

CCA Summer Reading

Mrs. Hanley – Grade 8

Dear Student,

Attached, you will find the summer reading list for your class. Your list consists of 10 or more carefully selected books. Each book is accompanied by a brief review or description that should provide you with enough information about the plot to determine whether or not it may be of interest to you. Your summer assignment is as follows:

The Reading –

1. Select and read any two books (minimum) from the list **THAT YOU HAVE NOT READ BEFORE**.
2. Decide which book you found most interesting (and best understood).
3. Choose one of the book reporting written activities on the attached sheet (the circled numbers are the ones available for you to choose from).
4. Complete the activity *with excellence*.

The Book Report Activity –

1. Regardless of the activity you choose, each activity must be *typed, double spaced, and written in size 12 font*.
2. The activity should reflect careful thought and time spent. By its quality and creativity, it should show that you took the assignment seriously and gave your best effort.
3. Length: There is no set length. Follow the guidelines given in the activity description, and keep in mind that something short and hastily written will receive the grade it deserves.

Final Note –

This may not be the type of reading you're used to, or would necessarily choose for yourself, but pray that God would grant you an open mind as you tackle these books. They're called classics for a reason, and each has something to teach us about human nature and the nature of God. Don't feel limited to the required two – if you have time and the desire, read as many books as you possibly can! Extra reading expands your vocabulary, which leads to better thinking and writing skills. Those skills, in turn, lead to greater opportunities both within school and beyond!

Book Reporting: 8th Grade Written Activities

These alternative assignments to the standard "book report" can be used for reporting on fiction.

1. Write a diary as if you were one of the main characters in the book. Tell not only what is happening to you and others, but how you feel about what is taking place. Make a minimum of ten sequential entries of at least five sentences each.
2. Pretend you are a book critic and write a book review for a newspaper. Tell the name of the book, its author, something about the main characters, plot, setting, and conflict. Do not reveal the ending, but evaluate the book and the author's writing ability.
3. Rewrite the ending of the story. Be sure it is plausible and different from the one the author uses. Your ending should begin at the climax and take the main characters through to a different resolution or solution to their basic problem.
4. Choose a main character from the book. Write a letter to him or her, giving advice on what he or she should do to solve the conflicts that have been presented in the book. Be sure your advice is different from the way the author resolves the problems.
5. Write a two-page biography of a character from the story. Use any and all information given by the author throughout the book. Write the facts about the character in chronological order, even if they weren't presented that way during the story.
6. If the book you read was adapted for television or the movies, write two long paragraphs (one page) comparing and contrasting the book and the television or movie version. In the first paragraph, tell the ways the versions were similar. In the second, tell the ways in which they differed.
7. In what period of history was the story set? Go to the library and research the era. Add what you learned about the customs, dress, language, and so forth from the book to what you learn from your research. Summarize on one full page the historical period. Create a works cited for your research.

8th Grade Summer Reading List

1. *Fever, 1793*—Laurie Halse Anderson

From Amazon.com: The opening scene of Anderson's ambitious novel about the yellow fever epidemic that ravaged Philadelphia in the late 18th century shows a hint of the gallows humor and insight of her previous novel, *Speak*. Sixteen-year-old Matilda "Mattie" Cook awakens in the sweltering summer heat on August 16th, 1793, to her mother's command to rouse and with a mosquito buzzing in her ear. She shoos her cat from her mother's favorite quilt and thinks to herself, "I had just saved her precious quilt from disaster, but would she appreciate it? Of course not." Mattie's wit again shines through several chapters later during a visit to her wealthy neighbors' house, the Ogilvies. Having refused to let their serving girl, Eliza, coif her for the occasion, Mattie regrets it as soon as she lays eyes on the Ogilvie sisters, who wear matching bombazine gowns, curly hair piled high on their heads ("I should have let Eliza curl my hair. Dash it all"). But thereafter, Mattie's character development, as well as those of her grandfather and widowed mother, takes a back seat to the historical details of Philadelphia and environs. Extremely well researched, Anderson's novel paints a vivid picture of the seedy waterfront, the devastation the disease wreaks on a once thriving city, and the bitterness of neighbor toward neighbor as those suspected of infection are physically cast aside. However, these larger scale views take precedence over the kind of intimate scenes that Anderson crafted so masterfully in *Speak*. Scenes of historical significance, such as George Washington returning to Philadelphia, then the nation's capital, to signify the end of the epidemic are delivered with more impact than scenes of great personal significance to Mattie.

2. *Bruchko* – Bruce Olson

Book Description: *Bruchko* is a fascinating story of a young man's struggles, Bruce Olsen, to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to civilizations that were previously unreachable within the South American continent.

3. *Anne of Green Gables* – L.M. Montgomery

Amazon.com review: When Marilla Cuthbert's brother, Matthew, returns home to Green Gables with a chatty redheaded orphan girl, Marilla exclaims, "But we asked for a boy. We have no use for a girl." It's not long, though, before the Cuthberts can't imagine how they could ever do without young Anne of Green Gables--but not for the original reasons they sought an orphan. Somewhere between the time Anne "confesses" to losing Marilla's amethyst pin (which she never took) in hopes of being allowed to go to a picnic, and when Anne accidentally dyes her hated carrot-red hair green, Marilla says to Matthew, "One thing's for certain, no house that Anne's in will ever be dull." And no book that she's in will be, either.

