



May 2021

Dear Eighth Grade Parents,

To prepare the students for an exciting and productive school year in English, each child will be required to read one book during the summer. As students read, they are required to create and complete a plot diagram for their selected book.

A plot diagram includes identifying and writing briefly about the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution of the novel. Diagrams can be digital or created on paper. They will also be writing an essay on the novel when they return in the fall. Therefore, it would be beneficial for students to take notes over character development, plot, and conflicts as they read. If they own their book copy, annotating with pencil would also be helpful.

Your children will have a choice of reading *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon, or *Schooled* by Gordon Korman. Students only have to read one novel. Below is a summary of each novel.

If you have any questions, please email Upper Division Dean of Students and Faculty, Mrs. Peta Miller, at pmiller@denverjds.org or Barbara Silberman at bsilberman@denverjds.org.

Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

Jason DiGioia

Book Choices:

The Curious Incident of the Dog at Nighttime: Mark Haddon

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, for fifteen-year-old Christopher everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning. He lives on patterns, rules, and a diagram kept in his pocket. Then one day, a neighbor's dog, Wellington, is killed and his carefully constructive universe is threatened. Christopher sets out to solve the murder in the style of his favourite (logical) detective, Sherlock Holmes. What follows makes for a novel that is funny, poignant and fascinating in its portrayal of a person whose curse and blessing are a mind that perceives the world entirely literally.

Schooled: Gordon Korman

Homeschooled by his hippie grandmother, Capricorn (Cap) Anderson has never watched television, tasted a pizza, or even heard of a wedgie. But when his grandmother lands in the hospital, Cap is forced to move in with a school counselor and attend the local middle school. While Cap knows a lot about tie-dyeing and Zen Buddhism, no education could prepare him for the politics of public school.