



Middle School SUMMER READING



Choice and engagement drive our middle school summer reading program. Our primary purpose is to keep students reading, as, even at the middle school level, research consistently shows a drop in skill when students stop reading for a prolonged period of time. But, we also want to spark thought about the essential questions students will encounter in their English classes over the next school year. As you navigate through the assignments and books, please read these instructions and helpful tips. Questions? Please contact Mrs. Jessica Ramsey at jessica.ramsey@charchrist.com.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Students will choose one book, or, in some cases, an activity for each question. For instance, the first question for 6th grade is "What can one generation learn from another?" Students may then choose from four different tasks: read a novel about a family, interview someone born before 1950, read a book with a parent or grandparent, or read the Bible selection from Deuteronomy. Students will complete one category for each question for a total of four. It is important to note that one of the selections must be from the Bible. The assignment is to write a paragraph that answers the question using their book or activity as evidence.

At the end of the summer, students will have completed and/or read four books and/or activities. Additionally, students will have written one paragraph in answer to each of the four questions using the book or activity from that column as evidence for a total of four paragraphs.

SOME TIPS:

- There is some **strategy** to this. Some students have busy summers and not every student enjoys reading. In these cases, choosing easy to accomplish activities makes sense and is completely acceptable.
- We offer **suggestions** for each category, but, as long as the book is on the student's level and they haven't read it before, they can pick another book that fits the category they have chosen. [But remember--you'll be using the book to answer the question, so you'll want to be sure the book has something to do with the essential question for that category!]
- **Make a plan.** Choose your books right as summer begins and make mini-goals. Decide how many pages you can reasonably read in a day and break up your reading and writing over the course of the summer. Be sure to consider how other activities like camps or family trips or a long car drive might impact your plan.
- You are welcome to read all of the Bible passages, but you can only "count" the **Bible reading** for one column.
- **Write the paragraph** for each book when you finish reading it and before you start the next book. Really--there's nothing worse than waiting to write all four paragraphs just before school starts.
- **Typed or handwritten?** Either one is fine for now; your teachers will give you submission instructions during the first week of school. If you can access your school Google Drive, it would be safest to keep your paragraphs there. If you're a really organized person and you're not worried about losing your paragraphs--by all means, write them by hand. However you "store" your work--just make sure it's easy to access during the first week of school.
- **Use the following sample paragraph as a guide.** Your teachers will expect you to have a great hook and conclusion, a strong topic sentence that answers the essential question, and context, evidence and commentary that supports your topic sentence. Remember you are not writing about what you liked about the book or summarizing the plot, you are answering the essential question.

SAMPLE PARAGRAPH: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM A JOURNEY?

During a long trip, someone, at some point, usually asks, “Are we there yet?” We often just want the trip to be over and to quickly arrive at our destination. However, journeys offer lessons about purpose and can lead us to new understandings. In her book, *A Long Walk to Water*, the author, Linda Sue Park, tells the story of Salva who walks over 1200 miles as he escapes a civil war in Sudan. While he and his uncle are walking across a desert, Salva observes a woman sharing drops of water with dying men and wonders if he would “have given water to those men? Or would he, like most of the group, have kept his water for himself?” Even though everyone he is traveling with is suffering, he notices and understands the importance of acts of kindness like sharing water or food. Later in the novel, Salva recognizes that other people he’s traveling with need help from someone, and “he organized the group, giving everyone a job.” Here, he gives away his leadership like the woman gave water to the dying men and begins to understand his purpose. Eventually, Salva is sent to Rochester, NY to live with an American family. It may seem like his journey was over, but in some ways it had only just begun. With the help of others, he begins an organization that will bring clean water to villages in Africa. It was hard work, but even when he was nervous or afraid of failing, he reminded himself to just take “a step at a time,” which is a lesson his uncle taught him while they walked through the desert. Without his difficult journey, Salva may not have found his purpose to lead with compassion. Journeys, even if hard, often teach us lessons we might not have learned if we had just stayed at home.

THE PARTS OF A PARAGRAPH:

The Hook: To start, you need 1-2 sentences that get your reader interested in your topic.

The Topic: This sentence should answer the essential question.

The Quick Summary: Just to set the scene, give your reader a quick, one-sentence summary of the book.

The Context [x3]: In a few words, give some context or set the scene for your evidence with details from your reading.

The Evidence [x3]: You should have precise examples or even a quote to make your point. Plan to have 3 pieces of evidence in your paragraph. As you consider what evidence to use, it helps to think about the beginning, middle, and end of the reading.

The Explanation [x3]: This is your opportunity to link your evidence or examples to your topic. How does your evidence lead to your answer to the question?

Restate the Topic: Without exactly repeating your words, restate your answer to the question.