4. *Out of the Silent Planet* (book one of The Space Trilogy) – C.S. Lewis

Book Description: The first book in C. S. Lewis's acclaimed Space Trilogy, which continues with *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength*, *Out of the Silent Planet* begins the adventures of the remarkable Dr. Ransom. Here, that estimable man is abducted by a megalomaniacal physicist and his accomplice and taken via spaceship to the red planet of Malacandra. The two men are in need of a human sacrifice, and Dr. Ransom would seem to fit the bill. Once on the planet, however, Ransom eludes his captors, risking his life and his chances of returning to Earth, becoming a stranger in a land that is enchanting in its difference from Earth and instructive in its similarity.

5. *Robinson Crusoe* – Daniel Defoe

Book Description: Daniel Defoe relates the tale of an English sailor marooned on a desert island for nearly three decades. An ordinary man struggling to survive in extraordinary circumstances, Robinson Crusoe wrestles with fate and the nature of God.

6. *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* – Avi

From Publishers Weekly: Told in the form of a recollection, these "confessions" cover 13-year-old Charlotte's eventful 1832 transatlantic crossing. She begins her trip a prim schoolgirl returning home to her American family from England. From the start, there is something wrong with the Seahawk : the families that were to serve as Charlotte's chaperones do not arrive, and the unsavory crew warns her not to make the trip. When the crew rebels, Charlotte first sides with the civilized Captain Jaggerty, but before long she realizes that he is a sadist and--the only female aboard--she joins the crew as a seaman. Charlotte is charged with murder and sentenced to be hanged before the trip is over, but ends up in command of the Seahawk by the time it reaches its destination. Charlotte's repressive Puritanical family refuses to believe her tale, and the girl returns to the sea. Charlotte's story is a gem of nautical adventure, and Avi's control of tone calls to mind William Golding's 1980s trilogy of historical novels of the sea. Never wavering from its 19th century setting, the novel offers suspense and entertainment modern-day readers will enjoy.

7. *The Fellowship of the Ring* or *The Two Towers* or *The Return of the King*– J.R.R. Tolkien

Amazon.com review: For over fifty years, J.R.R. Tolkien's peerless fantasy has accumulated worldwide acclaim as the greatest adventure tale ever written. No other writer has created a world as distinct as Middle-earth, complete with its own geography, history, languages, and legends. And no one has created characters as endearing as Tolkien's large-hearted, hairy-footed hobbits. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* continues to seize the imaginations of readers of all ages, and this new three-volume paperback edition is designed to appeal to the youngest of them.

In ancient times the Rings of Power were crafted by the Elvensmiths, and Sauron, the Dark Lord, forged the One Ring, filling it with his own power so that he could rule all others. But the One Ring was taken from him, and though he sought it throughout Middle-earth, still it remained lost to him...

8. *Watership Down* - Richard Adams

Amazon.com review: *Watership Down* has been a staple of high-school English classes for years. Despite the fact that it's often a hard sell at first), Richard Adams's bunny-centric epic rarely fails to win the love and respect of anyone who reads it, regardless of age. Like most great novels, *Watership Down* is a rich story that can be read (and reread) on many different levels. The book is often praised as an allegory, with its analogs between human and rabbit culture (a fact sometimes used to goad skeptical teens, who resent the challenge that they won't "get" it, into reading it), but it's equally praiseworthy as just a corking good adventure.

The story follows a warren of Berkshire rabbits fleeing the destruction of their home by a land developer. As they search for a safe haven, skirting danger at every turn, we become acquainted with the band and its compelling culture and mythos. Adams has crafted a touching, involving world in the dirt and scrub of the English countryside, complete with its own folk history and language (the book comes with a "lapine" glossary, a guide to rabbitese). As much about freedom, ethics, and human nature as it is about a bunch of bunnies looking for a warm hidey-hole and some mates, *Watership Down* will continue to make the transition from classroom desk to bedside table for many generations to come. --Paul Hughes [L] [SEP]

9. *The Wind in the Willows* – Kenneth Grahame

Kenneth Grahame's classic tale of the pleasures of country life and the dependability of good friends will never grow old. Now, in this splendid volume, Inga Moore recaptures its scenes and its characters with richly patterned and warmly detailed illustrations. Here, drawn with charming freshness, are impulsive dear Mole, rash Mr. Toad, reclusive Badger, and sensible Rat, so happy just "messing around in boats." And here are the most treasured moments from *The Wind in the Willows* - Mole's first enraptured row on the river, Toad's irrepressible adventures in and out of automobiles, and many more. So gather 'round to read or listen, and, as Mole and Rat would heartily agree, a fine time will be had by all.

10. *Soul Surfer* – Bethany Hamilton, Sheryl Berk, and Rick Bundschuh

This is the amazing story of a thirteen-year-old girl who lost her arm in a shark attack but never lost her faith -- and of her triumphant return to competitive surfing. They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the tremendous passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing -- not even the loss of her arm in a horrific shark attack -- could come between her and the waves? When the first thing Bethany wanted to know after surgery was "When can I surf again?" it became clear that her unfaltering spirit and determination were part of a greater story -- a tale of courage and faith that this modest and soft-spoken girl would come to share with the world. *Soul Surfer* is a moving account of Bethany's life as a young surfer, her recovery in the wake of the shark attack, the adjustments she's made to her unique surfing style, and her unprecedented bid for a top showing in the World Surfing Championships. *SC Book Award Junior Book Nominee, Bethany Hamilton ESPY Award for Best Comeback Athlete.*

SUMMER READING SIGN-OFF FORM

I have read at least two books from Mrs. Hanley's summer reading list and have completed the book reporting activity to the best of my ability.

Student Signature:

My child has read at least two books from the summer reading list and I have seen a completed (typed) book reporting activity.

Parent Signature:
