St. Michael's
EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL

Dear Parents of Incoming Fourth Graders,

At St. Michael's, we believe that learning is a year-round journey, and we want to ensure our students are well prepared for the exciting challenges of the coming year. To support that goal, **all students entering first through eighth grade are required to complete a summer math and reading program.** The following information outlines the expectations for students entering fourth grade:

Math
Each student will complete a summer math workbook designed to reinforce concepts learned in third grade. This workbook will be sent home with your child on the last day of school.

- Please **remove the answer key** from the back of the book and use it to check your child's work throughout the summer.
- **Calculators should not be used**; we encourage students to practice their mental math skills.
- Once completed, the workbook should be **signed by a parent** and returned to your child's homeroom teacher on the **first day of school: Tuesday, September 1**.

Reading
Students are also expected to:

- Read **at least three books** over the summer.
- Write a book report on two of the three books.
- In lieu of one of the book reports, the fourth graders have the option to write a travel report. This can be a one-page essay about a summer trip or adventure.
- **Email the book reports and/or the travel essay to Mrs. Schmitt** at laurenschmitt@smeds.com on or before **August 1 and September 1.**
- Complete the **summer reading log**.

A suggested reading list and all necessary directions for the written response are attached to this letter and can also be found on our website on the **Summer Homework** page. Please ensure the **reading log is signed by a parent** and is returned to the homeroom teacher on the first day of school.

Grading and Support

Students who do not submit their completed summer work will receive an **Incomplete** in math and/or literature on their first trimester report card.

We encourage families to establish a regular routine that balances summer fun with time for learning. Starting early and spreading the work out over the summer will make the experience more enjoyable and effective for your child. Waiting until the final weeks of summer can make it harder for students to retain and apply their skills.

If you have any questions about the summer homework requirements, please feel free to contact your child's homeroom teacher at **laurenschmitt@smeds.com**.

Thank you for your partnership in your child's education. We look forward to welcoming your child to fourth grade in the fall!

Sincerely,

Olivia Keffer
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St. Michael's Episcopal Day School
a California Independent School
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Summer Reading 2026
Incoming Fourth Grade

Dear Parents,
For summer 2026, incoming fourth-grade students are expected to read a minimum of three books and prepare written responses for two of the three of the books they read (see page 2). Each book response should be between a half and a full page of writing. Their book responses are to be submitted to Mrs. Schmitt via email at laurenschmitt@smeds.com by the first of August and the first of September. Students are also expected to keep a log of all the books they read (see page 3). The completed reading log is to be brought to their teacher on the first day of school in September. **Below are suggested titles for incoming fourth graders. They may select other titles that are not included on this list.** Please note that audiobooks are acceptable and count toward summer reading goals.

Fiction Suggestions

A Rover's Story by Jasmine Warga
The Brilliant World of Tom Gates (series) by Liz Pichon
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl
Charlie Joe Jackson's Guide to Not Reading (series) by Tommy Greenwald
The Cricket in Times Square by George Selden
Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library (series) by Chris Grabenstein
Front Desk by Kelly Yang
Gecko and Sticky: Villain's Lair (series) by Wendelin Van Draanen
The Genius Files by Dan Gutman
The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom (series) by Christopher Healy
Igraine the Brave by Cornelia Funke
I, Survived (series) by Lauren Tarshis
J.D. the Kid Barber (series) by J. Dillard
Matilda by Roald Dahl
The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo
PAWS (series) by Nathan Fairbairn
The Secret School by Avi
Spy School (Series) by Stuart Gibbs
The Strange Case of Origami Yoda (*series*) by Tom Angleberger
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing (series) by Judy Blume
Tuesdays at the Castle (series) by Jessica Day George
The Unintentional Adventures of the Bland Sisters (series) by Kara LaReau
The Unlikely Tale of Chase and Finnegan by Jasmine Warga
The Wild Robot (series) by Peter Brown
Wings of Fire (series) by Tui T. Sutherland
Wombat Waiting by Katherine Applegate

Nonfiction Suggestions

Dinosaur Mountain: Digging into the Jurassic Age by Deborah Kogan Rae
It's Up to You, Abe Lincoln by Leila Hirschfeld
Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11 by Brian Floca
Who Was and Who Is? (series)

READING RESPONSE

As students read during the summer, they will record reactions to what they read. Writing about reading is a way to express opinions about each book read and to explore what they think of it. The writing is to be completed in Google Docs. They will share the documents with their new teacher via email at laurenschmitt@smeds.com. Students are expected to read a minimum of **three** books during the summer break and write a response to **two** of the three books. The responses will be reviewed by teachers and returned to students at the opening of school.

