

May 7, 2026

Dear Parents,

The English teachers at Grace Christian School are committed to an ongoing reading program for the students that includes summer reading. We believe this emphasis is important in preparation for life in general and, specifically, for success in high school, pre-college testing, and college itself. We also want our students to find enjoyment in reading books of interest.

The Purpose Behind Required Summer Reading at GCS

The Grace Christian School summer reading program is an important aspect of our academic program, especially considering what studies reveal:

- The number of books read in summer is consistently related to academic gains.
- Significant vocabulary gains take place when students read in the summer.
- Significant fluency gains take place through summer reading programs.

When selecting books for our different grade-level summer reading lists, faculty and staff at GCS make choices based on historical and subject significance, literary merit, and the goal of fostering a life-long love for reading in all of our students. It is with these and the following thoughts in mind that we require reading over the summer:

- To provide the opportunity for students to keep literacy skills sharpened.
- To motivate students to read for pleasure while guiding them to make sound choices (using an approved book list which includes a mix of classic and contemporary options, as well as a variety of genres).
- To foster the correlation between reading and writing skills.
- To encourage our students to discover and develop a sense of ownership in their reading lives.

Throughout the school year, students read from a variety of literature genres. These books are specifically selected to coincide with some of the other disciplines such as history, geography, and vocabulary.

Summer reading specific guidelines:

- Summer reading is a required assignment.
- The signed form documenting completion of summer reading is due on Friday, August 21st.
- Students are required to read one regular book from the list and one higher level book (marked with one asterisk* in a column with the heading "Higher Level Books").
- If all the guidelines on the Summer Reading Letter/Form are followed, the student will receive a 100 test grade first quarter.
- If a student reads two books, but one is not at a higher level, and the student complies with all other guidelines, the student will receive a 90 test grade first quarter.
- If a student reads only one book (high level or regular) and complies with all of the other guidelines, the student will receive an 85 test grade first quarter.
- If a student does not read any books, the student will receive a 0 quiz grade first quarter.
- No forms will be accepted past the deadline. Any student who has not returned the signed form by Friday, August 25th will earn a 0 quiz grade for first quarter.
- Summer reading books that are chosen must be the original, complete version. Abridged or condensed versions will not be accepted.

In addition, if you read as a family one book of your choosing, not necessarily from the suggested list, your child will receive an additional "A" test grade.

Please refer to the GCS website for a complete list of approved books, which includes a brief synopsis of each book. You will find this resource helpful when choosing your books. A parent and the student must fill out and sign the form below and return it to their teacher by the end of the first full week of school. Please contact me if you have any questions.

In His service,

Cherie Morel

Return this form to your reading or literature teacher by Friday, August 21st.

I have read in full the following book(s) this summer:

Book Read by Student _____

Book Read by Student _____

Book Read as a Family _____

Student sign _____ Parent sign _____

Date _____

Summer Reading List - 6th - 8th Grade			
**Read any book by this author			
Title	Author	Higher Level	Summary
<i>Watership Down</i>	Adams, Richard	*	Classic animal fantasy; Adventure; Courageous animals fight to save their homeland.
** <i>Little Women</i>	Alcott, Louisa May	*	Realistic fiction; Jo March experiences adventures and heartache in 19th century New England.
<i>Chronicles of Prydain (any of the 5 book series)</i>	Alexander, Lloyd		Tolkien-like fantasy; Journey through the magical land of Prydain; Welsh Mythology; Good vs. Evil; Involves courage and heroism
<i>God's Smuggler</i>	Andrew, Brother	*	Nonfiction; As a child he wanted to be a spy behind enemy lines, yet God called him to something even greater.
<i>Souder</i>	Armstrong		Historical fiction; Faced with overwhelming prejudice, a young boy overcomes great tragedy in the American South.
<i>A Kind of Secret Weapon</i>	Arnold, Elliott		Historical fiction; Working in the Dutch Resistance, Peter helps his parents fight against the Nazis.
<i>Crispin Series</i>	Avi		Historical fiction 14th century England; Newbery Award; Heroism, honor, friendship; After his mother dies, a 13 year old boy has to leave his village to save his own life.
The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle	Avi		Historical fiction; Adventure set in England 1832; Sea travel: fairness, justice, equality
<i>Nick of Time</i>	Bell, Ted	*	Historical fiction adventure set in England during WW II; Time travel fantasy of family loyalty
<i>The Time Pirate</i>	Bell, Ted		Sequel to Nick of Time
<i>Caddie Woodlawn</i>	Brink, Carol		Newbery Award; Mischievous Caddie experiences challenge and adventure in 1860 Wisconsin.
** <i>The Lost Prince (unabridged)</i>	Burnett, Frances H.		Historical fiction; Mystery; Marco is a 12 year old refugee from Samavia with a mysterious past and an unsettled present.
<i>The Incredible Journey</i>	Burnford, Sheila	*	Fiction; Lost in the Canadian wilderness, three loyal pets face starvation, wild animals, and perils on their journey.

