

CCS Middle School Summer Reading 2011

Seventh and Eighth Grade



WHY:

We encourage all middle school students to read throughout the summer to enhance reading enjoyment while increasing reading proficiency.

WHAT:

To support these goals, students will need to read one required book and at least two books of their choice from the designated list.

HOW:

- 1) During/after reading, students should complete a **Book Report Form** for each of their novels of choice.
- 2) For the required novel, students will complete a **Study Questions**, which is different from the book report form. Seventh graders will complete a specific set of questions for *Treasure Island*. Eighth graders will complete a specific set of questions for *A Wizard of Earthsea*. These should be completed carefully.
- 3) All three forms will be due on the first day of school. You will need **two Book Report Forms**, one for each of your books chosen from the list, and the **Study Questions** for your required book. We will follow up with additional meaningful activities and assignments in class once school resumes, and this may include a quiz on the material.

7th Grade Required Reading: *Treasure Island* – Author: Robert Louis Stevenson

A classic tale of adventure that has captivated the young and the old for one hundred and thirty years, *Treasure Island* is a must-read. From the cover, "Following the demise of bloodthirsty buccaneer Captain Flint, young Jim Hawkins finds himself with the key to a fortune. For he has discovered a map that will lead him to the fabled Treasure Island. But a host of villains, wild beasts and deadly savages stand between him and the stash of gold. Not to mention the most infamous pirate ever to sail the high seas . . . "

There is a set of questions specifically for this novel that must be completed by the first day of school when these questions and answers will be collected. **These questions may be downloaded from the CCS website:**
www.cvillecatholic.org.

8th Grade Required Reading: *A Wizard of Earthsea* – Ursula K. Le Guin

First published in 1968, this fantasy classic is the first book in the *Earthsea Trilogy*. The world of Earthsea is often compared to Tolkien's Middle-Earth or C. S. Lewis's Narnia. From the cover: "Ged, the greatest sorcerer in all of Earthsea, was called Sparrowhawk in his reckless youth. Hungry for power and knowledge, Sparrowhawk loosed a terrible shadow upon the world. This is the tale of his testing, how he mastered the mighty words of power, tamed an ancient dragon, and crossed death's threshold to restore the balance."

There is a set of questions specifically for this novel that must be completed by the first day of school when these questions and answers will be collected. **These questions may be downloaded from the CCS website:**
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Please read the blurbs taken from the book covers, www.amazon.com, and www.puffin.co.uk to get an idea of which books you might like.

Students should select TWO of the titles below which they have NOT read.

- 1. *The Call of the Wild* – Author: Jack London** **ADVENTURE**
Stolen from his home and family, a dog named Buck must quickly learn the harsh law of survival among the men and dogs of the gold-crazed North. His intelligence, courage, and cunning transform him into a feared leader. As wolves attack and men grow desperate, Buck must heed the call of the wild. Only the strong will survive.
- 2. *The Count of Monte Cristo* – Author: Alexandre Dumas** **ADVENTURE**
Falsely accused during the final days of Napoleon's reign, Edmond Dantès is imprisoned in the bleak Chateau d'If. After a hair-raising escape, he launches an elaborate plot to extract a bitter revenge against those who betrayed him. Amazingly based on actual events, Dumas' labyrinthine tale is popular fiction of the highest mark.
- 3. *The Eagle of the Ninth* (also published as *The Eagle*) – Author: Rosemary Sutcliff** **HISTORIC FICTION**
In A.D. 119 the Ninth Roman Legion marched north into the wilds of Britain beyond Agricola's Wall and disappeared without a trace. Fifteen years later, Marcus Flavius Aquila, the son of the unit's commander, embarks on a quest to recover the lost eagle's standard of the Ninth, a symbol of a legion's -- and his family's-- honor.
- 4. *Emma* – Author: Jane Austin** **CLASSIC FICTION**
Emma Woodhouse is a charming, willful young woman with no responsibilities other than the care of her indulgent father. To amuse herself she plays with other people's lives, planning and arranging them as she sees fit. Emma comes to appreciate the folly and thoughtlessness of her meddling.
- 5. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* – Author: Arthur Conan Doyle** **MYSTERY**
Upon hearing Dr. James Mortimer's saga of the haunted Baskerville family and the recent death of family head Sir Charles Baskerville, apparently from the hound of the legend, Holmes and Watson begin their investigation. Situated in Dartmoor in Devonshire, the estate borders a tremendous moor that includes Grimpen Mire, the deadly quicksand-like bog, the oppressive manor and nightly sounds of a wailing woman, Neolithic ruins and monoliths throughout the moor, a mysterious butler and his agitated wife, an escaped killer at-large on the moor, and the spectral and murderous hound.
- 6. *The House of the Scorpion* – Author: Nancy Farmer** **FUTURISTIC FICTION**
Matt is a clone struggling to understand his existence on the estate of El Patron. Escape is his only chance to survive, but he is surrounded by a sinister cast of characters, including El Patron's power-hungry family and a dangerous army of bodyguards.
- 7. *Kidnapped* – Author: Robert Louis Stevenson** **HISTORICAL FICTION**
After the death of his father, David Balfour sets out to meet his uncle and claim his inheritance. This adventure takes him through the highlands of Scotland where he embarks upon a long journey back from treachery and deceit.
- 8. *Life As We Knew It* – Author: Susan Beth Pfeffer** **FUTURISTIC FICTION**
When a meteor hits the moon and knocks it closer in orbit to the earth, nothing will ever be the same. Worldwide tidal waves. Earthquakes. Volcanic eruptions. And that's just the beginning.
- 9. *Little Women* – Author: Louisa May Alcott** **REALISTIC FICTION**
Meg is the eldest and on the brink of love. Then there's tomboy Jo who longs to be a writer. Sweet-natured Beth always puts others first, and finally there's Amy, the youngest and most precocious. Together they are the March sisters. Even though money is short, times are tough and their father is away at war, their infectious sense of fun sweeps everyone up in their adventures – including Laurie, the boy next door. And through sisterly squabbles, their happy times and sad ones too, the sisters discover that growing up is sometimes very hard to do.

