



Westminster Christian Academy

# 8TH GRADE SUMMER READING

FOUNDATION OF WRITING AND LITERATURE 8

As we work together with families to create lifelong learners, Westminster Christian Academy expects that our students will continue reading throughout the summer months. Over the summer, all incoming eighth grade students will be required to **read** and **annotate** *The City of Ember* By Jeanne DuPrau and **write a short essay** responding to one of the two prompts below. Students, if you have read this book before, rereading it is still a worthwhile exercise. Please read the following prompts, and read this book through a new lens. We are hoping that students can engage with a story that is easily accessible and analyze it from a deeper perspective. **Email your summer reading essay by Friday, August 14.**

## STEP #1

**READ the two prompts below and READ *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau** with those prompts in mind. As you read, **annotate your book** by marking any passages that work to answer the prompt you've chosen. For annotating, **identify and highlight 5 key passages** related to the prompt you choose. Underline, highlight, or mark each passage with a stick note and summarize your thoughts in the margin

## STEP #2

**CHOOSE ONE PROMPT & WRITE** (type) an essay response to your book.

**NOTE: Students may NOT utilize ChatGPT or any other A.I. to complete their summer reading assignment.**

### CHOOSE ONE PROMPT:

**PROMPT 1:** When reading any novel, one may find themselves reading words of wisdom, nuggets of truth or wise counsel that feel applicable to real life outside of the novel. **As you read the novel, be on the lookout for wise words from either a character or the narrator.** Choose one or two excerpts from the text in which you found wisdom that is applicable to real life, and explain the significance of those one or two quotes. Write your response in paragraph form, utilizing claim, support, analysis structure (see rubric below). Make sure to include the full quote(s) in your writing, and use an in-text citation (see instructions below).

**PROMPT 2:** In *The City of Ember*, people's perception of reality is missing a key piece of truth. This story has parallels to our world today, especially for people who do not know God. Show the parallel between the people in the City of Ember and people in our world today. Describe the similarities that are evident between the state of the City of Ember itself and the condition of our current human culture. Describe the hope about reality (a parallel) that a Christian has after reading this novel all the way to the end that a non-Christian might not see. Can you see it? Show it!

**For help with structuring your essay and specific essay requirements, see the rubric on the next page.**

## STEP #3

Please **submit the essay** to [summerreading8@wcastl.org](mailto:summerreading8@wcastl.org) by **Friday August 14** .

- **Make the subject of the email** the student's first and last name.
- If possible, please submit the response **as a PDF**; if you aren't able to submit a PDF, please type your response in the body of the email. You may copy and paste if needed
- You will get an automatic email response when you submit your essay. If you do not receive this, please double-check the email address and resend your response.

## STEP #4

Please **bring your annotated copy** of the novel with you each day during the first week of school.

## A. Rubric for Essay (10 points)

Your essay should include **one introduction and one body paragraph**. It should be typed, double spaced, and in size 12 font. Writers should choose **ONE prompt** only to write about. Your Body paragraph should be well structured with topic sentences, specific supporting details from the text, and analysis with reasoning. When applicable, students should use direct quotations from the novel in their responses, and be sure to provide the page number for the direct quote.

### Introduction: (2.5)

Creatively grab your readers attention, introduce the **book title** and **author**. Also **clearly present the prompt** to which you are responding.

### Body Paragraph: (5)

This paragraph has a clear structure and addresses the prompt. The body paragraph content displays an **accurate understanding** of the text and **deep consideration** for the prompt.

- Topic Sentence/Claim
- Supporting Details:
- Analysis:
- Clincher:

### Grammar & Mechanics: (2.5)

The writer pays **careful** attention to grade-level appropriate grammatical standards: spelling, capitalization, use of complete sentences (no fragments, run ons, or comma splices), subject-verb agreement, and correct word usage.

Remember, your written response must be received via email by **Friday, AUGUST 14** in order to avoid a late grade penalty. Students will receive a one-point grade deduction per day that the written assignment is late (up to a 50% total reduction). This will be reflected and noted in the first quarter grade.

## B. How to quote a text and create an in-text citation.

### Basic Formatting of a quote and citation:

“Quote” (Author’s Last Name pg #).

- **If the quote ends in a period**, then you do not need to include the period in your quote:

EX: “Then we heard the first crash. The three of us froze” (Johnson 5).

- **If the quote ends with a unique punctuation mark (- ? !)**, then include that punctuation mark inside the quotation marks surrounding the quote. You will still need to include a period after the citation

EX: “Why? What’s happening?” ( Johnson 5).

- **If you already used the author’s name**, then you do not need to include the last name in your citation:

EX: Sydney Johnson wrote about this instance in the novel: “Then we heard the first crash. The three of us froze” (5).

### Example in a paragraph:

In the novel, *Projekt 1065*, author Alan Gratz creates characters who are wise and characters who are foolish. One character who is wise beyond his years is Michael O’Shaunessey. When talking with his mother about the Nazi’s plan to attack the Jewish population, Michael reveals his wisdom. He says, “What good is that when people are dying?” (10). Michael, even as a young boy, can see that the Nazi’s plan is evil. In his desperation and fear, Michael is ultimately worried about valuing human life more than his own safety. In his wisdom, he knows that people matter, no matter their race, political leanings, or religion. Gratz created a character, Michael, who wants so desperately to stand up for what is right and protect others so that his readers may be challenged and inspired to consider the same.

## C. Summer Reading Checklist.

For those needing organization, guidance, or if you just like to check off the boxes:

- I have **read the reading prompts** and **selected one** to think about as I annotate.
- I have **read** *The City of Ember*.
- I annotated the text by finding at least **5 key passages** that address the prompt I chose:
  - I underlined, highlighted, or placed a sticky note next to the passage.
  - I wrote down any thoughts I had about that passage in the margin (the space to the side of the page between the edge of the page and the text) or on a sticky note.
  
- I wrote my response essay:**
  - It includes an **introductory paragraph**.
  - It includes a **body paragraph**.
    - I made an effort to **quote part of the text**.
    - I made sure to **explain the quoted part of the text** and how it relates to the prompt.
    - I edited and **revised** my work.
    - I **emailed** my essay to [summerreading8@wcastl.org](mailto:summerreading8@wcastl.org)
    - I have **my annotated book** ready for the first day of school.
  - I **did not utilize any A.I.** to complete my summer reading assignment.