



Summer Reading 2017-18 For Middle School Students



Dear Parents of rising sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students,

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” This quote from Dr. Seuss inspired us as we created our Summer Reading assignments for middle school students. As our students dive into the ocean of adolescent literacy, we want to encourage their love of reading.

The chief feature of the program is the *choice* it offers students. Past programs told students which titles to read for their independent reading. This year, students have a choice of books, and a choice of questions to answer about the books.

Each rising sixth grader will need to read and analyze **one** novel over the summer. A suggested reading list is attached. Please make sure the selected book is at an appropriate reading level for a middle school reader. If you feel the book might be too easy, choose another. We encourage you to email us if you have any questions about the free choice book, as books beneath a student’s reading level and ability will not be accepted. Graphic novels will also not be accepted.

Our summer reading program is designed to help our students understand the following:

- Reading can be an enjoyable pastime.
- People read for pleasure, not just to acquire information.
- Reading is a skill that improves with practice.
- Reading can be a family activity; families in which parents read inspire children to read.
- Reading is fundamental in providing a solid basis for academic achievement.

Once the student has read the novel, he/she will need to answer a selection of the questions below. Students need to earn at least the minimum required points for their course placement.

Grade	Required Point Total
Sixth	20
Seventh	25
Eighth	30

For example, a seventh grade student could answer two Level 4 questions (8 points each) and one Level 3 question (5 points each) one Level 1 (1 point each) and one Level 2 (3 points each) for a total of 25 points. Or, the student could answer one Level 6 question (15 points each) and one Level 5 (10 points each) for 25 points.

When submitting their summer reading assignments, students must include the level, point value, question, and response for each question.

Example:

Level 1 (1 point) What problems does one of the characters have, and how does he or she solve it?
Response to the question in sentence form.

The point sheet at the end of the question/activity list can be used to calculate the total points.

Students are asked NOT to read the following books for the free-choice assignment:

- *Everything on a Waffle* by Polly Horvath
- *Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett
- *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- *Odette's Secret* by Maryann MacDonald
- *Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai
- *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry
- *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech
- *Hate That Cat* by Sharon Creech
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
- *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse
- *Locomotion* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *The Little Prince* by Antoine De St. Exupéry
- *Heartbeat* by Sharon Creech
- *Pictures of Hollis Woods* by Patricia Reilly Giff
- *Moon Over Manifest* by Clare Vanderpool
- *Steve Jobs, Thinking Differently* by Patricia Lakin
- *Chasing Lincoln's Killer* by James L. Swanson
- *The Nazi Hunters* by Neal Bascomb
- *Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan

**Any questions regarding the summer reading assignment should be directed to
Dr. Peshie Kasloff pkasloff@torahday.org or Mrs. Linda Rabinowitz lrabinowitz@torahday.org**

Questions/Activities

Level 1 Knowledge: (1 Point Each)

1. In sentences, make a list of 10 facts you learned from the story.
2. List the three main characters and describe them.
3. What problems does one of the characters have, and how does he or she solve it?

Level 2 Comprehension: (3 Points Each)

1. Did anyone in the book do something that you did not like? Why?
2. What kind of book is this? List three evidences of this.
3. What was the author's purpose or purposes in writing the book?
4. If you could continue the story, what events would you include? Why?
5. List five major events in the story in the correct order.
6. Tell in your own words the beginning of the book.
7. How did the main character feel during the book? Give evidence of this.
8. Tell in your own words how the setting of the story made it more interesting.

Level 3 Application: (5 Points Each)

1. Did this book remind you of anything that has happened to you? What? Why?
2. Did this book give you any new ideas about yourself? Why?
3. What lesson did you learn from the story? Explain how it relates to your life.
4. List the places in the book that are important. Then make up a map including these places as you imagine they may look. It may be a city map or a country map or any other kind of map.

Level 4 Analysis: (8 Points Each)

1. Pick one of the main characters. Think of a shape that fits that person's traits. Draw the shape. Then describe the character inside the shape.
2. Decide which parts of the book include the five W's (who, what, when, where, and why) and the H (how). Then write a good paragraph for a newspaper article including these facts.
3. Write a different ending to the book. Tell why you changed it.
4. Create a plot line of the story identifying the exposition, rising action (a minimum of 3 events), climax, falling action and resolution.
5. In a minimum of two well written paragraphs, compare and contrast two of the characters in this book.

Level 5 Evaluation: (10 Points Each)

1. Who do you think the author intended to read this book and why? What is the central idea of it and how does it appeal to the intended reader?
2. If you could only save one character from the book in the event of a disaster, which one would it be and why?
3. Which character in the book would you choose for a friend? Explain the characteristics the character has that appeal to you as the reader.

Level 6 Synthesis: (15 Points Each)

1. Write another short story using the same characters.
2. Design a poster that represents the theme, genre, and setting of the book.
3. Make an eight section comic strip with captions showing the main events of the story.
4. Choose an interesting character from your book. Think of what his/her dislikes are; then think of a gift you would like to give him/her. Design a greeting card to go along with the gift in which you explain why you gave that gift.