<i>Gifted Hands (Biography)</i>	Carson, Ben	*	Nonfiction; Growing up in Detroit's inner city, one young man overcomes numerous obstacles to pursue his dream.
<i>Banners at Shenandoah</i>	Catton, Bruce	*	Historical fiction; A young boy experiences adventure while riding for the Union cavalry.
<i>G. W. Carver: Man's Slave Becomes God's Scientist</i>	Collins, David		Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Inspiring story
<i>Pinocchio</i>	Collodi, Carlo		Fantasy; When a boy is side-tracked on his way to school, he experiences many exciting adventures.
<i>The Children's Homer</i>	Colum, Padraic		Mythology; Stories based on the Iliad, The Odyssey, and other Greek myths
<i>The Landing of the Pilgrims</i>	Daugherty, James		Historical fiction
<i>With Daring Faith (Amy Carmichael)</i>	Davis, Rebecca		Biography; A young woman risks her life to help thousands of Hindu children.
<i>The Wheel on the School</i>	DeJong, Meindert		Animal story classic; birds; set in a Dutch fishing village
<i>Hans Brinker</i>	Dodge, Mary Mapes	*	Historical fiction; A brother and sister try to win first place in town's annual race to help their family.
<i>**The Hound of the Baskervilles</i>	Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan	*	Mystery; A legendary curse has claimed another victim: Sir Charles Baskerville. Then Sherlock Holmes arrives on the scene. . . .
<i>The Never Ending Story</i>	Ende, Michael		Fantasy/Sci Fi; Character and values
<i>Freedom Fighter: The Story of William Wilberforce</i>	Everett, Betty Steele		Historical fiction; He stood against Britain's slave trade
<i>April Morning</i>	Fast, Howard	*	Historical fiction; As a veteran of the Battle of Lexington, you continue to fight against British tyranny.
<i>Elsie Dinsmore Series</i>	Finley, Martha		Historical fiction; Enter the world of Elsie Dinsmore - a beautiful young heiress in the Civil War South
<i>America's Paul Revere</i>	Forbes, Esther		Historical fiction; Meet one of America's early patriots.
<i>Phantom of the Opera</i>	Leroux, Gaston	*	Fiction; A phantom haunts the theater striking again when beautiful Christine disappears.
<i>**My Side of the Mountain</i>	George, Jean Craighead		Fiction and Adventure; Tired of cramped city life, teenage Sam Gibley ventures to the Catskill Mountains where survival is a key.
<i>Lily's Crossing</i>	Giff, Patricia Reilly		Historical fiction; WWII has devastated so many families. Now Lilly and her newfound friend are also at risk.
<i>Old Yeller</i>	Gipson, Fred		Historical fiction; Will the love between a boy and his dog overcome all trials?
<i>The Wind in the Willows (unabridged)</i>	Grahame, Kenneth	*	Fantasy; Toad, Mole, Badger, and Rat encounter numerous adventures in the Wild Wood.
<i>Adam of the Road</i>	Gray, Elizabeth Janet		Historical fiction set in 13th century England; Newbery Medal
<i>Soul Surfer (Biography)</i>	Hamilton, Bethany		Biography; After tangling with a great white shark, Bethany struggles to return to her love - surfing.

