

CCA Summer Reading

Mrs. Hanley – Grades 6, 7, & 8

Dear Student,

Attached, you will find the summer 2011 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.
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!

7th Grade Summer Reading List

1. **White Fang** – Jack London

Book Description: He was three quarters wolf and all fury. Born in a cave, in famine, in the frozen arctic. Born in a world where the weak died without mercy, where only the swift, the strong, the cunning saw each dawn. It was White Fang's world--until he and his mother were captured by the man-gods. But men and their dogs taught White Fang to hate. He was beaten, abused, attacked. He was bought, sold, tortured, trained to kill in blood sports. Knowing no kindness, he became a mad, lethal, creature of pure rage. Only one man saw White Fang's intelligence and nobility. Only one had the courage to offer the killer a new life. But can a wolf understand the word "hope"? Can a creature of hatred understand the word "love"?

2. **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.

3. **Call of the Wild** – Jack London

Book Description: First published in 1903, *The Call of the Wild* is regarded as Jack London's masterpiece. Based on London's experiences as a gold prospector in the Canadian wilderness and his ideas about nature and the struggle for existence, *The Call of the Wild* is a tale about unbreakable spirit and the fight for survival in the frozen Alaskan Klondike.

4. **Helen Keller: The Story of My Life** – Helen Keller

Book Description: Helen Keller's story of struggle and achievement is one of unquenchable hope. From tales of her difficult early days, to details of her relationship with her beloved teacher Anne Sullivan, to her impressions of academic life, Keller's honest, straightforward writing lends insight into an amazing mind. Like the original, this centenary edition of *The Story of My Life* includes letters Keller wrote to friends throughout her childhood and adolescence that chronicle her intellectual and sensory progression, as well as assistant John Macy's commentary on her interpretations of her surroundings.

5. **Redwall** – Brian Jacques

Amazon.com book description: As the inhabitants of Redwall Abbey bask in the glorious Summer of the Late Rose, all is quiet and peaceful. But things are not as they seem. Cluny the Scourge, the evil one-eyed rat warlord, is hell-bent on destroying the tranquility as he prepares to fight a bloody battle for the ownership of Redwall. This dazzling story in the Redwall series is packed with all the wit, wisdom, humor, and blood-curdling adventure of the other books in the collection, but has the added bonus of taking the reader right back to the heart and soul of Redwall Abbey and the characters who live there. Magical, mystical, and the stuff of legends, this stunning tale of good battling with--and ultimately triumphing over--evil takes the reader on a roller-coaster adventure that barely draws breath from the first page to the very last. Brian Jacques is a true master of his craft. --*Susan Harrison*

6. **Profiles in Courage** – John F. Kennedy

Book Description: In 1954-55 a freshman U.S. Senator from Massachusetts wrote a book profiling eight of his historical Senatorial colleagues, such men as John Quincy Adams, Sam Houston, and Robert A. Taft. Instead of focusing on their storied careers, John F. Kennedy chose to illustrate their acts of integrity, when they stood alone against tremendous political and social pressure for what they felt was right.

7. **A Wrinkle in Time** – Madeleine L'Engle

Book Description: Meg Murray, her little brother Charles Wallace, and their mother are having a midnight snack on a dark and stormy night when an unearthly stranger appears at their door. He claims to have been blown off course, and goes on to tell them that there is such a thing as a "tesseract," which, if you didn't know, is a wrinkle in time. Meg's father had been experimenting with time-travel when he suddenly disappeared. Will Meg, Charles Wallace, and their friend Calvin outwit the forces of evil as they search through space for their father?

8. **Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry** – Mildred Taylor

Amazon.com book description: In all Mildred D. Taylor's unforgettable novels she recounts "not only the joy of growing up in a large and supportive family, but my own feelings of being faced with segregation and bigotry." Her Newbery Medal-winning *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* tells the story of one African American family, fighting to stay together and strong in the face of brutal racist attacks, illness, poverty, and betrayal in the Deep South of the 1930s. Nine-year-old Cassie Logan, growing up protected by her loving family, has never had reason to suspect that any white person could consider her inferior or wish her harm. But during the course of one devastating year when her community begins to be ripped apart by angry night riders threatening African Americans, she and her three brothers come to understand why the land they own means so much to their Papa. "Look out there, Cassie girl. All that belongs to you. You ain't never had to live on nobody's place but your own and long as I live and the family survives, you'll never have to. That's important. You may not understand that now but one day you will. Then you'll see."

