



Willows Academy

Summer Enrichment Requirements

Summer 2021

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Summer Enrichment Guidelines

The goal of the summer break is to give our minds, bodies and spirits a time to rest, relax, grow, and prepare for what comes next in our lives. Summer is designed to be a break from the ordinary, to rest, and enjoy all that Chicago has to offer during the summer months. Willows believes that this rest is accomplished by a change of activity rather than an absence of activity.

In order to help the students use their time well and keep their minds sharp while they relax, Willows expects students to continue their studies over the summer by completing the summer enrichment expectations.

The **Summer Reading** is designed to be enjoyed throughout the summer months. Texts are chosen not just for their correlation to the curriculum, but also for their literary worth and enjoyment by the student. During the summer, students have the time to read slowly and to savor the texts they are reading, adding this literature to their intellectual fund of knowledge. Students are required to read the texts indicated, but very much encouraged to read from the recommended titles list. Students are also reminded that many libraries carry unabridged copies of these texts on audio books which, when read together with the text, can greatly enhance the reading experience.

Students are encouraged to continue to practice their math skills throughout the summer. The **Math Review for Grades 7 and 8** employs MathIXL software to help students sharpen skills, improve math fluency, and get a head start on the upcoming academic year. Details are included with your daughters' math placement letter.

The transition from middle-school math to Algebra I can be an overwhelming experience. The **Algebra I Readiness Packet for Grade 7, 8, and 9** reviews key mathematical skills, knowledge, and content mastered in middle school math courses. The completed packet is due on August 26, the first Thursday of the 2021-2022 school year. Further details are included with your daughters' math placement letter.

Learning through service to others is an integral component of a Willows education. We encourage our students to begin their **Service Hours** over the summer months. Students in grades 6-12 are required to serve five hours of service in each of the three following categories: care for the elderly, service to the community, and assistance to the impoverished, for a total of fifteen meaningful service hours each year. Service Hours are not due until May 1, 2022, but we advise to get a head start over the summer.

In addition to these required activities, we also encourage parents to closely monitor student use of technology and television during the summer months. One quick guide a parent can use is to balance reading and other wholesome activities with television/technology/cell phone time. For every hour your daughter spends on the computer, in front of the tv, or on her phone, has she spent an hour: reading, doing a craft, playing music, exercising, playing sports, engaged in a service activity, helping out at home? As you well know as parents, it's all about balance!

We hope you enjoy this summer enrichment program, and we look forward to seeing all our students taller, tanner, and intellectually sharp on August 24!

What is a Lexile?

Next to each text on the reading list we identify the Lexile® of each text. A Lexile® provides one piece of information about a student's reading ability or about the difficulty of a text. A Lexile® allows us to predict how well a student may be able to comprehend a text; by matching a student Lexile® with a text Lexile® we increase the chances of students having a successful reading experience.

A Lexile® is based on a different principle than a "grade level equivalency." In the same way that you don't buy a shoe based on your daughter's age, you buy it based on the size of her foot, you don't identify a student's reading level based on her age, but on her actual reading "size." This reading "size" is her Lexile®.

Unlike reading fluency, the Lexile® measure focused on **comprehension**. It indicates identifies your daughter's ability to decipher the words of the text (fluency) and her ability to understand what she just read.

A Lexile® is a flexible measure that acknowledges other factors that influence comprehension. For example, when interest is very high, a child a child may enjoy and comprehend texts at the high end or above her Lexile®. When the text is guided, for example the novels your child will read throughout the years, students can comprehend at much higher Lexile® because the text is read more slowly and its complexity is analyzed and guided in class by a teacher. When content is new or not interesting and unguided (as is summer reading), a student may need to read at a lower Lexile® to comprehend the text.

In addition to Lexile® however, we all know that reading is a skill: the more a child reads, the stronger her reading skills will become.

We also know that some texts are simple, but very deep due to their themes and, despite their Lexile®, should be read at an older age or several times. For example, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (L940) could easily be placed on the senior reading list because of its allegory.

When helping your daughter select a text to read, consider two factors: 1) her reading ability and 2) her interest in the topic. To help you do this, we have provided summaries of all the texts on the list. If your daughter is a lower reader, but very interested in the topic, she may be able to do well with a text with a higher Lexile®. If your daughter's interest in a text is very low, she may need a text with a lower Lexile® in order to get through it with comprehension.

From: www.Lexile.com

All book descriptions in the Summer Reading lists below are taken from publishers' and sellers' websites and book jackets.

Although each child is at her own place at her own time...like her shoe size...in general, a student tends to fall into the following Lexile® ranges:

Incoming 10th Grade

World Language Review

With the goal of letting the girls have a break from the rigors of school, the French and Spanish language teachers have decided to create an opportunity for grades **10, 11 and honors level 4** to maintain and ideally sharpen their skills through the use of the online program **Duolingo**. Participation will be voluntary but highly encouraged, and teachers have explained the benefits of maintaining all of the skills that the girls have worked so hard to acquire during the year.

The lessons are “gamified”, meaning they are entertaining, and competition with oneself is rewarded with “expert points” and gold circles. There is a placement test offered at sign-up so that girls can place out of the very elementary lessons and begin at a higher level if they choose to do so. A daily 15 to 20 minutes Duolingo work is recommended as well as practice listening skills with <https://podcast.duolingo.com/> (for Spanish and French), <https://www.notesinspanish.com/> for Spanish only and watching movies in the target language with subtitles in English or in the target language.

Again, participation is not mandatory but highly encouraged, and the benefits of using Duolingo, and the listening activities should be felt by the levels below AP. The programs in French and Spanish are available on both the computer and smartphone.

Summer Reading

Assignment: Read the text marked “REQUIRED” and try to read those “HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.” The books listed under “suggested books” are not required, rather they are optional recommendations that students may choose from for additional summer enrichment.

Assessment: Group in-class discussion and writing activity. While reading the novel, create four diary entries (250-300 words each) of one of the characters as he/she reflects on what is happening. Each entry should incorporate a quote and cite the page number in parentheses. Do not use the name of the character writing the entries, but on a separate piece of paper, put your name and underneath put the character’s name. One entry should take place close to the novel’s beginning and another toward the end; the other two may take place in the novel at any other points you choose. Bring the entries to English class on the first day of school.

Required for all 10th Graders:

REQUIRED: The Scarlet Pimpernel by Baroness Emmuska Orczy (L1140)

The Scarlet Pimpernel is set in 1792, during the early stages of the French Revolution. Marguerite St. Just, a beautiful Frenchwoman, is the wife of wealthy English fop Sir Percy Blakeney, a baronet. Before their marriage, Marguerite took revenge upon the Marquis de St. Cyr, who had ordered her brother to be beaten for his romantic interest in the Marquis' daughter, with the unintended consequence of the Marquis and his sons being sent to the guillotine. When Percy found out, he became estranged from his wife. Marguerite, for her part, became disillusioned with Percy's shallow, dandyish lifestyle.

Highly Recommended Books for Additional Summer Enrichment:

Antigone by Sophocles

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak (L730)

The Chosen by Chaim Potok (L970)

The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas (L810)

Cry, The Beloved Country by Alan Paton (L860)

Cyrano de Bergerac by Edmond Rostand

The Death of Ivan Ilyich by Leo Tolstoy

I am Malala: How One Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Changed the World by Malala Yousafzai (L1000)

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

Madame Curie by Eve Curie

Night by Elie Wiesel