

2026 Notre Summer Reading
Notre Dame - Bishop Gibbons
English Department
Tricia White * Ben Sinkora

We are pleased to roll out our Summer Reading Experience 2026

At Notre Dame - Bishop Gibbons we work to help keep students on track with learning. Part of this is requiring summer reading. Following a study done in 2020, shared in the American Education Research Journal, 52% of students lost an average of 39% of their learning gains during the summer. This evaluation included 200 million test scores, in 7,500 school districts. With this data, we also realize that summer is also a time for kids to recharge - and just be kids. In looking at balancing this, we are requiring one book be read, (details follow below).

We encourage all students to read more than just the Summer Reading Experience book. Read a new author or one you already like. Try a magazine, newspaper, or blog. Go to a bookstore and wander. Ask the staff for their favorites. Type a book you have liked into Amazon, and see what is suggested under "Frequently Bought Together", or "Customers Who Bought This Also Bought". Chances are you will find things you like to read. Fiction or nonfiction. It's all good reading!

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO FIND YOUR PACKET, THERE IS A LINK ON THE ND-BG WEBSITE FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND THE HIGH SCHOOL.

Middle School (grades 6 - 8)

Mr Sinkora (ben-sinkora@nd-bg.org)

The Assignment

Choose one of the books on the Reading List for either Middle School or High School based upon your grade level, and complete a dialectical journal which will be handed in the second full week of school in September. Directions for how to complete a dialectical journal follow, as well as the number of entries required.

High School (9-12)

Mrs. White (tricia_white@nd-bg.org)

The Assignment

Choose one of the books on the Reading List for the High School, and complete a dialectical journal which will be handed in the second full week of school in September. Directions for how to complete a dialectical journal follow, as well as the number of entries required

Dialectical Journal

The purpose of a dialectical journal is to identify significant pieces of text and explain the significance. It is another form of highlighting/annotating text and should be used to think about, digest, summarize, question, clarify, critique, and remember what is read.

This is an excellent way to more fully understand a text.

Quote

Find a quote which you feel is significant. It can be significant to the story, or it may be a piece that is significant to you personally. The quote may also be a question which you have about a character, event, theme, etc.

Response

Each response should be 3 - 4 sentences.

Possible topics:

1. Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text.
2. Give your personal reactions to the passage.
3. Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author.
4. Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences.
5. Write about what it makes you think or feel.

Example

(From Night by Elie Wiesel)

Quote

"Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere."

Response

This quote shows one of the themes of the book, which is the world being responsible for wrongs that are done to other people. If people do not stand up to what is wrong, the world will spin downward. This is like the idea that any behavior that isn't spoken against, is acceptable. For example, a teen drinking a lot and coming home and not having their parents speak to him or her about it could seem like it is accepted.

**Attached are reading lists for
Summer Reading Experience.
Pick a book
Enjoy**

Reading List:

High School List is given first. Middle School list is given second.

This is a listing of books that we feel offers a wide selection of choices from many genres and time periods. Perhaps you would like to try a classic piece, or a mystery, or fantasy, or historical fiction. Perhaps you aren't sure - look in the "General" category. Reading allows you to sit down, and walk into a different world, or way of thinking. Find a book, a comfy spot, with a cool breeze, have a glass of lemonade nearby, and enjoy.

HIGH SCHOOL

Grade 8 going into 9. Write 11 Dialectic Journal Entries

Grade 9 going into 10. Write 12 Dialectic Journal Entries

Grade 10 going into 11. Write 13 Dialectical Journal Entries

Grade 11 going into 12. Write 14 Dialectic Journal Entries

Mysteries

The Best of Mystery: 63 Short Stories Chosen by Alfred Hitchcock

Fuzzy Mud by Louis Sachar

Murder on the Orient Express by Agatha Christie

Death on the Nile by Agatha Christie

The Magpie Mysteries by Anthony Horowitz

Mrs. Thistlethwaite and the Magpie by J.B. Hawker

General

The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas

Sold on a Monday by Kristana McMorris

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver

A Dog's Purpose by Bruce Cameron

The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

The Fault of Our Stars by John Green

Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell

Burn Baby Burn by Meg Medina

The Absolute True Story of a Part Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher

Stars Go Blue by Laura Pritchett

The Sparrow by Sarah Moon

Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

Goodbye Days by Jeff Zenner

A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith
Thursday's Child by Sonya Hartnett
Looking for Alaska by John Green

Classics

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck
Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens
David Copperfield by Charles Dickens
The Old Curiosity Shop by Charles Dickens
Bleak House by Charles Dickens
Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte
Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte
The Tenant of Wildfell Hall by Anne Bronte
Wuthering Heights by Charlotte Bronte
Little Women by Louisa May Alcott
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne
The Lost World by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Emma by Jane Austen
Pride And Prejudice by Jane Austen
Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen
Cannery Row by John Steinbeck
Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller
The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemmingway
Gone With the Wind by Margaret Mitchell

