



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 6th Grade

Summer Reading

Assignment: Read the texts marked “REQUIRED.” The books listed under “SUGGESTED” books are not required, rather they are optional recommendations that students may choose from for additional summer enrichment.

Assessment: In-class writing prompt and activity during the first week of school.

Required for all 6th Graders:

D’Aulaires’ Book of Greek Myths by Ingri d’Aulaire and Edgar Parin d’Aulaire (L1070)

Presented here are the gods, goddesses, and legendary figures of ancient Greece, from Midas to Zeus. “In a relaxed and humorous tone, these splendid artists bring to life the myths that have inspired great European literature and art through the ages.

Angel on the Square by Gloria Whelan (L820)

Both sides of the Russian revolution are shown in a sympathetic light in this absorbing saga of an aristocratic girl. The novel opens in 1913, just before Katya goes to live with Tsar Nikolai II, when her widowed mother becomes lady-in-waiting to the Empress.

Suggested Titles for Enrichment:

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery (L640)

When Marilla Cuthbert and her brother, Matthew, decide to adopt a child from a distant orphanage, they don’t get quite what they bargained for. The child who awaits them at the tiny Bright River train station is not the strapping young boy they’d imagined—someone to help Matthew work the fields of their small farm—but rather a freckle-faced, redheaded girl named Anne (with an e, if you please). Matthew and Marilla may not be sure about Anne, but Anne takes one look at Prince Edward Island’s red clay roads and the Cuthberts’ snug white farmhouse with its distinctive green gables and decides that she’s home at last. But will she be able to convince Marilla and Matthew to let her stay? Armed with only a battered carpetbag and a boundless imagination, Anne charms her way into the Cuthberts’ hearts—and into the hearts of readers as well.

Secret Garden, The by Frances Hodgson Burnett (L970)

‘It was the garden that did it - and Mary and Dickon and the creatures - and the Magic.’ An orphaned girl, a grim moorland manor with hundreds of empty rooms, strange cries in the “wi, a walled garden, with its door locked and the key buried - and a boy who talks to animals. These are the ingredients of one of the most famous and well-loved of children’s classics. Through her discovery of the secret garden, Mary Lennox is gradually transformed from a spoilt and unhappy child into a healthy, unselfish girl who in turn redeems her neglected cousin and his gloomy, Byronic father. Frances Hodgson Burnett’s inspiring story of regeneration and salvation gently subverted the conventions of a century of romantic and gothic fiction for girls. After a hundred years, The Secret Garden’s critique of empire and of attitudes to childhood and gender, and its advocacy of a holistic approach to health remains remarkably contemporary and relevant.

The Trumpeter of Krakow by Eric P. Kelly (L1200)

Everyone admires a young, courageous hero. *The Trumpeter of Krakow* presents just such a hero. Love of God, country and family inspire the protagonists of Eric Kelly’s story about 15th century Poland. The tale begins in the 13th century as the Tartars invade Poland. The citizens of Krakow have always depended on the young trumpeter to sound his horn every hour of the day and night. Faithful to his post, the young man assigned to this noble task plays the traditional Heynal as the Tartars attack the city and loses his life. As a tribute to his sacrifice, the trumpeters of Krakow adopt the tradition of playing their song every hour, but stopping at the last note this young man played. 200 hundred years later, Joseph Charnetski continues this tradition. Although originally from the Ukraine, he immigrated to the city with his father and mother while escaping Tartars in his native land. His father, Andrew, is in possession of a valuable and powerful artifact, entrusted to him for safekeeping. Chased by power hungry, evil men, Andrew is trying to begin a new life while remaining in hiding. It is only with the help of a holy priest and a brave young lady that Joseph is able to fulfill his duty and protect Krakow.

Summer of the Monkeys by Wilson Rawls (L810)

Farm life in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains is never easy, but fourteen year old Jay Berry Lee has many reasons to be happy. He loves helping his father on the farm, wandering along the river bottoms with his dog Rowdy and visiting his grandfather at his general store. He does not even mind the teasing of his twin sister Daisy. Indeed, life seems actually quite peaceful for the Lee family, in spite of Daisy's crippled leg. Peaceful, that is, until 30 monkeys escape from a traveling circus into the forest surrounding the Lee's farm. Although Mrs. Lee would like her son to leave well enough alone, Jay Berry is determined to find those monkeys and earn the reward for returning them. Then he'll have enough money to buy a pony and a rifle. With his grandfather's help and the assistance of Rowdy, Jay Berry concocts a series of schemes to outwit the animals. Unfortunately, those monkeys are more clever than expected. Readers will not be able to keep from laughing aloud as this group of circus animals gets the best of Jay and Rowdy at every turn. They will also admire Jay Berry's tenacity, Rowdy's loyalty and Daisy's cheerfulness in the face of suffering. The Lee family is a warm, close-knit unit that encompasses three generations. Jay's relationship with his grandfather is particularly noteworthy. Grandpa has his own motives for encouraging Jay's attempts to win that reward. With that special patience and wisdom that only grandfathers seem to have, he manages to help Jay sacrifice his own dreams for the good of another.