The Conclusion: Hooks get readers interested, but conclusions let them know why your idea matters. Try to end with an idea that will stick in your reader’s head.

Middle School GRADE 6 SUMMER READING Assignment



1	ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS	CHOICES			
	WHAT CAN ONE GENERATION LEARN FROM ANOTHER?	A novel about a family	Interview someone born before 1950* *May use interview from heritage project.	Read a book with a grandparent or parent and discuss	The Book of Deuteronomy 1-6, 31-34
2					
	WHAT CAN CAUSE A SUDDEN CHANGE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE?	A book with a male protagonist	A book with a female protagonist	Historical fiction	Acts 1-2, 9-10
3					
	WHAT EFFECTS DO PEOPLE HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?	A work of fiction related to the environment	Three articles about climate change	A dystopian novel	Psalms 24 and Genesis 1-3
4					
	HOW DO WE OVERCOME OBSTACLES?	A book from the perspective of someone who is differently abled	A nonfiction book about human rights	A book about an "underdog"	The Book of Nehemiah

Middle School GRADE 6 SUMMER READING Recommendations



1

WHAT
 CAN ONE
 GENERATION
 LEARN FROM
 ANOTHER?

A NOVEL ABOUT A FAMILY	<i>Hour of the Bees</i> Lindsay Eager (978-0763691202)	<i>Someday Birds</i> Sally Pla (978-0062445773)	<i>The Day the Angels Fell</i> Shawn Smucker (978-0800728496)	<i>Patina</i> Jason Reynolds (9781481450188)
READ A BOOK WITH A PARENT OR GRANDPARENT AND DISCUSS	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> Lewis Carroll (978-0141321073)	<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i> Wilson Rawls (978-0553274295)	<i>Hatchet</i> Gary Paulson (978-1416936473)	

2

WHAT CAN
 CAUSE A
 SUDDEN
 CHANGE IN
 SOMEONE'S
 LIFE?

A BOOK WITH A MALE PROTAGONIST	<i>The Trail</i> Meika Hashimoto (978-1338035872)	<i>Pax</i> Sara Pennypacker (978-0062377012)	<i>The Crossover</i> Kwame Alexander (978-0544107717)	<i>Home of the Brave</i> Katherine Applegate (978-0312535636)
A BOOK WITH A FEMALE PROTAGONIST	<i>The Running Dream</i> Wendelin Van Draanen (978-0375866289)	<i>Listen, Slowly</i> Thanhha Lai (978-0062229199)	<i>A Place to Belong</i> Cynthia Kadohata (978-1481446655)	<i>Weedflower</i> Cynthia Kadohata (978-1416975663)
HISTORICAL FICTION	<i>The War that Saved My Life</i> Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (978-0147510488)	<i>Forge</i> Laurie Halse Anderson (978-1416961451)	<i>The Witch of Blackbird Pond</i> Elizabeth George Speare (978-0547550299)	

3

WHAT EFFECTS
DO PEOPLE
HAVE ON THE
ENVIRONMENT?

A WORK OF FICTION RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENT	Operation Redwood S. Terrell French (978-0810997202)	Fuzzy Mud Louis Sachar (978-0385370226)	Flush Carl Hiaasen (978-0375861253)
A DYSTOPIAN NOVEL	Shipbreaker Paolo Bacigalupi (978-0316056199)	The Last Wild Piers Torday (978-0147509659)	Cosmic Frank Cottrell Boyce (978-0061836886)
THREE ARTICLES ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE	Science News for Students	Infobits*	Smithsonian Tween Tribune

* Please email Mrs. Jessica Ramsey, MS/US Media Specialist for the Infobits password.

4

HOW DO WE
OVERCOME
OBSTACLES?

A BOOK WRITTEN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOMEONE WHO IS DIFFERENTLY ABLED	Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree Lauren Tarshis (978-0142411506)	P.K. Pinkerton and the Case of the Deadly Desperados Caroline Lawrence (978-0142423813)	Rain Reign Ann M. Martin (978-1250073976)	Counting by 7's Holly Goldberg Sloan (978-0142422861)
A NONFICTION BOOK ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS	Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice Phillip Hoose (978-0312661052)	The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind (Young Reader's Edition) William Kamkwamba (978-0147510426)	The Red Pencil Andrea Davis Pinkney (978-0316247825)	
A BOOK ABOUT AN "UNDERDOG"	The Boys in the Boat (Young Readers Adaptation): The True Story of an American Team's Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics Daniel James Brown (978-0147516855)	No Summit out of Sight Jordan Romero (978-1481432764)	The Finest Hours (Young reader's edition): The True Story of a Heroic Sea Rescue Michael J. Tougias & Casey Sherman (978-1250044235)	