**Misty of Chincoteague	Henry, Marguerite		Realistic fiction; Phantom and her foal, Misty, once roamed free on Chincoteague Island. . . .
**For the Temple: A Tale of the Fall of Jerusalem	Henty, G.A.		Historical fiction; A stirring tale of the last days of the Temple at Jerusalem. A.D. 70
**All Creatures Great and Small	Herriot, James	*	Realistic fiction; Join a country veterinarian as he ventures across the English countryside.
The Black Stallion	Farley, Walter		Fiction; Adventure; Survival; Follow the bond between a boy and a wild stallion.
**Mossflower	Jacques, Brian		Fantasy (Prequel to Redwall); Tsarmina plans to rule Mossflower Woods with a heavy paw.
Smoky the Cow Horse	James, Will		Fiction; Adventure; The dramatic story of Smoky, a wild, spirited horse who triumphs over-human cruelty
Walk Across America	Jenkins, Peter	*	Nonfiction; A disillusioned young man rediscovers faith in his country while hiking across America.
The Walk West: Walk Across America 2	Jenkins, Peter	*	Nonfiction; Newly married, Peter Jenkins continues his journey across America--with his bride Barbara.
The Hidden Treasure of Glaston	Jewett, Eleanore	*	Historical fiction; Newbery Award; Filled with mystery and intrigue
The Phantom Tollbooth	Juster, Norton		Adventure; Fantasy; Humor; A precocious ten-year-old boy learns to appreciate the ordinary things in life while on a wondrous journey.
The Story of My Life	Keller, Helen	*	Autobiography; A young woman overcomes devastating obstacles in life.
Trumpeter of Krakow	Kelly, Eric P.	*	Historical Fiction; Newbery Award; Set in Poland during Middle Ages
**The Jungle Book	Kipling, Rudyard		Adventure; Fantasy; Adventurous classic about a boy raised in the jungle by a wolf pack
**Big Red	Kjelgaard, Jim		Fiction; Adventure; A boy and an Irish setter encounter danger in the American wilderness.
Lassie, Come Home	Knight, Eric		Fiction; Adventure; Separated from the family she loves, a collie begins a 400 mile trek home.
Sackett's Land (Sackett Series #1)	L'Amour, Louis		Historical fiction; A British farmer leaves England to seek his fortune in the new land of America.
A Wrinkle in Time	L'Engle, Madeleine		Science Fiction; Newbery Medal; Late one night, Meg Murry and her family begin a search through time for Meg's father.
Anna and the King of Siam	Landon, Margaret		Historical fiction; Delightful and enchanting; Discover what it's like to be an English governess in court of the King of Siam (Thai) during the 1860's.
Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage	Lansing, Alfred		Nonfiction; A true story of the first crossing on foot of the Antarctic continent
In the Hall of the Dragon King (Dragon King #1)	Lawhead, Stephen	*	Fantasy and Adventure; The first book of the Dragon King Trilogy and a timeless epic of war
The Paradise War (Albion Trilogy)	Lawhead, Stephen	*	Historically accurate fantasy adventure; Struggle between good and evil; Mystical; A breach opens between two worlds and an Oxford student stumbles through.

<i>Taliesin (Pendragon Cycle)</i>	Lawhead, Stephen	*	Christian fantasy; The story of how a princess escapes from the devastation of her homeland and from the druid prince of Taliesin; How love joins two worlds
<i>Any Chronicles of Narnia Books</i>	Lewis, C.S.		Christian fantasy; C. S. Lewis weaves Biblical truths throughout the imaginary world of Narnia.
<i>Call of the Wild</i>	London, Jack	*	Historical fiction. This classic wilderness adventure explores the thin line that separates tame from wild — within animals and humans alike.
<i>White Fang</i>	London, Jack	*	In this companion volume to his classic masterpiece, <i>The Call of the Wild</i> , Jack London follows the life of a magnificent wolf-dog in the Yukon wilderness
<i>The Giver</i>	Lowry, Lois	*	Sci-Fi; Jonas has been chosen for something special. When his selection leads him to an unnamed man — the Giver — he begins to sense the dark secrets of his world.
<i>The Princess & the Goblin</i>	MacDonald, George	*	Fantasy adventure of wit and courage; Princess Irene and Curdle depend on a magic ring while facing fiendish goblins.
<i>The Princess & Curdie</i>	MacDonald, George	*	<i>Sequel to The Princess & the Goblin</i>
<i>The Baronet's Song</i>	MacDonald, George	*	Fiction; This is the captivating story of an orphan whose life communicates truth despite his inability to speak.
<i>The Light and the Glory</i>	Marshall, Peter	*	Nonfiction; Explores the Christian foundations of American history, considering God's special role in America's creation and its implications for today.
<i>Homer Price</i>	McCloskey, Robert	*	Classic humorous adventure; Homer Price finds adventure wherever he goes, whether he's befriending a skunk or trying to gain control of an automatic doughnut maker.
<i>Anne of Green Gables Series</i>	Montgomery, L.M.		Classic series; In one of the most beloved classics of all time, Anne brings mischief, adventure, and love to the countryside of Green Gables.
<i>War Horse</i>	Morpurgo, Michael	*	Historical fiction; The adventure of a boy and his horse whose lives are forever changed by WW I; Contains some mild language
<i>Rascal</i>	North, Sterling		The true story of the author's boyhood, when he takes in Rascal a mischievous, endearing raccoon as a pet
<i>Silver Chief: Dog of the North</i>	O'Brien, John		Fiction adventure set in the great Canadian north; This is the moving story of the bond between a man and a wild dog.
<i>Island of the Blue Dolphins</i>	O'Dell, Scott		Adventure classic; Newbery Award.; Find out how Karana survived 18 years alone on an island off the coast of California.
**Hatchet	Paulsen, Gary		Fiction; #1 in Hatchet series; Could you survive in the Canadian wilderness at age 13 alone with only a hatchet?
<i>The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood</i>	Pyle, Howard	*	Classic adventure; Find out if Robin Hood really wears tights.
<i>The Yearling</i>	Rawlings, Marjorie K.		A classic animal story set in the Florida backwoods; Discover what happens when a pet becomes a liability.
<i>Summer of the Monkeys</i>	Rawls, Wilson		Adventure set in the Oklahoma's Cherokee Ozarks; "Monkeys Out In The Middle Of Nowhere Staring At Him!"

