



Summer Reading for Middle School (Students Entering Grades 6-8)

Dear Students & Parents,

Asalaamu alaikum! The following document details the summer reading program at Alhuda. Summer reading is mandatory and students must complete TWO books and TWO writing assignments. These are due on the first Friday of school.

The single-most important factor in improving your child's academic ability in Middle School, High School and beyond is how much they read. **Reading improves vocabulary, mechanics, comprehension, and mental acuity. It's not just for Language Arts, but rather reading has a profound impact on students' ability to learn science, math, social studies, and other subjects. Having your child complete the reading is an important way to ensure your children do not lose their progress in school over the months of summer.**

In addition, please note that: Graphic Novels are not reading, Audible is not reading. These can be great entertainment, fun, and even good for listening skills, however, they do not constitute reading.

My recommendation for *all students* is that they try to read one book per week for entertainment and that these books should be at or above their grade level if your child's reading ability is average or above. If English is your child's second language or they struggle with reading, please ask them to read at the level which is most comfortable for them but not easy. I also ask that you try to have your children read a news article online once a week and discuss it with family. Students are often overly sheltered in our day and age and they will need some understanding of current events to succeed at school and beyond.

If, as your child reads, he/she does not understand some words, please have a dictionary for them and ask them to look up the words and write them down. This is how your child grows! Anything is possible with effort, resources, and the blessings of Allah.

Parents may want to consider requiring children to read 10 pages each day before being allowed to use a computer, video game console, or other electronic device. Students in this day and age need reinforcement to make reading a steady habit. Remember when we grew up? We always had books in our hands. These days, students need our encouragement to understand the importance of books, reading, and seeking knowledge.

Please also consider role-modeling for your children by reading yourself and discussing what you read with your kids. I might recommend you read Alex Haley's [The Autobiography of Malcolm X](#) and discuss racism with your family. Otherwise, read the same book your child is reading and discuss together!

Please consult the following pages for details on the assignment. It really is overly stressful if your child doesn't read *in the summer* and instead they delay until school begins. There will not be adequate time and their grade will definitely suffer. Please help them manage their time well. I wish you a pleasant summer. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mona Salem Ives



Please note that English literature OFTEN contains themes or content that some parents may find inappropriate for their children depending on age, personality, or maturity level. Please review options with your child and choose the book you find most suitable.

Summer Reading is a requirement:

- Choose **TWO** books to read, **one from each reading list below**
- You **MUST complete** the Letters About Literature assignment for at least **one** of the books you read
- You **MUST complete** an essay (instructions below) on the **other** book
- Each assignment will be counted as a test grade in Language Arts class, which will be equivalent to 15% of the student's overall grade in quarter 1
- These **TWO assignments** are due on the first Friday of school. Late work will have points deducted.

ONE BOOK REQUIRED FROM THE FOLLOWING "MODERN" BOOK LIST:

Becoming Kareem: Growing Up On and Off the Court by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

Proud: Living My American Dream (Young Readers Edition) by Ibtihaj Muhammad

Where the Streets Had a Name by Randa Abdel Fattah

Does My Head Look Big in This? By Randa Abdel Fattah

The War Within Our Hearts by Habeeb Quadri

The Cat I Never Named: A True Story of Love, War, and Survival by Amra Sabic-El-Rayess

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman

Far Away by Lisa Graff

It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah

Shouting at the Rain by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Guts by Raina Telgemeier

Bridge of Clay by Markus Zusak

The Things She's Seen by Ambelin Kwaymullina

The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA by Brenda Woods

The Friendship War by Andrew Clements

Song for a Whale by Lynne Kelly

The Man Who Counted: a Collection of Mathematical Adventures by Malba Tahan

Words by Heart by Ouida Sebestyen

Tasting the Sky by Ibtissam Barakat

The Jedera Adventure by Alexander Lloyd

Little Brother by Baillie, Allan

Dragonwings by Laurence Yep

Now is Your Time!: The African-American Struggle for Freedom by Myers, Walter Dean

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by Kamkwamba, William and and Bryan Mealer

The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews during the Holocaust by Ruelle, Karen Gray



ONE ADDITIONAL BOOK IS REQUIRED FROM THE “CLASSICS” BOOK LIST BELOW.