Sci-Fi

Binti by Nnedi Okorafor (Nigerian)
The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer
The Andromeda Strain by Michael Crichton

Dystopian

Unwind Series by Neal Shusterman
Hunger Game Series by Suzanne Collins
The Man in the High Castle by Phillip K. Dick
Divergent by Veronica Roth
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
Animal Farm by George Orwell

Fantasy

Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern
Strange the Dreamer by Lani Taylor
The Reader by Traci Chee
The Shadow and Bone Trilogy by Leigh Bardugo
Six of Crows Duology by Leigh Bardugo
The Builders of Rollrock Island by Margo Langan
Watership Down by Richard Adams
Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings by JRR Tolkien
Harry Potter Series by JK Rowling

Diversity

Piecing Me Together by Renee Watson
Beloved by Toni Morrison
Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiechie
The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds
The Color Purple by Alice Walker
Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston
The Help by Katherine Stockert

Non-Fiction

The 59 Bus by Dashka Slater
Dead Mountain by Donnie Echar
Walk to Beautiful by Jimmy Wayne
Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng
Flags of our Fathers by James Bradley
I Am Malala by Malala Yousafzai
Shaken by Tim Tebow
Five Feet Apart by Rachel Lippincott
Malcolm X Autobiography as Told by Alex Haley
Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do

Holocaust

The Book Thief by Marcu Zusak Knoph
Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys
The Librarian of Auschwitz by Antonio Iturbe

Historical Fiction

Beneath a Scarlet Sky by Mark Sullivan
The Passion of Dolssa by Julie Berry
Telegram for Mr. Mooney by Cate Ruane
Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Foer

Sports

The Boys of Summer by Roger Kahn
Ball Four by Jim Bouton
A Season on the Brink by John Feinstein
Paper Lion by George Plimpton
Semi-Tough by Dan Jenkins
Friday Night Lights by H.G.Bissinger
The Game by Ken Dryden
Seabiscuit by Laura Hillenbrand
Bang the Drum Slowly by Mark Harris
The Natural by Bernard Malamud
Shoeless Joe by W.P. Kinsella

Autobiographies/Biographies

The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Alex Haley and Malcolm X
An Hour Before Daylight a Memoir by Jimmy Carter
The Immortal Life of Henrietta Locks by Rebecca Skloot
Notorious RBG by Carmon and Knizhnik
Pope Francis Hope the Autobiography by Pope Francis
Washington by Ron Chernow

Ghost/Scary

Frankenstein by Mary Shelly
Rebecca by Daphne DuMaurier
The Picture of Dorian Grey by Oscar Wilde
The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins
Dracula by Bram Stoker

Suggested Horror authors for further reading:

Edgar Allen Poe

Stephen King

Dean Koontz

Bram Stoker

Shirley Jackson

H.P. Lovecraft

Poetry

Poetry is accessible to all ages at different levels.

The Hill We Climb by Amanda Gorman

Gmorning, Gnight! By Lin-Manuel Miranda

The Dark Between the Stars by Atticus

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo

Suggested poets for further reading:

Emily Dickens, Robert Frost, Walt Whitman,

E.E. Cummings, Shel Silverstein, Oscar Wilde, Dylan Thomas, Pablo Neruda,

T.S. Eliot, Joyce Carol Oates, Seamus Heaney, Fleur Adcock

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Incoming 6th graders. Write 8 Dialectic Journal Entries

Grade 6 going into 7. Write 9 Dialectic Journal Entries

Grade 7 going into 8 . Write 10 Dialectic Journal Entries

Each genre has 2 works listed. Choose 1 book from the list below to read, and complete the Summer Reading assignment.

Attached, please also find suggested books which you might enjoy reading after you have completed your summer reading. Often, if you aren't someone who loves reading, choosing the book makes the difference.

Mysteries

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin

The Shadow Jumper by J.M. Forster

General

Sarah Plan and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night by Mark Haddon

Survival

Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand

I Survived . . . by Lauren Tarshis

Classics

The Secret Garden by Fances Hodgson Burnett

Bridge to Terabithis by Katherin Paterson

Sci-Fi

Ender's Game by Orson Scottcard

Wrinkle in Time by Madeline L'Engle

Dystopian

Uglies by Scott Westerfeld

Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Fantasy

Percy Jackson - 1 book from the series - by Rick Riordan

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

Diversity

Starfish by Lisa Flippo

The Watson's Go to Birmingham by Christopher Paul Curtis

Non-Fiction

The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate

Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of WWII by Joseph Bruchac

Holocaust

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

Diary of Anne Frank by . . . Anne Frank

Historical Fiction

Fever by Megan Abbott

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis

Sports

Camp Legend by Greyson Gray

Inspirational Sports Stories for Young Readers by Kurt Taylor

Ghosts/Suspenseful

City of Ghosts by Victoria Schwab

Roald Dahl's book of Ghost Stories by Roald Dahl

Suggested Middle School Books for further reading. Find a genre you like, look up a book description, and ENJOY!

