

REQUIRED BOOKS FOR STUDENTS Summer 2008

Dear WLS students,

Here is your required reading list for the summer. By requiring you to read some books and allowing you to choose others, we want to help you get in the habit of reading daily and learning to pick good books for yourself. Above all, we want you to read, read, read over the summer. You have probably heard this many times, but reading every day is the best way to become a better student.

We have listed three books for each grade, and we are asking you to read ONE of the first two titles. In addition, if you really want to challenge yourself, you can read the book marked with the asterisk; these books are a bit harder. You also need to read THREE other books that come either from the lists we have made or from your own choice. In other words, every student will read a minimum of FOUR books, ONE required book and THREE other books.

In the first weeks of class, your English teachers will be discussing the required books with you. Please make sure you know these books well when you come to school in the fall; you might want to glance over them right before school so you can remember details. You might even want to write some notes, or draw some pictures to remind yourself about the books. You really want to start off the year well by doing a good job with your summer reading. Your teachers will also ask you to report on your three choices.

In the future, you'll be helping all of us make this list better. Please come back to school with some good books for these lists. Have a good summer of reading and we'll see you in the fall.

PREP I (Grade 5)

Please read one of the first two books:

“Odyssey” – All of these books are about journeys to unusual and different places.

William Pene duBois, *The Twenty-One Balloons* (ISBN#0140320970)
Professor William Waterman Sherman finds himself in Krakatoa, a paradise of sorts, after starting out on a trip across the Pacific in a hot-air balloon.

Shawneen Orzechowski, *Midnight Journey: Running for Freedom on the Underground Railroad* (ISBN # 1572493798) Journeys on the Underground Railroad were serious and real--and an important part of our country's history.

*Robin Lister, *The Odyssey* (ISBN# 0753457237)
An excellent, age-appropriate version of the famous journey of Odysseus.

PREP II (Grade 6)

Please read one of the required books (the first two count as one):

“Civitas I” – All of these books are about what it means to be a citizen under different kinds of governments.

Jean Fritz, ***Shh! We’re Writing the Constitution*** (ISBN # 0590412019)
An informative, interesting, and readable account of the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

-----, ***You Want Women to Vote, Lizzie Stanton?*** (ISBN # 0698117646)
The story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a pioneer in the suffrage movement.

(**Note:** These two short books count as one required book.)

Julia Alvarez, ***Before We Were Free*** (ISBN # 044023784X)
Julia Alvarez and her family escaped from the Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic when she was 10; here she imagines, through the stories of her cousins and friends, how it was for those who stayed behind.

*Richard Adams, ***Watership Down*** (ISBN # 0743277708)
Once their home is destroyed by land developers, this band of rabbits must begin to reform their community, questioning all their governing principles as they migrate to a new home.

FORM I (Grade 7)

Please read one of the first two books:

“Agon” -- All of these books are about an “agon,” the Greek word for a struggle or conflict, and the word that describes the events of the Olympic Games.

Stephanie Spinner, **Quiver** (ISBN# 0440238196)

A modern retelling of the Greek myth of Atalanta in which an adolescent woman, blessed with the power of extraordinary speed and an unerring shot, struggles to maintain her allegiance to Artemis, the maiden goddess of the hunt. Despite the traditional setting, the book is about teenaged things!

Rosemary Sutcliff, ***The Eagle of the Ninth*** (ISBN # 0374419302)

In A.D. 119, the Ninth Roman legion marched north into Britain and disappeared. The son of the legion’s commander, some fifteen years later, returns to find the lost eagle standard.

* David Young, ***A Brief History of the Olympic Games*** (ISBN #1405111305)

Some excellent non-fiction for those students who want to understand how the current Olympics came to be.

FORM II (Grade 8)

Please read one of the first two books:

“Civitas II” - All of these books are about how different societies govern themselves, or don’t.

William Butler, ***The Butterfly Revolution*** (ISBN # 0345331826)

The power relations at a boys’ summer camp get out of hand and the story becomes a parable of the human tendencies towards good and evil.

Colin Turnbull, ***The Forest People*** (ISBN # 0671640992)

Some anthropologists approve of this book, others don’t. But as an introduction to the field of anthropology, this study of the Mbuti pygmies of the Ituri forest in what is now called the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes its reader into a new world and introduces students to a new way of running a society. Some WLS student might become an anthropologist because of this book.

* Plato, ***The Republic***, Books 1,2,3,4 (ISBN #0465069347, trans.Alan Bloom)

A challenge indeed, but a worthy one for those who want to begin their reading in philosophy. This is the earliest Western treatise on the question of justice.

FORM III (Grade 9)

Please read one of the first two books:

“Bildungsroman” – That is a long word for a kind of book in which a young man or woman grows up, all the while reacting against and shaping the environment in which he or she grows.

Richard Wright, *Black Boy (Part I: Southern Night)*. (Students are expected to read only Part I) (ISBN#0061130249)

The classic account of a young black man’s coming of age in the Jim Crow South.

Chaim Potok, *The Chosen* (ISBN #0395881455)

The story of the realistically bumpy friendship of two Jewish boys who grow up in Brooklyn, New York, in the 1940’s, and of their fathers whose differing approaches to their faith shapes the lives of their sons.

*Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (ISBN# 0192833391)

A good introduction to the works of this classic author, this novel traces the story of a band of orphaned children living from hand to mouth in London of the early 1800’s. The novel is quite different from the more familiar movies and musicals it has spawned.

or

*Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (ISBN # 0141441143)

The story of an independent, spirited, and poor young woman who begins life as an orphan, becomes a governess, and eventually falls in love with a man whose life is a mystery from beginning to end.