

**Nazarene Christian Academy**  
**Jr. High Summer Reading Program for 7th and 8th grade students**  
(Students read for the grade they have just completed.)

Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers  
in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity (1 Timothy 4: J 2)

Today a reader, tomorrow a leader (W Fusselman)

There is no substitute for books in the life of a child (Mary Ellen Chase)

A book is a garden, an orchard, a storehouse, a party, a company by the way, a counselor, and a multitude of counselors (Henry Ward Beecher)

Choose one book from the attached list that you HAVE NOT read.

Important Things to Note:

1. Begin your reading as soon as possible. The longer you wait, the more overwhelming it gets.
2. The ultimate goal of reading in the summer is to get you to enjoy the written word.
3. **All assignments are due on the first day of the school year. You must submit all assignments in order to get full credit.**
4. You may type the assignments if you wish using **Times New Roman** font only.
5. Included are informative tips on how to improve vocabulary and writing skills, and the reading process.
6. You are required to do **a report on the book** you chose. There are 3 types of Book Report Styles you can choose from. You're required to use one of the three types. They are included in the packet.

GRADING

- This portfolio project is due on the first day of school
- The final grade will count as a test grade
- This project may be shared with the class; it is not private

There should be a little voice in your head like the storyteller is saying it. And if there's not, then you're just lookin' at the words  
(LaKeisha-9th grader from San Francisco (1999))

**Writing a Book Report**

Book reports can take on many different forms. Three types of effective book reports are **plot summaries, character analyses, and theme analyses**. Writing a book report helps you practice giving your opinion about different aspects of a book, such as the author's use of description or dialogue. No matter what type of book report you decide to write, however, there are a few basic elements you need to include in order to convey why the book you read was interesting. **Always** include the following elements in any book report:

- the type of book report you are writing
- the title of the book
- the author of the book
- the time when the story takes place
- the location where the story takes place
- the names and a brief description of each of the characters you will be discussing
- many quotations and examples from the book to support your opinions

**A Plot Summary**

When you are writing a plot summary for your book report you don't want to simply retell the story. You need to explain what your opinion is of the story and why you feel the plot is so compelling, or unrealistic, or

silly. It is the way you analyze the plot that will make this a good report. Make sure that you use plenty of examples from the book to support your opinions. Try starting the report with a sentence similar to the following:

The plot of *I Married a Sea Captain*, by Monica Hubbard, is interesting because it gives the reader a realistic sense of what it was like to be the wife of a whaling captain and live on Nantucket during the 19th century.

### **A Character Analysis**

If you choose to write a character analysis, you can explore the physical and personality traits of different characters and the way their actions affect the plot of the book.

- Explore the way a character dresses and what impression that leaves with the reader.
- What positive characteristics does the character possess?
- Does the character have a "fatal flaw" that gets him/her into trouble frequently?
- Try taking examples of dialogue and analyzing the way a character speaks. Discuss the words he/she chooses and the way his/her words affect other characters.
- Finally, tie all of your observations together by explaining the way the characters make the plot move forward.

Try starting the report with a sentence similar to the following:

In the novel *Charlotte's Web*, by E. B. White, Templeton the rat may seem like an unnecessary character but his constant quest for food moves the plot forward in many ways.

### **Themes**

Exploring the themes (or big ideas that run throughout the story) in a book can be a great way to write a book report because picking a theme that you care about can make the report easier to write. Try bringing some of your thoughts and feelings as a reader into the report as a way to show the power of a theme. Before you discuss your own thoughts, however, be sure to establish what the theme is and how it appears in the story.

- Explain exactly what theme you will be exploring in your book report.
- Use as many examples and quotations from the book as possible to prove that the theme is important to the story.
- Make sure that you talk about each example or quotation you've included. Make a direct connection between the theme and the example from the book.
- After you have established the theme and thoroughly examined the way it affects the book, include a few sentences about the impact the theme had upon you and why it made the book more or less enjoyable to read.

Try starting the report with a sentence similar to the following:

In the novel *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*, by Mildred Taylor, the theme of racial prejudice is a major catalyst in the story.

No matter what type of book report you decide to write, make sure that your writing is clear and expressive and that you include examples from the book to support your opinions. Book reports may seem disconnected from your other school work, but they help you learn to summarize, compare and contrast, make predictions and connections and \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Seventh and Eighth Grades**

Alcott, Louisa May. *LITTLE MEN*. 1871.

Jo March and her husband Professor Bhaer's school for boys is a place of light, warmth, comfort, and delights, where self-knowledge and self-control are acquired along with book learning.

Armstrong, William Howard. *SOUNDER*. Illustrated by James Barkley. 1969.

Angry and humiliated when his sharecropper father is jailed for stealing food for his family, a young black boy grows in courage and understanding by learning to read with the help of the devoted dog Sounder.

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *THE SECRET GARDEN*. 1909.

A ten-year-old orphan comes to live in a lonely house on the Yorkshire moors and discovers an invalid cousin and the mysteries of a locked garden.

Cooper, James Fenimore. *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS*. 1826.

Set in pre-Revolutionary times, this story tells of the Indians caught up in the struggle of Europeans for the continent of North America.

Defoe, Daniel. *ROBINSON CRUSOE*. 1719.

An Englishman's great resourcefulness enables him to survive for almost thirty years on the desert island where he is shipwrecked.

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. *ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. 1892.

A collection of Sherlock Holmes mystery adventures includes "A Scandal in Bohemia," "The Red-Headed League," and "The Adventure of the Speckled Band."

Frank, Ann. *THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL*. 1947.

Hidden from Nazi soldiers, a young girl keeps a diary of her experiences.

Gilbreth, Frank B. and Ernestine. *CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN*. 1948.

