

# **PANTEGO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: SUMMER READING**

## **2026 Summer Reading Grades 5 - 8**

Welcome to PCA's Secondary English Department! We're glad you're here.

Each incoming grade level is required to read two literary pieces during the summer months. It is our belief that summer reading helps our students be their very best. We hope that they enjoy reading this summer, and we can't wait to discuss it with them in August.

Below is the list of required reading for middle school students. Students should read the novel listed for their course and then choose their second book from the list of options. There is no additional assignment for middle school, however students should be prepared to discuss their books (for example: growth of the characters/characterization (if reading fiction), the lessons learned, etc.). There will be an in-class assignment on the books, which will count as their first major grade for the quarter. Students should feel free to take notes while reading to help them prepare for the assessment.

Entering:

- *Grade 5- James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl
- *Grade 6- Treasures of the Snow* by Patricia St. John
- *Grade 7- A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle
- *Grade 8- The Boy Who Dared* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Further support:

- Keep in mind that while it can be fun to see a movie adaptation after finishing a book, watching the movie is no substitute for reading.
- The latest research shows that students in this age group need to read six to seven books (or the equivalent) during the summer in order to maintain their reading skills and reading level. Students who read less are most likely to move backward one or more reading levels during the summer. For this reason, we recommend that students read a total of at least six books over the summer.

Should you have any questions about summer reading or the English department here at PCA, please contact Stephanie Bendel at [sbendel@pantego.com](mailto:sbendel@pantego.com).

Sincerely,

*Stephanie Bendel*

English Department Chair

## PCA Middle School- Grades 5-8

**Directions:** For your summer reading assignment, you will read **TWO** books. One book is chosen by your teacher (see the chart below), and the other you will choose from a list of options (see list below).

**Middle School (Grades 5-8):** Your assignment is to read both books and be prepared to discuss both books in August.

Happy Reading!

**Book #1- mandatory.** You must read the book listed here.

Grade Level (entering)	Book #1- mandatory. You must read the book listed here.
5th Grade	<i>James and the Giant Peach</i> by Roald Dahl
6th Grade	<i>Treasures of the Snow</i> by Patricia St. John
7th Grade	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> by Madeleine L'Engle
8th Grade	<i>The Boy Who Dared</i> by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

**Book #2- Choose 1 from the list below.**

### Grades 5-6

#### Faith, Resilience & Memoir

- Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell
- Malala: My Story of Standing Up for Girl's Rights* by Malala Yousafzai and Patricia McCormick
- Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges
- When Stars are Scattered* by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson

#### Historical Fiction

- Refugee* by Alan Gratz
- The Devil's Arithmetic* by Jane Yolen

## Adventure & Survival

- Escape from Mr. Limoncello's Library* by Chris Grabenstein
- Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen
- Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls

## Realistic Fiction

- Out of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper
- Pictures of Hollis Woods* by Patricia Reilly Giff
- The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate
- The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street* by Karina Yan Glaser

## Mystery & Fantasy

- City Spies* by James Ponti
- Whatever After: Fairest of All* by Sarah Milynowski

## Grades 7-8

### Faith, Resilience & Memoir

- All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot
- Joni: An Unforgettable Story* by Joni Eareckson Tada
- The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind Young Reader's Edition* by Brian Mealer and William Kamkwamba
- The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank
- The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom
- The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller

### Historical Fiction

- Code Talker* by Joseph Bruchac
- I Must Betray You* by Ruta Sepetys
- The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare

### Survival & High Stakes

- Peak* by Roland Smith
- My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George
- The Testing* by Joelle Charbonneau

## Realistic Fiction

- Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli
- Sunkissed* by Cassie West
- Unplugged* by Gordon Korman

## Mystery & Supernatural

- And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie
  - The Bletchley Riddle* by Ruta Sepetys and Steve Sheinkin
  - The Wall* by Brian Penn
  - The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin
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\*Note- if your student plans on competing in the Beta competition, the following is a list of books that will be used in the book battle:

### 5th Grade:

- Before the Ever After* by Jacqueline Woodson
- Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White
- Crenshaw* by Katherine Applegate
- Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick
- Holes* by Louis Sachar
- I Thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly: The Diary of Patsy, a Freed Girl* by Joyce Hansen
- Indigo* by Alice Hoffman
- Lawn Boy* by Gary Paulsen
- Octopus Moon* by Bobbie Pyron
- The Wild Robot* by Peter Brown
- Upside Down in the Middle of Nowhere* by Julie T. Lamana

### 6th Grade:

- All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team* by Christina Soontornvat
- Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart* by Candace Fleming
- Life As We Knew It* by Susan Beth Pfeffer
- Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli
- Swim Team: A Graphic Novel* by Johnnie Christmas
- The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill
- The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer
- The Storm Runner* by J.C. Cervantes
- The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi

- The War That Saved My Life* by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
- Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech
- When Stars Are Scattered* by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed

**Ways to Support Summer Reading:**

- ★ Reading should feel like a fun part of your day. Let your child relax on the couch or outside with an ice pop while reading.
- ★ Let your child choose the books that interest him or her. You might look at online book reviews together before deciding.
- ★ Parents, consider reading the book, too. You could read it before, after, or at the same time as your child. The important thing is to talk to your children about what they read. Ask questions such as: What are your favorite scenes? Which character are you most like and why? Would you like to live during this time period and why?
- ★ Celebrate when you finish by watching the movie, earning a treat, and checking out other books by the author.

NOTE: Middle school parents, we encourage you to actively read and discuss the summer reading selections with your child. Some of these books depict other worldviews and do not always totally align with a biblical worldview. PCA intentionally exposes students to other worldviews with the intention of walking alongside them in that exposure as they grow in biblical discernment. It is vital that you are asking about and discussing your child's reading selections with them. We thank you for your partnership and look forward to walking alongside you this year.