Point Sheet

Question Level	Points Per Question	Questions Answered	Total Points
Level 1 Knowledge	1 point		
Level 2 Comprehension	3 points		
Level 3 Application	5 points		
Level 4 Analysis	8 points		
Level 5 Evaluation	10 points		
Level 6 Synthesis	15 points		
		Total Earned	

Middle School Reading List (*annotated*)

Grades 6-8

The Moves Make the Man by Brooks

A story of friendship and fast action on the basketball court. Newbery Honor.

S.O.R. Losers by Avi

A story of a sports team that can't win; a funny original sports saga. Horn Book

The View From Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg

A story of a group of sixth grade students who pull together, beat the odds and win the Academic Bowl Championship. Newbery Award

The Ear, The Eye and the Arm by Farmer.

Fantasy, mystery and adventure set in the future. Newbery Honor

The Cat Ate My Gymsuit by P. Danziger

A story of a student who organizes a protest against the suspension of a favorite teacher.

Afternoon of the Elves by J. Lisle

A story of something strange and wonderful that has appeared in Sam and Kate's junkyard, a tiny village of sticks and leaves. Newbery Honor

The Story of My Life: Helen Keller by Helen Keller

A story of an amazing woman who overcame physical handicaps.

Banner in the Sky by J. Ullman

A story about a boy who chooses to save an enemy's life rather than following his dream.

Lassie Come Home by E. Knight

Lassie sets out on a 400 mile journey to find her beloved master.

Who Was That Masked Man Anyway? by Avi

A hilarious story of two boys in New York, 1945, who set out to right all the wrongs in the world. ALA, SLJ

Ella Enchanted by Gail Levine

Ella of Frell was the recipient of a foolish fairy's gift, the gift of obedience. She must obey any order given to her. Against a backdrop of princes and fairy godmothers, Ella tries to break the curse. Newbery Honor

Incident at Hawk's Hill by Eckert

A moving survival story about a boy who is adopted by a badger. Newbery Honor

Treasure Island by R.L. Stevenson

A classic of buried treasure, piracy and adventure in days past.

The Black Pearl by S. O'Dell

A story of a boy who finds the Pearl of Heaven and earn the hatred of his people and the notorious devilfish. Newbery Honor, ALA Best

The Slave Dancer by Paula Fox

Story of a young fifer who is forced to play his fife for the slaves to keep their muscles strong. Newbery

Here's to you Rachel Robinson by J. Blume
A humorous story about a seventh grader's trip to Ellis Island. ALA Best Book

Pigman and Me by Zindel
A biography of a boy struggling to overcome the cruelties of life with humor and a little help from a wise pigman. ALA Best Book

The Haymeadow by G. Paulsen
A survival story about a boy who puts himself in danger in order to win his father's approval. ALA Best Book

Bull Run by P. Fleischman
A re-creation of the first battle of the Civil War from the points of view of sixteen participants, Northern, Southern, white, black, etc. ALA Best Book

Zlata's Diary by Z. Filipovic and B. Elleman
A moving story of a young girl's life in war-torn Sarajevo. A remarkable story of a childhood lost to war.

Lincoln: A Photobiography by Russell Freedman
Outstanding biography with 90 black and white photos. Newbery Honor.

Fantastic Voyage by Asimov
Five doctors are miniaturized and injected into a man's arteries in order to destroy a blood clot.

Earthquake at Dawn by Gregory
An amazing account of the San Francisco earthquake in 1906. ALA Best

The Watsons Go To Birmingham, 1963 by C. Curtis
Kenny Watson tells of his African American family, the "Weird Watsons" of Flint, Michigan. Life takes a turn as the Watson's visit Birmingham, Alabama during this . troubled period.

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle by Avi
An adventure of a young girl's sailing trip from England to Providence, Rhode Island in 1832. Newbery Honor

Nothing But The Truth by Avi
This is a thought-provoking story about a ninth grader who is suspended from school for humming "The Star Spangled Banner" during homeroom and as a result, he finds himself the focus of a national news story. Newbery Honor, ALA Notable, Booklist Editor's Choice, Golden Kite Award

Whirligig by P. Fleischman
In the aftermath of a fatal car crash, a teenager slowly realizes how people come together to affect each other in surprising ways. Newbery Honor

California Blue by D. Klass
A story of a young teen who is caught in a battle between environmentalists and his community and he must deal with his father's conflicting values. Young Adult Choice, ALA Best

The Time Machine by H.G. Wells
Classic science fiction story dealing with the next step in human development: homo superior.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by J. Verne
A classic tale about an embittered genius who takes refuge from humanity aboard his fantastic submarine, the Nautilus.

Alice in Wonderland by L. Carroll

A classic. Alice falls into a rabbit hole and ends up in another world.

Phoenix Rising by Hesse

An accident at a nuclear power plant changes life on the farm for 13 year old Nyle and his grandmother. ALA Best

A Single Shard by Linda Sue Park

Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in 12th century Korea longs to be a potter.

