



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 9th Grade:

Math Review

Assignment: Students in the Algebra I class will receive an email that will include a summer 2021 Algebra I readiness packet. This packet should be completed before school starts. This will be the first test/project score for quarter 1.

Summer Reading

Assignment: Read the texts 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 in the novel. 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 and Highly Recommended for all 9th Graders:

REQUIRED: To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee (L870)

While drawing readers into a lawyer’s passionate struggle for truth, *this novel touches upon issues such as racism and an alleged rape that parents may want to discuss with their daughters.* *To Kill A Mockingbird* takes readers to the roots of human behavior -- to innocence and experience, kindness and cruelty, love and hatred, humor and pathos. Now with over 18 million copies in print and translated into forty languages, this regional story by a young Alabama woman claims universal appeal. Harper Lee always considered her book to be a simple love story. Today it is regarded as a masterpiece of American literature.

Suggested Books for Additional Summer Enrichment

Gone with the Wind by Margaret Mitchell

Iliad by Homer

The Innocence of Father Brown by Gilbert Keith Chesterton

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (L780)

Lay Siege to Heaven: A Novel of St. Catherine of Siena by Louis de Wohl

The Once and Future King by T.H. White (L1080)

Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw (L1340)

The Quiet Light: A Novel of St. Thomas Aquinas by Louis de Wohl

The Robe by Lloyd C. Douglas

Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose