of Elam** and be prepared to take part in a lengthy discussion with their classmates during the start of the 2014-2015 school year.
- In the fall, Jim Mastro will return to Ellis for a follow-up with our middle school students where he will take their questions and comments.

For more information on our upcoming author visit, please go to [www.jimmastro.com](http://www.jimmastro.com)

Here is some more information about his book **The Talisman of Elam**:

*Jason Hunter has never piloted a spacecraft before. He has never faced bizarre and deadly creatures or had to escape from a toxic region of space called the Vuhndalac Pit. Nor has he ever had to evade capture by a powerful alien leader intent on destroying him. But if he is to rescue his kidnapped parents and prevent aliens from invading Earth, he must do all these things — and more!*

*Hidden somewhere in the galaxy is an ancient talisman that he must find — before time runs out. If he is the Heir of Elam, the one person in the entire universe who can claim this talisman, he will save his planet. If he is not, touching it will be the last thing he ever does!*