<u>Grade 6</u>	<u>Grade 7</u>	<u>Grade 8</u>
<u>Swift, Jonathan, GULLIVER’S TRAVELS</u>	<u>London, Jack, THE CALL OF THE WILD</u>	<u>Wells, H.G., THE WAR OF THE WORLDS</u>
<u>Sewell, Anna, BLACK BEAUTY</u>	<u>Keller, Helen, THE STORY OF MY LIFE</u>	<u>Steinbeck, John, THE PEARL</u>
<u>O’Hara, Mary, MY FRIEND FLICKA</u>	<u>Dumas, Alexandre, THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO</u>	<u>Dickens, Charles, A TALE OF TWO CITIES</u>
<u>Gipson, Fred, OLD YELLER</u>	<u>Dickens, Charles, DAVID COPPERFIELD</u>	<u>Crane, Stephen, THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE</u>
<u>Farley, Walther, THE BLACK STALLION</u>	<u>Adams, Richard, WATERSHIP DOWN</u>	<u>Bronte, Charlotte, JANE EYRE</u>
<u>Dumas, Alexandre, THE THREE MUSEKETEERS</u>	<u>Verne, Jules. JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH</u>	<u>Frank, Anne. THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL</u>
<u>Dickens, Charles, OLIVER TWIST</u>	<u>Twain, Mark. THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN</u>	<u>Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOMES</u>
<u>Adams, Richard, WATERSHIP DOWN (challenging)</u>	<u>Stevenson, Robert Louis. TREASURE ISLAND</u>	<u>Defoe, Daniel. ROBINSON CRUSOE (easy)</u>
<u>Twain, Mark. THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN</u>	<u>Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan. THE YEARLING</u>	<u>Cooper, James Fenimore. THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS</u>
<u>Stevenson, Robert Louis. Treasure Island</u>	<u>Lewis, C.S. THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE (easy)</u>	<u>Tolkien, J.R.R. The Lord of the Rings trilogy: The Fellowship of the Ring; The Two Towers; The Return of the King</u>
<u>Spyri, Johanna. HEIDI</u>	<u>Grahame, Kenneth. THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS.</u>	<u>Verne, Jules. Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea</u>

Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan. <u>THE YEARLING</u>	Frank, Anne. <u>The DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL</u>	Twain, Mark. <u>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (easy)</u>
Montgomery, L.M. <u>ANNE OF GREEN GABLES</u>	Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. <u>ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOMES</u>	Steinbeck, John. <u>The Grapes of Wrath (challenging)</u>
Lewis, C.S. <u>THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE</u>	Defoe, Daniel. <u>ROBINSON CRUSOE</u>	Bradbury, Ray. <u>Fahrenheit 451</u>
Grahame, Kenneth. <u>THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS.</u>	Alcott, Louisa May. <u>LITTLE MEN</u>	James Herriot. <u>All Creatures Great and Small (easy)</u>
Irving, Washington. <u>Rip Van Winkle, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Other Tales</u>	Washington, Booker T. <u>Up From Slavery</u>	<u>Iliad</u> by Homer (translation by Robert Fitzgerald)
Picard, Barbara Leonie. <u>The Iliad of Homer</u>	Picard, Barbara Leonie. <u>The Iliad of Homer</u>	H.G. Wells. <u>Invisible Man</u>
Rawls, Wilson. <u>Where the Red Fern Grows</u>	Verne, Jules. <u>Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea</u>	Ray Bradbury. <u>Martian Chronicles (challenging)</u>
Wyss, Johann David. <u>The Swiss Family Robinson</u>	Rawls, Wilson. <u>Where the Red Fern Grows</u>	Ernest Hemingway. <u>Old Man and the Sea (challenging)</u>
James Herriot. <u>All Creatures Great and Small (Challenging)</u>	Twain, Mark. <u>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</u>	
<u>Hobbit There and Back Again (Challenging)</u> by J. R. R. Tolkien	Wyss, Johann David. <u>The Swiss Family Robinson</u>	

Summer Reading Assignments

You must complete BOTH assignments, one for each of the two books you selected.

REQUIRED: Letters About Literature

Write a letter to the author telling him/her how this book has impacted you as a person. What influence did it have on your life? How did it make you feel? Why is this book important? Write the letter using proper letter-writing format.



Think deeply before you write and try your best to be *personal* and *insightful* in your writing. Think about your **personal** connection to the story and characters. Do not write a fan letter. You must submit a brainstorming page where you jot down your initial ideas in list, map, or chart format. Also, please submit your draft of letter. It should be no more than 800 words total and no less than 400.

REQUIRED: Character Essay

Write an essay about the main character in the book you read. Describe them physically as the author has done. Why is this character important? What is special about him/her? Did you like the character? Could you relate to him/her? If so, *how* could you relate to him/her? What do you have in common? What is different about you and the character? Does the character change or grow throughout the book? How? Why? Make sure your essay includes a heading, introduction, and conclusion. This essay should be two pages, double-spaced, typed and emailed to mives@alhudaacademy.org using your Alhuda Academy email account. Exceptions can be made if you do not have access to a personal computer or the Internet, a note from parents stating as such can accompany a hand-written assignment.

BOTH ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE THE FIRST FRIDAY AFTER SCHOOL BEGINS. POINTS ARE DEDUCTED FOR LATE WORK.