9. **Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women** – Catherine Thimmesh

From School Library Journal: Grade 5-8-An outstanding collective biography of women and girls who changed the world with their inventions. Thimmesh surveys unique and creative ideas that were both borne of necessity or were simply a product of ingenuity and hard work. Included are Bette Nesmith Graham, who invented Liquid Paper, known more commonly as "white-out," and Ann Moore, who emulated the way African mothers carried their babies to create the Snuggli. While working for NASA, Jeanne Lee Crews invented the "space bumper" that protects spacecraft and astronauts. The last few individuals highlighted utilized their creativity at a fairly young age. Becky Schroeder was 10 when she invented Glo-sheet paper, which enables people to write in the dark. She became the youngest female to receive a U.S. patent. The book also encourages young women to start inventing themselves and offers a list of organizations with postal and Internet addresses to help them get started. Colorful collage artwork shows the women and their creations and adds vibrancy and lightness to the text.

10. **My Side of the Mountain** – Jean Craighead George

Amazon.com review: Every kid thinks about running away at one point or another; few get farther than the end of the block. Young Sam Gribble gets to the end of the block and keeps going--all the way to the Catskill Mountains of upstate New York. There he sets up house in a huge hollowed-out tree, with a falcon and a weasel for companions and his wits as his tool for survival. In a spellbinding, touching, funny account, Sam learns to live off the land, and grows up a little in the process. Blizzards, hunters, loneliness, and fear all battle to drive Sam back to city life. But his desire for freedom, independence, and adventure is stronger. No reader will be immune to the compulsion to go right out and start whittling fishhooks and befriending raccoons.

11. **The Diary of a Young Girl** – Anne Frank

Amazon.com review: A beloved classic since its initial publication in 1947, this vivid, insightful journal is a fitting memorial to the gifted Jewish teenager who died at Bergen-Belsen, Germany, in 1945. Born in 1929, Anne Frank received a blank diary on her 13th birthday, just weeks before she and her family went into hiding in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam. Her marvelously detailed, engagingly personal entries chronicle 25 trying months of claustrophobic, quarrelsome intimacy with her parents, sister, a second family, and a middle-aged dentist who has little tolerance for Anne's vivacity. The diary's universal appeal stems from its riveting blend of the grubby particulars of life during wartime (scant, bad food; shabby, outgrown clothes that can't be replaced; constant fear of discovery) and candid discussion of emotions familiar to every adolescent (everyone criticizes me, no one sees my real nature, when will I be loved?). Yet Frank was no ordinary teen: the later entries reveal a sense of compassion and a spiritual depth remarkable in a girl barely 15. Her death epitomizes the madness of the Holocaust, but for the millions who meet Anne through her diary, it is also a very individual loss. --Wendy Smith

Book Reporting: Written Activities * Options are marked by grade

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

1. Write a skit or short play that utilizes the same main characters as the story. If you wish, you may add a new character to give freshness to the mix. Continue the plot of the original story; or invent a new conflict and resolution.
2. On a 3-inch X 5-inch note card, write a telegram about the book to send to a friend. Include specific things about the characters, story, and setting. Limit the telegram to fifty words by leaving out *ands* and similar, small words so you can say more in a short space.
- * 6,7,8,9 3. 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.
- * 6,7,8,9 4. Write a letter to the-author of the book. Emphasize the parts of the book you liked best, one part you would change (telling specifically how), and name your favorite character. Tell exactly why you found the character likable and/or, believable.
- * 8,9,10 5. 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.
6. 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.
- * 6,7,8,9 7. 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.
8. Write a one-page publicity article promoting the book. Be specific, but don't tell the story or the ending. Remember, you are trying to interest someone in reading the book, not summarizing it. Reading book jackets should help you get ideas.
9. Write a one-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.
- *9, 10 10. Pretend you are a news reporter assigned to the obituary page. Write brief obituaries about two characters from the book. Give pertinent information about their lives, showing readers what you have learned about them and the legacies they leave.
- * 8,9,10 11. 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.
- * 8,9,10 12. 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.

13. Search the book for similes, metaphors, or exceptional images the author used. Write them down exactly as stated. Label each with a S, M, or I to show that you know one from the other. Be sure to fill one complete page.
- * 6 14. Write a one-page summary of the story. Be sure to include the main characters, setting, plot, climax, and resolution, but be brief and to the point. Put the title and author's name at the top of the page, and put your name at the bottom.
15. Take one interesting incident from the story. Use it as a springboard to write a short story for a young person of elementary school age. Limit yourself to two or three pages.
16. Write one page telling why you would or would not like the main character for a friend.
17. Write one page about one of the characters. In the first paragraph, tell how the character *is* like you. In the second, tell how the character differs from you.
- * 6,7 18. Compare two books you have recently read. Tell all the ways they are alike. Be sure to list the complete titles and authors.
- * 6,7 19. Contrast two books you have recently read. Tell all the ways they are different. Be sure to list the complete titles and authors.
20. Outline the book, using main headings such as SETTING, CHARACTERS, PLOT, INCIDENTS, and ENDING for your Roman numeral divisions.
21. Make up a shape poem relating to the book.
22. If you've read a myth, fable, or legend, make up one of your own and tell or read it to the class.

