



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 7th Grade

Math Review

Assignment: We invite students to practice their math skills with IXL over the summer. Account information and specifics will be communicated in your math placement email.

Any student who is placed into the Algebra I class will receive an email which will include a summer 2021 Algebra I readiness packet. This packet should be completed before school starts. This will be the first test/project for quarter 1.

All new Willows 7th graders are recommended to review their math skills using KhanAcademy. Students can create their own account and practice at their own pace.

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 7th Graders:

Shakespeare Stories (Book 1) by Leon Garfield (L750) - Must read five of ten stories

By skillfully weaving his own prose with Shakespeare's language, Leon Garfield has refashioned twelve of the Elizabethan playwright's most memorable dramas into stories, capturing all the richness of the characters, plot, mood, and setting. This format will delight both those who know the great dramatist's works and those who are new to them. Michael Foreman's dramatic color illustrations and varied black-and-white line drawings are the perfect complement to this celebration of Shakespeare's genius.

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott (L750)

The four March sisters--Meg, Amy, Beth, and feisty Jo--share the joys and sorrows of growing up while their father is away at war. The family is poor in worldly goods, but rich in love and character.

Suggested Titles for Enrichment :

Anne of Green Gables or Anne of Avonlea by L.M. Montgomery (L990)

As soon as Anne Shirley arrived at the snug, white farmhouse called Green Gables, she knew she wanted to stay forever... but would the Cuthberts send her back to the orphanage? Anne knows she's not what they expected -- a skinny girl with decidedly red hair and a temper to match. If only she could convince them to let her stay, she'd try very hard not to keep rushing headlong into scrapes or blurt out the very first thing she had to say. Anne was not like anybody else, everyone at Green Gables agreed; she was special -- a girl with an enormous imagination. This orphan girl dreamed of the day when she could call herself Anne of Green Gables.

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.

Small Acts of Amazing Courage by Gloria Whelan (L940)

Here is an extraordinary little book that draws you to its warm-hearted characters and introduces you to a part of history that called for great changes, which were achieved through 'small acts of amazing courage.' It is a delight and an eye-opener at the same time. It settles you with a colonial family living in India in 1919, immediately after World War I, at the time when Ghandi was beginning his peaceful demonstrations to free Indians from British rule. Rosalind is the fifteen-year-old daughter of a British Army General and his wife who have been stationed in India her whole life. Rosalind loves the people, the colour and the excitement of her adoptive country, and though her father would have her properly educated in British ways she can't help but absorb India's vibrancy. The young Lieutenant Max Nelson was studying at Cambridge when he joined the war and served under Rosalind's father. Max's parents live in India: his father runs a jute plantation and his mother is described as 'unconventional' for running an orphanage for abandoned Indian children. Max and Rosalind meet one day at 'The Club,' and he immediately draws Rosalind's interest by talking to her about Ghandi and his dream of freeing India from England's rule.

King of Shadows by Susan Cooper (L1010)

Only in the world of the theater can Nat Field find an escape from the tragedies that have shadowed his young life. So he is thrilled when he is chosen to join an American drama troupe traveling to London to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in a new replica of the famous Globe theater. Shortly after arriving in England, Nat goes to bed ill and awakens transported back in time four hundred years -- to another London, and another production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Amid the bustle and excitement of an Elizabethan theatrical production, Nat finds the warm, nurturing father figure missing from his life -- in none other than William Shakespeare himself. Does Nat have to remain trapped in the past forever, or give up the friendship he's so longed for in his own time?

Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson (L580)

During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lives above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But then the fever breaks out. Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path and turning Mattie's world upside down. At her feverish mother's insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather. But she soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere, and Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease.