



Willows Academy

Summer Enrichment Requirements

Summer 2021

Willows Academy

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 8th 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 8th 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 8th Graders:

Shakespeare Stories II by Leon Garfield (L750) – Must read 5 of 10 stories

By skillfully weaving his own prose with Shakespeare's language, Leon Garfield has refashioned nine of the Elizabethan playwright's 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. Plays included are: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Measure for Measure*, *As You Like It*, *Cymbeline*, *King Richard the Third*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Winter's Tale*.

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom, John Sherrill, Elizabeth Sherrill (L900)

Corrie ten Boom was a woman admired the world over for her courage, her forgiveness, and her memorable faith. In World War II, she and her family risked their lives to help Jews escape the Nazis, and their reward was a trip to Hitler's concentration camps. But she survived and was released—as a result of a clerical error—and now shares the story of how faith triumphs over evil. For thirty-five years Corrie's dramatic life story, full of timeless virtues, has prepared readers to face their own futures with faith, relying on God's love to overcome, heal, and restore. Now releasing in a thirty-fifth anniversary edition for a new generation of readers, *The Hiding Place* tells the riveting story of how a middle-aged Dutch watchmaker became a heroine of the Resistance, a survivor of Hitler's death camps, and one of the most remarkable evangelists of the twentieth century.

Suggested Titles for Enrichment:

An Old Fashioned Girl by Louisa May Alcott (L1290)

Polly Milton never questions the way she is until she visits her cousins in the city. Her cousin Fanny looks too glamorous to be Polly's age, and wouldn't be caught dead playing in the snow. Will Polly ever learn to be like the other girls? And does she even want to? Sometimes being old-fashioned is right in style.

The Dark Is Rising by Susan Cooper (L920)

Before "Harry Potter," there was Susan Cooper's "The Dark is Rising." The original classic series comes to life with this action-packed feature-length movie. It's midwinter and Will Stanton, the seventh son of a seventh son, discovers his destiny on the eve of his birthday. Will must learn to harness the powers of the Old Ones and embark on an incredible battle against the terrifying Dark, an evil entity that threatens the world's very existence.

Invincible Louisa by Cornelia Meigs (L1150)

This award-winning biography details the fascinating life of Louisa May Alcott from her happy childhood in Pennsylvania and Boston to her success as a writer of such classics as Little Women and Little Men.

Outlaws of Ravenhurst by Sr. M. Imelda

This exciting historical adventure depicts the last stand of the Gordons - God's "outlaws" - fighting for their Catholic Faith in the early days of the Protestant Revolution in seventeenth-century Scotland. Written for the children but enjoyed by young and old alike, this intriguing novel is filled with courageous heroes, cowardly villains, secrets and even secret passages! (Summary by Maria Therese)