In lieu of one of the book reports, the fourth graders have the option to write a travel report. This can be a one page essay about a summer trip or adventure.

For the book reports, students are to select **three** prompts for **each written response**. They can either pick something to write about from the suggestions below or write about what interests them about the book. They should think before they write and include details from the book to support their responses. Each book response should be between a half-page and a full page of writing. Here are some suggested prompts from which they may choose (also posted on the SMEDS Website).

FICTION: Using 3 prompts from the list below, students are to write a paper that includes the prompts, using a minimum of 250 words. Use "word count" under "tools" in Google Docs.

1. Are the characters realistic (do they seem like they could be real people)? Why or why not?
2. Describe the setting's time and place.
3. Describe a character that you would like to meet. What are 4 questions that you would ask?
4. If you could change one thing in the story, what would it be? Why?
5. Make a connection. How does this book relate to real life?
6. Describe the similarities and differences between the main character and you.
7. After reading, I wonder…
8. Write a recommendation. Explain why a friend should read the book.

NONFICTION: If you read a nonfiction book, answer these three questions. The paper should be a minimum of 250 words. Use "word count" under "tools" in Google Docs.

1. Write about three things you learned or read about in this book.
2. The most interesting part of the book was…
3. Write a review (your opinion) of the book.

My Reading Log Name:_____

BOOK LOG Keep a list of all books (title, author) that you read during the summer break.

Title	Author	Rating 

Parent Signature _____

Six Traits of Writing

	6 Exemplary	5 Strong	4 Proficient	3 Developing	2 Emerging	1 Beginning
Ideas & Content *main theme supporting details*	Exceptionally clear, focused, engaging with relevant, strong supporting detail	Clear, focused, interesting ideas with appropriate detail	Evident main idea with some support which may be general or limited	Main idea may be cloudy because supporting detail is too general or even off-topic	Purpose and main idea may be unclear and cluttered by irrelevant detail	Lacks central idea; development is minimal or non-existent
Organization *structure introduction conclusion*	Effectively organized in logical and creative manner Creative and engaging intro and conclusion	Strong order and structure Inviting intro and satisfying closure	Organization is appropriate, but conventional Attempt at introduction and conclusion	Attempts at organization; may be a "list" of events Beginning and ending not developed	Lack of structure; disorganized and hard to follow Missing or weak intro and conclusion	Lack of coherence; confusing No identifiable introduction or conclusion
Voice *personality sense of audience*	Expressive, engaging, sincere Strong sense of audience Shows emotion: humor, honesty, suspense or life	Appropriate to audience and purpose Writer behind the words comes through	Evident commitment to topic Inconsistent or dull personality	Voice may be inappropriate or non-existent Writing may seem mechanical	Writing tends to be flat or stiff Little or no hint of writer behind words	Writing is lifeless No hint of the writer
Word Choice *precision effectiveness imagery*	Precise, carefully chosen Strong, fresh, vivid images	Descriptive, broad range of words Word choice energizes writing	Language is functional and appropriate Descriptions may be overdone at times	Words may be correct but mundane No attempt at deliberate choice	Monotonous, often repetitious, sometimes inappropriate	Limited range of words Some vocabulary misused
Sentence Fluency *rhythm, flow variety*	High degree of craftsmanship Effective variation in sentence patterns	Easy flow and rhythm Good variety in length and structure	Generally in control Lack variety in length and structure	Some awkward constructions Many similar patterns and beginnings	Often choppy Monotonous sentence patterns Frequent run-on sentences	Difficult to follow or read aloud Disjointed, confusing, rambling
Conventions *age appropriate, spelling, caps, punctuation, grammar*	Exceptionally strong control of standard conventions of writing	Strong control of conventions; errors are few and minor	Control of most writing conventions; occasional errors with high risks	Limited control of conventions; frequent errors do not interfere with understanding	Frequent significant errors may impede readability	Numerous errors distract the reader and make the text difficult to read