



June 2020

Dear Stuart Hall 5th Grade Students and Families,

“Reading gives you someplace to go when we have to stay where we are.” - Mason Cooley

A love of reading is one of the greatest gifts we give our children. Reading can be the mirrors of our lives, reflecting family life and childhood familiar to us; and, it can be the windows into people we’ve not met or places we’ve never traveled to. Books inspire our imagination, evoke emotion, propagate ideas and start conversations. Students who invest in summer reading show greater academic gains and also develop a sense of personal identity along with an appreciation and empathy for the lives of others.

We have identified books that are essential reading, along with options for suggested reading, all of which are in development of the literary theme for 5th grade: “**The Art of Storytelling.**” We hope that each student will develop a daily reading habit, and an enjoyment of reading. Additionally, there are writing opportunities that accompany the reading so that students develop an engagement with their reading and reading choices.

Another resource for your summer reading and learning and a chapter within our ever-developing collection of *Cor Unum* resources is our [Anti-Racism Resource List](#). This is shared in support of continuing and deepening dialogue about topics that are challenging, often uncomfortable, and vital to the betterment of ourselves and our society. The [Essentials of Dialogue](#) from Generation Global have helped to guide our school community’s practice of creating safe and brave spaces from which to speak, listen and learn. This list contains multimedia resources for all ages.

#### Reading Prompts

##### **Essential Summer Reading:**

- [Holes by Louis Sachar](#)

As further evidence of his family's bad fortune which they attribute to a curse on a distant relative, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a correctional camp in the Texas desert where he finds his first real friend, a treasure, and a new sense of himself.

##### **Optional Summer Suggestions (please choose one or more):**

- [Aru Shah and the End of Time by Roshani Chokshi](#)

In this mythology-fueled story, Aru’s habit of stretching the truth leads to her unleashing a demon that is bent on stopping time; can Aru defeat the demon, save her parents, and return the universe to normal?

- [\*Bridge to Terabithia\* by Katherine Paterson](#)

The life of a ten-year-old boy, Jess, in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer. When a tragedy occurs, it will take the love of his family and the strength that his new friend has given him for Jess to be able to deal with his grief.

- [\*The City of Ember\* by Jeanne DuPrau](#)

The city of Ember was built as a last refuge for the human race. Two hundred years later, the great lamps that light the city are beginning to dim. When Lina finds part of an ancient message, she's sure it holds a secret that will save the city. Now, she and her friend must race to figure out the clues to keep the lights on.

- [\*Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph\* by Roxanne Orgill](#)

What happens when you invite as many jazz musicians as you can to pose for a photo in 1950s Harlem? Playful verse and glorious artwork capture an iconic moment for American jazz.

- [\*The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe\* by C.S. Lewis](#)

Four English school children find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia and assist Aslan, the golden lion, to triumph over the White Witch, who has cursed the land with eternal winter.

- [\*One Crazy Summer\* by Rita Williams-Garcia](#)

When Delphine and her two sisters are sent to Oakland to spend time with their estranged mother, they learn just who the Black Panthers are and how they support their communities; will the girls also learn more about their mother and her life?

- [\*Refugee\* by Alan Gratz](#)

Three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, unexpected connections will tie their stories together in the end.

#### Writing Prompts for Summer Creativity:

#1–22 are suggested for Gr. K–3; #1–30 are suggestions for Gr. 4–12

“*Pens and books are the weapons that defeat terrorism*,” said Malala Yousafzai. Writers are historians and fortune tellers, entertainers and healers. Over the summer, and on behalf of the School’s commitment to helping you develop a strong, creative and unique voice, we would like you to **keep a handwritten journal of at least six entries** using these prompts or any other of your own. Each journal entry should be **at least a page long**. Write as much as you can about your topics. You can **fictionalize** your entries if you like - pretend to be someone else and write in their voice. You could write in the form of **poetry, song lyrics, or drama** as well. Be honest, be descriptive, be creative.

1. Write about your day from another person’s perspective. Choose a person with whom you’ve interacted. How do you think they’d see you? The day’s events?

2. Describe a stranger that you saw today. What did they look like? What do you think they're like? What are they interested in? What do they hate?
3. Imagine that you get to meet a celebrity. Describe your interaction.
4. Write about a time you said something that you regretted.
5. Write about a time that someone said something to you that hurt you.
6. Write about something that you are proud of.
7. Choose an article out of the newspaper. Tape it into your journal. Write about it.
8. If you could live in any book, what book would it be? Why?
9. Write a review of a movie.
10. Write a review of a television show.
11. Pick a random book from your bookshelf. Then, open to a random page and pick a random sentence. Use that sentence as the first line of a story of your own.
12. Imagine that you are singing to yourself, when suddenly, the topic of the song comes true. Describe the scene.
13. Pick a formula you learned in math class. Imagine the story of the mathematician who discovered it. How?
14. Write your high school graduation speech.
15. Write about something from your childhood that you think changed you.
16. Write a story inspired by a recent dream that you had.
17. Write a new ending for your favorite book.
18. Write a poem, short story, or journal entry about a conversation that you've overheard.
19. Write a story inspired by one of your pet-peeves.
20. Write a story from the perspective of someone who does not have one of their major senses (sight, smell, touch, hearing, taste).
21. Write about a time you kept a secret from someone else, or someone else kept a secret from you.
22. Write a story or journal entry about a photograph you have in your house. If you can, tape your photograph into your journal. You may also draw the photograph!
23. Interview a person in your life. Write a transcription of your interview. Try to ask them questions you do not already know the answer to!
24. Write a story inspired by a slogan for an advertising campaign.
25. Write a story inspired by a trending hashtag on Twitter or Instagram.
26. Read the newspaper. Write a poem or short story using a headline as your first line.
27. Use all of the following words in a piece of writing: bit, draw, flex, perilous, bubble, corner, pound, high, open, admonish.
28. You accidentally drink a potion that shrinks you down to two inches tall. Write a story about your day.
29. Pick a random word from the dictionary. Use this word as inspiration for a story.
30. Imagine you find a time traveling machine. Describe how you use it. Where do you go? What happens?

We wish you a healthy and happy summer and look forward to seeing you in the new school year.

On behalf of the Summer Reading Team,

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