



7th grade Core Summer Reading 2023-2024

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Middle School Core Program! Based upon the theories of John Dewey, Howard Gardner, and 21st century educational research, Core is an interdisciplinary study, using primary and secondary historical sources, as well as fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama. The Core curriculum fosters skills that prepare students for a college prep upper school curriculum by encouraging students to think, question, learn, and make decisions based on Jewish and American values.

In aligning our curriculum with our school's mission and philosophy, Core students participate in independent reading and writing and dynamic small group activities and projects that affirm and support the successes and challenges students face at the Saligman Middle School. Creative projects, cooperative learning, and independence as a learner are encouraged. Emphasis is on the development and improvement of skills that include but are not limited to, research, study skills, independent reading, vocabulary, grammar, note-making and organization, writing and critical thinking.

Please find instructions below for the two summer reading assignments. We hope you and your family have a wonderful summer. We look forward to seeing our middle schoolers after summer break!

Sincerely,

The Core Department

Summer Reading Instructions:

Welcome to seventh grade at Saligman Middle School of Barrack Hebrew Academy! This year, your Core curriculum will build on your sixth grade exploration of ancient civilizations and their establishment of governments and laws. You will be reading two books this summer.

Book #1: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

For this assignment, "active reading" means:

- Highlight passages that relate to the questions below.
- Jot a few words in the book's margin indicating the question to which it relates. You can also jot notes on post-it notes that you adhere to pages.

Active reading questions and writing assignment: Read the questions **BEFORE** you begin reading *The Giver* and provide answers to the first three questions once your reading is

complete. Please note that the **4th question** will be an in-class writing assignment. You should think about a response but **there is no need to write an answer** for the summer assignment.

Guideline for Question Responses for *The Giver*

1. Be sure your responses are in complete sentences.
2. Include quotations and page references from the book to support each of your responses.
3. The length of your responses, including all three questions, should be one to two pages 12 size font and double-spaced.
4. This written work is due during the first week of Core class in September.
5. Please bring your marked up copy of *The Giver* to class on the first day of school.
6. Your paper must have a proper heading:

In the **upper left hand corner**

Your Name

Class(Core 7)

Date

Questions for *The Giver*:

1. Why did the founders of this society assign roles rather than letting people choose their own roles?
2. What is the function of “The Giver”? What types of memories does he store? According to the Founders, how might the Giver help others in the community to feel content?
3. What choice does Jonas make towards the end of the novel? Why? Do you think it is wise or not? Explain your answer.

Please think about the following question for an in class writing assignment:

4. What event in the novel stood out to you the most? Describe this scene and explain why it had an impact on you.

Book #2 One Book, One Barrack

Please read our Barrack Middle School One Book, One Barrack selection *Turtle Boy* by M. Evan Wolkenstein. Please be sure to bring your book and question responses to class on the first day of school.

When you complete the reading, please respond to THREE of the SIX questions:

1. Our Barrack middle school is guided by four Derech Eretz values- kindness, honor, courage and kehillah. Choose one of our values and write about how it is demonstrated by one of the main characters. Be sure to include specific examples from the novel.
2. RJ writes a bucket list of adventures he wants to have, like owning a pet, going on a roller coaster, and swimming in the ocean. What would be on your list?
3. Why do you think Rabbi Harris thought that Will and RJ would benefit from spending time together? Do you think he was right?
4. Will invents several new Jewish rituals for himself, including the “Drummer’s Kaddish.” Are there ways you or your family have invented or innovated special traditions (Jewish or general)?

5. Memory is an important theme of *Turtle Boy*, as at the beginning of the novel, Will can't remember anything about his father, but as he gets closer to RJ some of his childhood memories come back to him. Discuss the idea of memory, and think about what sorts of things trigger Will to remember events he thought he'd forgotten.
6. Is there a character in *Turtle Boy* you felt especially fond of? Why? What did they do or say that struck you?

Guidelines for Question Responses for *Turtle Boy*

1. Responses must be typed and turned in as a hard copy on the first day of school.
2. Responses can be bullet points or complete sentences.
3. Be sure your responses are proofread and spell-checked.
4. Be sure your answers reflect your ideas and interpretation of the story.
5. Use size 12 font and double spaced.
6. Your paper must have a proper heading:

In the **upper left hand corner**

Your Name

Class (Core 7)

Date

Happy reading and enjoy your summer vacation!