**The Silver Sword	Serrailier, Ian		Historical fiction; Three Polish children search for their lost father in war torn Europe.
Black Beauty (Unabridged)	Sewell, Anna	*	Adventure fiction classic; Black Beauty tastes the bitterness of cruel handlers and indifferent masters as he is passed from hand to hand.
In His Steps	Sheldon, Charles		"In His Steps" has been a bestseller for well over a century. The theme centers on a pastor who challenges his congregation to ask, "What would Jesus do?"
Five Little Peppers and How They Grew	Sidney, Margaret	*	This heartwarming classic is the tale of five children born into poverty who live in the "little brown house." Courage and good cheer overcome adversity.
Miracles on Maple Hill	Sorensen, Virginia		Historical fiction; Moving to the house on Maple Hill helps a father recover from the ravages of war.
**The Witch of Blackbird Pond	Speare, Elizabeth G.		Historical fiction set in Connecticut in 1867; This Newbery Award novel portrays a heroine with an unwavering sense of truth, as well as an infinite capacity to love.
Heidi	Spyri, Johanna	*	The touching story of Heidi, her strange grandfather, and their life together in the Alps; Heidi's happiness is one day shattered, but love and friendship bring healing.
Treasures in the Snow	St. John, Patricia		A gentle story of repentance and restoration that depicts the love of Jesus in a simple way; The story centers on three children and is set in the Swiss Alps.
Kidnapped	Stevenson, Robert Louis	*	Scottish historical fiction set in the 18th century; Adventures of an orphaned boy as he sets out to make his way in the world
Treasure Island	Stevenson, Robert Louis	*	A young man's encounters with pirates and his adventures of bravery, heroism, and danger
The Mysterious Benedict Society	Steward, Trenton Lee		Adventure novel of a young boy's quest to solve a mystery
Girl of the Limberlost	Stratton-Porter, Gene	*	Classic novel of nature and friendship; Set near the Limberlost Swamp in Indiana; Elenora, who loves the outdoors, overcomes neglect and other challenges.
**Ballet Shoes ("Shoes" series)	Streatfeild, Noel		Story of three orphans who set out to become ballet stars; 1st book of the "Shoes" series
**The Eagle of the Ninth (Roman Britain Series)	Sutcliff, Rosemary	*	Historical fiction set in a.d.125; Saga of a young Roman centurion who travels amongst barbarians to retrieve a hallowed eagle
**Let the Circle Be Unbroken	Taylor, Mildred D.	*	Historical fiction set in 1935; a poor African American family struggles to cope with their changing world
Through My Eyes* (Autobiography)	Tebow, Tim		Autobiography; Tim Tebow's journey as a quarterback
**In My Father's House (Shiloh Series)	Thoene, Bodie		Historical fiction set during WWI; Story of diversity, tolerance, and friendship as four soldiers fight for a common cause
**Vienna Prelude (Zion Covenant Series)	Thoene, Bodie		Historical fiction set in Nazi Germany and Austria; Two musicians' adventures of mystery, secrets, and spies
Lord of the Rings (any book in this trilogy)	Tolkien, J.R.R.		Fantasy fiction; Frodo Baggins and his companions must carry a powerful ring to its destruction.

<i>Boys of Grit Who Never Gave Up</i>	Wallace, Archer		Inspirational stories of eighteen famous inventors
<i>Up From Slavery</i>	Washington, Booker T.	*	Inspirational biography of Booker T. Washington; Themes of slavery, segregation, overcoming obstacles
<i>The Sword in the Stone</i>	White, T.H.		Fantasy novel of young King Arthur; Set in medieval England; Integrates legend, history, comedy
<i>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm</i>	Wiggin, Kate Douglas	*	Post Civil War classic of a young girl's trials and her infectious joy for life that inspires those around her
<i>Swiss Family Robinson</i>	Wyss, Johann David	*	Survival adventure; Story of a family shipwrecked on an unknown island
<i>Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea</i>	Verne, Jules	*	Science fiction fantasy; A journey around the world that takes place under the sea