

Richard Phillips Pursuit of Knowledge Scholarship

Pursue Knowledge. Grow in Character. Make a Difference.

Reading Requirements & Scholarship Assignment

As part of the *Richard Phillips Pursuit of Knowledge Scholarship*, applicants are asked to read **two books** from the approved reading list. Upon completion of the books, you will be asked to handwrite a reflection on each book. Instructions are listed below.

The purpose of this reading experience is to encourage students to explore new ideas, develop a deeper understanding of others, and reflect on the qualities that help build strong character.

Your Assignment

Choose **TWO books** from the approved reading list and read each book in its entirety. You may select books from different categories.

Approved Reading List

[\[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE APPROVED READING LIST\]](#)

The list includes classics, biographies, history, faith and Catholic literature, science and discovery, leadership, service, character, and adventure.

As you read, consider:

- What did this book teach you?
- Did it change or challenge the way you think?
- What did you learn about **kindness, empathy, courage, faith, perseverance, service, leadership, or responsibility**?
- Was there a character whose actions or choices made an impression on you?
- How could something you learned from the book influence the way you live or contribute to the Aquinas community?

Books read for school - [\(THIS LIST\)](#) will not be allowed.

Your Written Response

After completing both books, you will be asked to respond to questions about your reading.

Your responses should demonstrate **thoughtful reflection rather than simply summarize the books**. We are interested in what you **learned, what you were challenged by, and how the experience influenced your thinking**.

What We Hope You Discover

The pursuit of knowledge is more than gaining information. It is about becoming a person who is **curious, thoughtful, compassionate, courageous, and willing to learn from others' experiences**.

We hope these books inspire you to **learn something new, see the world from another perspective, and consider how your own gifts and talents can make a difference in others' lives**.

Essay Sections (per book)

Remember: Do not turn this into a “book report”; the focus is on **YOU** and what the book taught you about three things: Empathy, kindness, and pursuing knowledge to serve others. Your responses should demonstrate thoughtful reflection rather than simply summarizing the books.

We are interested in what you learned, what you were challenged by, and how the experience influenced your thinking.

Each handwritten essay will include:

1. **Empathy Reflection:** How does the book challenge or strengthen my empathy? (I must share personal examples of empathy involving family, friends, teachers, coaches, or teammates.)
2. **Kindness & Resilience Reflection:** How has a meaningful moment in the book inspired me to be kinder and persevere through difficult times in my life? (Share some *specific* stories/examples of kindness and perseverance.)
3. **Character Inspiration:** Who is one character whose actions or choices made an impression on you, specific to your life, especially regarding empathy and kindness, and pursuing knowledge to serve others?
4. **Closing Reflection:** How could something you learned from the book influence the way you live or contribute to the Aquinas community? What are your final thoughts on this book? Would you recommend it to others?

[LINK TO THE APPLICATION](#)