



MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING

2026-2027

Dear Middle School students,

We are excited to have the opportunity to spend the year with you as your English teachers! We know that we will learn much from you, and hopefully you will learn from us, too!

Over the summer, please read **two books**. **Choose one book from the grade-specific list below**. Please be prepared to complete an **in-class assignment about this book within the first week when we return in August**.

Your in-class assignment will require you to write an essay about one of the grade-specific books. You will be required to support your ideas with textual evidence, so it would be beneficial to use sticky page markers/flags and annotate the book as you read, keeping in mind potential themes such as perseverance, love, justice, courage, faith, or personal growth/maturity. Please use the annotation symbols that are attached to help you engage with the text.

Your second book choice should be a book you have not previously read, have 200 or more pages and is at or above your reading level.

If at any time you happen to come upon something that is inappropriate, please stop reading the book and discuss it with a parent, before abandoning the book and choosing one that is more appropriate for you. Please use your common and moral sense to guide you.

We hope you have a refreshing summer with your family and friends and can't wait to hear all about your endeavors upon our return in the fall! We are going to have a fantastic year in English and look forward to this new adventure together!

Sincerely,
Ms. Krantz, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Mackey



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GRADE 8

***Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson:**

Recommended for its gripping depiction of courage and faith amidst adversity during the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia. Through the eyes of young protagonist Mattie Cook, readers witness the resilience of the human spirit and the power of community to overcome tragedy. This historical novel not only educates students about a significant event in American history but also inspires them to trust in God's providence and exhibit compassion towards others in times of crisis.

***The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane:**

Recommended for its profound exploration of bravery, inner conflict, and personal growth during the Civil War. Through the experiences of young soldier Henry Fleming, readers are invited to reflect on the importance of courage, faith, and integrity in the face of fear and uncertainty. This classic novel offers valuable lessons on overcoming self-doubt and finding strength in God's guidance, making it an inspiring read.

***Hidden Figures: Young Readers' Edition* by Margot Lee Shetterly:**

An inspiring portrayal of the remarkable contributions of African American women to the space program amidst the challenges of segregation. Through the stories of Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, students discover the power of perseverance, determination, and faith in overcoming obstacles. Its portrayal of these unsung heroes serves as a testament to the dignity and worth of every individual, echoing Christian principles of equality and justice.

***Peak* by Roland Smith:**

Roland Smith has created an action-packed adventure about friendship, sacrifice, family, and the drive to take on Everest, despite the incredible risk. The story of Peak's dangerous ascent—told in his own words— suspenseful, immediate, and impossible to put down.

I verify that my child, _____, read the following two books:

1. _____
2. _____

She/He has not read either of these books before this summer, nor did she/he just sit and watch the movie. She/He read both books in their entirety.

Parent Signature

Annotating Reference Sheet

Annotation or Annotating text is when a reader takes short notes to record his/her thinking as they read through a text.

This Action Requires

a highlighter



pen/pencil



sticky notes



Good Readers:

- Identify important information
- Make connections to the text as they read from their own life
- Make predictions
- Question the text
- Ask questions
- Identify words that s/he does not know
- Make notes while they read

In The Margins:

- Write comments next to your symbols
- React and respond
- Make inferences
- Identify literary and figurative terms

This kind of practice will help you read more closely and with great thought and understanding. As you practice, you'll develop your own system!

Here are symbols you can use to annotate your reading:



Important thought or piece of information



Something surprising or something you did not know



Something that you agree with in the text



Something that makes you sad or you disagree with in the text



Love it! Love an idea or piece of information



Something you find confusing or puzzling



Ha! This makes you laugh or smile