The twelve Gilbreth children are unforgettable as they grow up under the direction of their famous efficiency-expert parents.

Grahame, Kenneth. *THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS*. 1908.

This classic animal story features friends Toad, Mole, Rat, and Badger.

Hunt, Irene. *ACROSS FIVE APRILS*. 1964. Newbery Honor Book.

With the men in the family in both the Union and Confederate Armies, ten-year-old Jethro runs the farm and comes to have serious doubts about the war between brothers.

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A WRINKLE IN TIME*. 1962. Newbery Medal.

Meg Murry and her friends become involved with unearthly strangers in a search for Meg's father, who has disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government.

Lewis, C. S. *THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE*. 1950.

Four English schoolchildren find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia and assist Aslan, the golden lion, to triumph over the White Witch, who has cursed the land with eternal winter.

London, Jack. *WHITE FANG*. 1906.

A wolf-dog experiences the wilds, the campfire, and finally the habitation of the white man that molds him into a loyal ally.

Montgomery, L. M. *ANNE OF GREEN GABLES*. 1908.

An adventurous young orphan goes to live on a farm with an elderly brother and sister.

Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan. *THE YEARLING*. Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. 1938. Pulitzer Prize.

A young Florida farm boy raises a wild deer as a pet, but trouble looms as the animal grows and begins to destroy the family's crops.

Richter, Conrad. *THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST*. 1953.

John Butler, young son of an affluent family, is captured by the Delawares and becomes an Indian in every sense, even to learning to hate the white man.

Speare, Elizabeth George. *THE BRONZE BOW*. 1961. Newbery Medal.

A boy learns acceptance and love as his hate for the Romans, who killed his parents, dissolves.

Spyri, Johanna. *HEIDI*. 1880.

The goats and the Grandfather are Heidi's only happiness when she is sent from her mountain home to a big city where she can go to school and be a companion for Clara, a wealthy, gentle girl who cannot walk.

Steinbeck, John. *THE RED PONY*. 1933.

Four episodes in the life of Jody, a boy on a California ranch.

***Seventh and Eighth Grades***

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *TREASURE ISLAND*. 1882.

While going through the possessions of a deceased guest who owed them money, the mistress of the inn and her son find a treasure map that leads to a pirate fortune as well as great danger.

ten Boom, Corrie. *THE HIDING PLACE*. 1971.

Corrie ten Boom's account of her amazing family's experiences during the German occupation of Holland reveals her indomitable Christian faith.

Twain, Mark. *THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN*. 1885.

A poor white boy and a runaway slave find murder, family feuds, villains, and friendship while traveling on a raft on the Mississippi River.

Twain, Mark. *THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER*. 1882.

A poverty-stricken child and Edward, Prince of Wales, exchange clothes during a chance encounter. Each boy must live the other's life until they are restored to their true identities.

Verne, Jules. *JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH*. 1864.

Professor Hardwigg and his party attempt to reach the center of the earth by descending into the crater of a live volcano.

Wyss, Johann David. *THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON*. 1813.

When a Swiss couple and their four sons are shipwrecked on an isolated island, they adapt to their "New Switzerland," using imaginative methods of farming and animal taming.

## **Additional Books for Grades Seven and Eight**

Adams, Richard, *WATERSHIP DOWN*  
Adamson, Joy, *BORN FREE*  
Aldrich, Bess Streeter, *A LANTERN IN HER HAND*  
Bagnold, Enid, *NATIONAL VELVET*  
Brink, Carol Ryrie, *CADDIE WOODLAWN*  
Bronte, Charlotte, *JANE EYRE*  
Buck, Pearl, *THE GOOD EARTH*  
Burnford, Sheila, *THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY*  
Cleaver, Bill and Vera, *WHERE THE LILIES BLOOM*  
Collier, James and Christopher, *MY BROTHER SAM IS DEAD*  
Cooper, James Fenimore, *THE DEERSLAYER*  
Crane, Steven, *THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE*  
Dickens, Charles, *DAVID COPPERFIELD, OLIVER TWIST, and A TALE OF TWO CITIES*  
Dodge, Mary Mapes, *HANS BRINKER*  
Dumas, Alexandre, *THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO and THE THREE MUSKETEERS*  
Farley, Walter, *THE BLACK STALLION*  
Forbes, Esther, *JOHNNY TREMAIN*  
Fox, Paula, *SLAVE DANCER*  
Gipson, Fred, *OLD YELLER*  
Green, Bette, *SUMMER OF MY GERMAN SOLDIER*  
Hautzig, Esther, *THE ENDLESS STEPPE*  
Holm, Ann, *NORTH TO FREEDOM*  
Hunt, Irene, *UP THE ROAD SLOWLY*  
Keith, Harold, *RIFLES FOR WATIE*  
Keller, Helen, *THE STORY OF MY LIFE*  
Kipling, Rudyard, *CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS*  
Lee, Harper, *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*  
London, Jack, *THE CALL OF THE WILD*  
Marshall, Catherine, *CHRISTY*  
Meador, Stephen, *SHADOW IN THE PINES*  
Morey, Walt, *GENTLE BEN*  
O'Dell, Scott, *THE HAWK THAT DARE NOT HUNT BY DAY and SING DOWN THE MOON*  
O'Hara, Mary, *MY FRIEND FLICKA*  
Paterson, Katherine, *JACOB HAVE I LOVED*  
Pyle, Howard, *MEN OF IRON*  
Schaefer, Jack, *SHANE*  
Sewell, Anna, *BLACK BEAUTY*  
Sheldon, Charles, *IN HIS STEPS*  
Steinbeck, John, *THE PEARL*  
Swift, Jonathan, *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*  
Wallace, Lew, *BEN HUR*  
Wells, H. G., *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS*