St. Michael's
EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL

Dear Parents of Incoming Fifth 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 fifth grade:

Math
Each student will complete a summer math workbook designed to reinforce concepts learned in fourth 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 - two books of their choosing as well as the required book, *Not An Easy Win* by Chrystal D. Giles, assigned by Mrs. Trudel-Alusic.**
- *Not An Easy Win* should be read last, as the class will begin the school year discussing this book.
- Prepare a written response on *Not An Easy Win*, due to Mrs. Trudel-Alusic by emailing jennifertrudel-alusic@smeds.com by **August 24**.

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.

Grading and Support

Students who do not submit their completed summer work will receive an **Incomplete** in math and/or literature on their first 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 Mrs. Trudel-Alusic at jennifertrudel-alusic@smeds.com for questions about the reading homework and Mrs. Steiger at marneesteiger@smeds.com for questions about the math homework.

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

Sincerely,

Olivia Keffer
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
St. Michael's Episcopal Day School
a California Independent School
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916-485-3418

St. Michael's
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Summer Reading 2026
Incoming Fifth Grade

Dear Parents,
Students entering fifth grade will read at least three books over the course of the summer, one of which must be the all-class read ***Not An Easy Win*** by Chrystal D. Giles. Students are asked to prepare a written response for the all-class read. See page three for specific details.

Below are suggested titles for incoming fifth graders. They may select titles not included on this list. Please note that audiobooks are acceptable and count toward summer reading goals.

Fiction Suggestions
*Al Capone (*Series - Not Book 1) by Gennifer Choldenko
The Alchemyst: the Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel, Book 1 (series) by Michael Scott
Aurora County All Stars by Deborah Wiles
Baseball in April by Gary Soto
Book Scavenger (series) Jennifer Chambliss Bertman
Candymakers (series) by Wendy Mass
Chasing Vermeer (series) by Blue Balliett
Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz Ryan
The First State of Being by Erin Estrada Kelly
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by E. L. Konigsburg
The Forgotten Five: Map of Flames by Lisa McMann
Half Upon a Time (series) by James Riley
How I Survived Bullies, Broccoli, and Snake Hill by James Patterson
In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by Bette Bao Lord
The Incorrigible Children of Ashton Place (series) by Maryrose Wood
The Lemonade War (series) by Jacqueline Davies
The Magician's Elephant by Kate DiCamillo
Menagerie by Tui T. Sutherland
Merci Suárez (series) by Meg Medina
No Talking by Andrew Clements
Pax by Sara Pennypacker
Percy Jackson (series) by Rick Riordan
A Rover's Story by Jasmine Warga
Rules by Cynthia Lord
Scat by Carl Hiaasen
Series of Unfortunate Events (series) by Lemony Snicket
Sister's Grimm (series) by Michael Buckley
The Unlikely Tale of Chase and Finnegan by Jasmine Warga
The Unteachables by Gordon Korman
Wombat Waiting by Katherine Applegate
Wonderstruck *or* *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick

Nonfiction Suggestions

Accidental Archaeologists: True Stories of Unexpected Discoveries by Sarah Albee
Alexander Hamilton: The Making of America, Book 1 by Kyle Jackson
The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba
Girls Who Code (series) by Andrea Beach
How We Got to the Moon by John Rocco
The Thrifty Guide to the American Revolution by Jonathan W. Stokes

MIDDLE SCHOOL READING RESPONSE, SUMMER 2026

Incoming Fifth Grade:
Please respond to each of the following comprehension questions about *Not An Easy Win* by Chrystal D. Giles. The response for each question should be a properly formatted paragraph. You must type your response and use complete sentences as well as text evidence to support your answers. You must type your responses in double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font. Do not turn in multiple documents, but rather, make sure all four responses are numbered and in the same document. Your responses will be graded based on depth of detail, mechanics, spelling, and grammar.

1. Why does everyone treat Lawrence like he's the problem? What are the adults around Lawrence not seeing or hearing?
2. Mr. Dennis might not say much, but he is still a strong mentor for Lawrence. How does Mr. Dennis challenge Lawrence? What does Lawrence learn from spending time with him? How does it affect Lawrence's life? Do you have a mentor in your life? What does that relationship look like and mean to you?
3. Identify the primary differences between Lawrence and Deuce as characters.
4. Have you ever felt angry and then realized that you were actually not angry, but sad, hurt, or something else? How did you recognize what was happening and deal with it? What strategies worked for you?

Due Date for Responses: Monday, August 24
Please electronically share the document with four responses with Mrs. Trudel-Alusic by Monday, August 24, by emailing her at jennifertrudel-alusic@smeds.com.