Mysteries

Serafina and the Black Cloak by Robert Beatty

The National Parks Mystery Series by Aaron Johnson

The Shadow Jumper by J.M. Forster

The Feather Chase by Shannon L. Brown

Skeleton Creek by Patrick Carman

The Virginia Mysteries by Steven K. Smith

The Hardy Boys by Franklin Dixon

Nancy Drew by Carolyn Keene

General

Restart by Gordon Korman

Sarah Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan

Noticing by Kobi Yamada
Spy School the Graphic Novel by Stuart Gibbs
Addison Cooke and the Treasure of the Incas by Jonathan W. Stokes
The Thing About Jellyfish by Ali Benjamin
On My Way Home by Joseph Trencher
Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe by Jo Watson Hackl
House Arrest by K.A. Holt
We Were Liars by e.lockhart
The Worst Years of My Life by James Patterson
I Funny: A Middle school Story by James Patteson
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night by Mark Haddon
Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls
Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson
Wonder by R.J. Palacio

Survival

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
Holes by Louis Sachar
Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand

Classics

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett
Treasury of Greek Mythology by Donna Jo Napoli
Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson
Narnia by C.S. Lewis
Sarah Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan
The Push Cart War by Jan Merrill
Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery
The Call of the Wild by Jack London
Peter Pan by J.M. Barre
The Witch of Blackbird Pond
An Old Fashioned Girl by Louisa May Alcott

Sci-Fi

Diary of a Martian: The Discovery by Stephen B. Haunts
Escape From a Video Game by Dustin Brady
The Proto Project Project by BryanR. Johnson
Earthrise by Daniel Arenson
The Cosmic Fall by Rae Knightly
Ender's Game by Orson Scottcard

Unwind by Neal Shusterman
Divergent by Veronica Roth Set
City of Embers by Jean DuPrau

Dystopian

The City of Embers by Jeanne DuPrau
Alone by Megan E. Freeman
The Maze Runner by James Dashner
The Last Cuentista by Donna Barba Higuera
Uglies by Scott Westerfeld
The Knowledge Seeker by Rae Knightly

Fantasy

The Girl Who Looked Beyond the Stars by L.B. Anne
Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan
Hook's Daughter by R.V. Bowman
Reflection A Twisted TALE by Elizabeth Lim
The Book of Chaos by Jessica Renwick
Trial of Apollo by Rick Riordan
A Series of Unfortunate Events by Lemony Snicket
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by Frank Baum
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis
Coraline by Neil Gaiman
Ella Enchanted by Gail Carzson Levine
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
The Harry Potter Series by J.K. Rowling

Diversity

Starfish by Lisa Fipps
Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga
When You Trap a Tiger by Tae Keller
Freewater by Amina Luqman-Dawson
The Watsons Go To Birmingham by Christopher Paul Curtis

Non-Fiction

Mental Toughness for Young Athletes by Troy Horne
The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate

An Elephant in the Garden by Michael Morpurgo
Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of WWII by Joseph Bruchac
The Finest Hours (Young Readers Edition): The True Story of a Heroic Sea Rescue
By Michael Tougias

Holocaust

47 Days by Annette Openlander
Tutti's Promise by K. Keidi Fishman
Alias Anna: A True Story of Outwitting the Nazis by Susan Hood
White Bird: A Wonder Story (A graphic novel) by R.J. Palacio

Historical Fiction

Once by Morris Gleitzman
Behind Rebel Lines: The Incredible Story of Emma Edmonds, Civil War Spy by S. Reit
Risuko: A Kunoichi Tale (Season of the Sword) by David Kudler
The True Confession of Charlotte Doyle by Avi
Crispin by Avi

Sports

Camp Legend by Greyson Gray
Mental Toughness for Young Athletes
Inspirational Sports Stories for Young Readers by Kurt Taylor

Ghosts/Scary

The Mystery of Darkhill School by CJ Loughy
The Haunting of Elmwood Manor: A Pekin Dewlap Mysteries by Pamela McCord
City of Ghosts by Victoria Schwab
The Girl in the Locked Room by Mary Downing Hahn
Follow Me by K.R. Alexander
Battlefield Ghosts (True Hauntings #2) by Dinah Williams
Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark by Alvin Swartz
Ghost Stories for kids by Bernard Shaw
Arthur Blackwood's Scary Stories for Kids by A.M. Luzzader
Ronald Dahl's book of Ghost Stories by Roald Dahl