10. *The Lord of the Rings Series* – Author: J.R. Tolkien

FANTASY

The Fellowship of the Ring is the first book in The Lord of the Rings trilogy. This story is set in the world of Tolkien's invention, known as Middle Earth. A specter of evil is looming over Middle Earth as the Dark Lord, Sauron, seeks to consolidate his already immense power, by reclaiming the One Ring that he has lost. Most of his power is held in this ring. With this power, he can enslave Middle Earth and unleash an incredible evil with little opposition. Frodo, a hobbit, along with the fellowship of the ring, must find a way to destroy the ring.

11. *Oliver Twist* – Author: Charles Dickens

REALISTIC FICTION

This is a classic story of a young boy who seeks his fortune on the streets of London. After Oliver Twist asks nasty Mr. Bumble for more food, he has to flee the workhouse for the streets of London. Here he meets the Artful Dodger, who leads him to Fagin and his gang of pickpockets. When a thieving mission goes wrong, Oliver narrowly avoids prison and finds himself in the care of kind Mr. Brownlow. But Fagin and the brutal Bill Sikes go in search of the young orphan, determined to drag him back.

12. *The Red Badge of Courage* – Author: Stephen Crane

HISTORIC FICTION

Henry Fleming dreams of the thrill of battle and performing heroic deeds in the American Civil War. But his illusions are shattered when he comes face to face with the bloodshed and horrors of war. Now he's a raw recruit, Henry experiences both fear and self-doubt. Will war make Henry a coward or a hero?

13. *Robinson Crusoe* – Author: Daniel Defoe

CLASSIC FICTION

The sole survivor of a shipwreck, *Robinson Crusoe* is stranded on an uninhabited island far from any shipping routes. At first he is in despair, but slowly, with patience and ingenuity, he transforms his dismal island into a tropical paradise. But for twenty-four years he has no human company - until one Friday, he rescues a prisoner from a boatload of cannibals.

14. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* – Author: Mildred Taylor

HISTORIC FICTION

The Mississippi of the 1930s is a hard place for a black child to grow up in and Cassie finds it difficult to understand why the farm means so much to her father. But, as she witnesses the hatred and destruction around her, she begins to learn the importance of fighting for your principles.

15. *The Space Trilogy Series* – Author: C.S. Lewis

SCIENCE FICTION

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.

16. *Sword of the Rightful King: A Novel of King Arthur* – Author: Janet Yolen

MYTHS/LEGENDS

This novel about King Arthur is set in post-Roman Britain when Arthur is already king. The main characters are a young Sir Gawaine and a page named Gawen. Gawaine is loyal to Arthur, but is the son of Morgause of Orkney, the sorceress who believes one of her sons, not Arthur, should be on the throne of Britain. Gawen appears at Cadbury Castle and becomes an apprentice to Merlinus, the great mage. Their stories intertwine, and include many of the familiar Arthurian elements. Adventure, magic, intrigue, and surprises abound.

17. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* – Author: Betty Smith

REALISTIC FICTION

This novel tells the story of Francie Nolan, growing up in a city slum, and of Francie's parents, her lovable drunkard father and her tender, determined mother.

18. War of the Worlds – Author: H. G. Wells

CLASSIC SCI-FI

This is the granddaddy of all alien invasion stories, first published by H.G. Wells in 1898. The novel begins ominously, as the lone voice of a narrator tells readers that "No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's..." Things then progress from a series of seemingly mundane reports about odd atmospheric disturbances taking place on Mars to the arrival of Martians just outside of London. At first the Martians seem laughable, hardly able to move in Earth's comparatively heavy gravity even enough to raise themselves out of the pit created when their spaceship landed. But soon the Martians reveal their true nature as death machines 100-feet tall rise up from the pit and begin laying waste to the surrounding land. What can bring about the downfall of these aliens?

19. The Westing Game – Author: Ellen Raskin

MYSTERY

A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. And though no one knows why the eccentric, game loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, one thing's for sure: Sam Westing may be dead...but that won't stop him from playing one last game!

20. Wish You Well – Author: David Baldacci

REALISTIC FICTION

Lou Cardinal and her brother Oz are living in New York with their parents when a tragic car accident changes their lives forever. They are sent to live in the mountains of Virginia with their great-grandmother on a farm that their father loved and wrote about. Lou and Oz make true friends and learn lessons in love and loyalty. However, they become caught up in another struggle for justice and survival that will be played out in a crowded Virginia courtroom.

21. Wuthering Heights – Author: Emily Bronte

REALISTIC FICTION

Heathcliff, an orphan, is raised by Mr. Earnshaw as one of his own children. Hindley despises him but wild Cathy becomes his constant companion, and he falls deeply in love with her. When she will not marry him, Heathcliff's terrible vengeance ruins them all - but still his and Cathy's love will not die . . .

***The Book Report Forms can be downloaded from the CCS website: www.cvillecatholic.org.**