A Year Down Yonder by Richard Peck

Mary Alice spends all of 1937 living with her larger-than-life Grandma Dowel.

I, Juan de Pareja by Elizabeth Borton de Trevino

A story about the slaves who served the Spanish painter Velazquez.

Letters From Rifka by Karen Hesse

In letters to her cousin, a young Jewish girl chronicles her family's perilous 1919 flight from Russia to America, and her own experiences when she has to be left behind in Belgium.

Bully For You, Teddy Roosevelt! by Jean Fritz

The dynamic life of the 26th president who hunted big game animals and fought for conservation.

Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery by Russell Freedman

Photographs and insight portray a dynamic first lady devoted to public service and humanitarian causes.

The House of Dies Drear by Virginia Hamilton

Thirteen-year-old Thomas and his family move from North Carolina to a strange, old mansion in Ohio which was once a station on the Underground Railroad.

Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell

When her younger brother dies in 1800, Karana, an Indian girl, spends eighteen years alone on the Island of San Nicholas, far off the coast of California. 1961 Newbery Award.

Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh

Precocious, over-privileged Harriet darts around her Manhattan neighborhood ferreting out the "scoop" on the moving scene.

Recommended Authors For Middle School

Louisa May Alcott, Sarah Birnhack, Avner Gold, James Herriot, Gershon Kranzler, Marcus Lehman, Ruchama Shain, Hanoch Teller, Gary Paulsen, Paula Fox, J. K. Rowling, Judy Blume, Hanoch Teller, Mark Twain, E. L. Konigsburg, Avi, Sharon Creech, Paula Danziger, Gail Levine, Paul Zindel, Russell Friedman, Paul Fleischman, Mark Twain, Karen Hesse, Robert Newton Peck, Jean Fritz, Roald Dahl, Madeleine L'Engle

More Reading For Middle School

Light in the Forest *by Richter*
Good-bye Mr. Chips *by Hilton*
Wolves of Willoughby Chase *by Aiken*
Sounder *by William Armstrong*
Red Badge of Courage *by Crane*
Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates *by Dodge*
The Celebrated Cases of Sherlock Holmes *by Arthur Doyle*
Johnny Tremain *by Esther Forbes*
Cheaper by the Dozen *by Gillbreth*
Goodbye to Mr. Chips *by Hilton*
Across Five Aprils *by Hunt*
Profiles in Courage *by J.F. Kennedy*
My Friend Flicka *by O'Hara*
Gulliver's Travels *by Swift*
Short Stories *by O'Henry*
Pedro's Journal *by Pam Conrad*
The White Mountains *by John Christopher*
A Wrinkle in Time *by Madeleine L'Engle 1963 Newbery Award*
The Chocolate Touch *by*

Series For Middle School

Anne of Green Gables Series
The Orphan Train Series
Harry Potter Series
The Original Hardy Boys Series
The Original Nancy Drew Series

Judaica For Middle School

On a Golden Chain *by Ruth Benjamin*
The Marrano Prince *CIS Publisher*
Deep in the Russian Night *by Aaron Chazan*
The Rav *by Ehrman*
Try For a Dream *by Miriam Elias*
Conquer the Darkness *by Esti Florans*
The Heavenly City *by Menachem Gerlitz*
Mamuka *by Gitel Greenhut*
Tzvika's Class-*Hakarem Publishers*
A Scent of Flowers *by R.I. Klein*
The Flight to Seven Swan Bay *by June Leavitt*
Shmuel Hanagid *by Asher Lehman*
Seder in Berlin *by Gershon Kranzler*
The Exiles of Crocodile Island *by Henya Meyer*
They Called Me Frau Anna *by Alter Pekier*
Working it Out *by Ruthie Perlman*
Sparks of Glory *by Prager*
Heir to the Throne *by Shmuel Rothstein*
A Time to Live *by Chana Rubin*
A Time to Heal *by Chana Rubin*
Legacy of Gold *by Sackville*

The Bamboo Cradle *by Avraham Schwarzbaum*
Go My Son *by Chaim Shapiro*
Forever My Jerusalem *by Shtainer*
Dovid Meyer, Orphan of Jerusalem *by G. Silber*
Once Upon America *by Silverman*
And Rachel Was His Wife *by Marsi Tabak*
The Yellow Star *by Simcha Unsdorfer*
The Hostage Torah *by Winkler*
All For The Boss *by Ruchama Shain*
And Then There Were Four--*Feldheim Publishers*
The Silver Matzoth and Other Stories--*Felheim Publishers*
The Captive Sultan--*CIS*
Shmuel Hanagid--*Feldheim*
Jerusalem Gems--*Artscroll*
Jerusalem Diaries and Other Stories--*Artscroll*
The Dream--*CIS*
The Year of the Sword--*CIS*
A Tzaddik In Our Time--*Feldheim*
The Impostor--*CIS*
Heroine of Rescue--*Artscroll*