

Summer Assignment – 2020

“We read to know we are not alone.”

--C. S. Lewis

It is important that students keep their minds and bodies exercised during the summer. Teachers fear the couch-potato temptations of the lazy, hazy days of summer: TV, Social Media, Texting, Video Games, and Movies. Therefore, **limit your child’s screen time** and require them (yes, force them if necessary ☺) to read and respond to the written word in some way, every day. Help them begin to “see” the world through the lens of literacy and meaningful cultural experiences.

A prolonged vacation from reading and writing skills takes its toll on learning. The more children read and write during the summer, the more they will enhance brain development. **Help us help your child become a better reader and thinker.**

Summer Assignment Policy:

All Royal Spring Middle School students are **EXPECTED** to read a book over the summer and complete a set of journal reflections.

The Journal Reflections will be due at the end of the third week of school.

The intent of these assignments is to keep you reading, writing, and thinking during the summer, and to give us a look at your writing and analysis skills. We intend to reward your best effort on these assignments!

Incoming 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students:

Choose a fiction chapter book on your reading/grade level to read over the summer and then complete the attached Journal Reflection Prompts. **(7th and 8th grade teachers may have a *suggested* book or genre that they will discuss with their students before summer vacation begins).**

Please **type** these Journal Reflections or write *neatly in ink or dark pencil*. Content and grammar, as well as the writing and analysis skills you bring to the assignment will be considered when evaluating your work.

Remember to put **your name and the grade** you are entering in the top right hand corner of every page. **Be sure to keep a copy of the completed assignment for your records.**

Copies of the Journal Reflections template may be found attached to the RSMS school website under the “Forms and Downloads” tab. *Summer journal reflections created by Willow Hambrick (former RSMS Literacy Coach).*

Journal Reflections Template

As you read the novel, answer the following questions. There is no set length for your answers, but depth of thought and analysis is expected. Be sure to fully answer each separate question asked and support your answers with details from the novel and/or your life experiences.

Journal Reflection One:

Put yourself in place in the shoes of the protagonist, or main character. How do you relate to this character? What are this character's internal and external conflicts? Would you want to be friends with this character? If you could ask this character three questions, what would they be, and why?

Put yourself in the place of the antagonist who is in opposition to the protagonist. How do you relate to this character? If you could ask this character three questions, what would they be, and why?

Journal Reflection Two:

Describe the main setting of the novel. Have you ever been to a place like this? If your novel is set in the past or the future, would this be the type of world or time you would want to live in? Explain.

Journal Reflection Three:

Describe a moment of joy, accomplishment, or kindness in the novel thus far. Have you experienced anything similar? Explain.

OR

Describe a moment of tragedy, sadness, or evil-doing in the novel thus far.

Journal Reflection Four:

Pick two quotes that you find meaningful so far, and explain why, in detail.

Journal Reflection Five:

Identify a place in the novel where you expected one thing to happen, but there was a moment of astonishment, surprise, or irony. Explain whether or not you have experienced anything similar in your own life.

Journal Reflection Six:

Think of a song (or poem), and a piece of artwork that you could link to your novel. Explain in detail why each of these would relate to the novel.

Journal Reflection Seven:

A theme is a universal observation about humankind or a life-lesson, like: Sometimes bad things happen to good people; or, Appearances can be deceiving. List two themes in the novel, and explain what deeper understanding you have gained about life after reading the novel.

Journal Reflection Eight:

Change the ending of the novel in some way, and explain how and why you made those changes.

Fast forward five years (after the close of the novel) and state what the protagonist's life would be like.

Journal Reflection Nine: Overall Critique:

8-10 sentences, critique the strengths and weaknesses of the novel, and discuss whether or not you would recommend the novel to others. Analyze the literary techniques that make the novel especially effective.

****We will collect these Reflective Journals on the Friday of the third week of school.**