

Entering 8th Grade (2019-2020)
Middle School Language Arts Summer Reading

Required Reading: You will read **two books** for summer reading before 8th grade. You will take an AR quiz on **each** book and write a thesis paper on **one** of the books.

1. The first book, which the entire class will read, is *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien.

You will write a 750-word thesis paper on this book. Your thesis paper will be on a prompt that I provide (see below)

2. The second book is your choice from the list below.

Book List:

Absolutely Normal Chaos, Sharon Creech
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, Sherman Alexie
Crash, by Jerry Spinelli
Ender's Game, Orson Scott Card
The Fault in Our Stars, John Green
The Fellowship of the Ring, J.R.R. Tolkien
For Whom the Bell Tolls, Ernest Hemingway
The Great Divorce, C.S. Lewis
Just Fly Away, Andrew McCarthy
Messenger, by Lois Lowry
The Once and Future King, T.H. White
Knots on my Yo Yo String, Jerry Spinelli
Make Lemonade, Virginia Euwer Wolff
Out of the Dust, Karen Hesse
Out of the Silent Planet, C.S. Lewis
Perelandra, C.S. Lewis
The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis
The Silver Chair, C.S. Lewis
Skink, Carl Hiaasen
Tangerine, Edward Bloor
That Hideous Strength, C.S. Lewis
The Two Towers, J.R.R. Tolkien
White Fang, Jack London

Details:

Thesis Paper: You should choose **one** of the following prompts for your paper topic.

Your paper should be in proper MLA format and it will be scored according to the 9 Point Paragraph Rubric (attached).

1. How does Tolkien portray the importance of wealth? What is the attitude towards material goods and property of the characters in *The Hobbit*? Whose approach is praised and approved in the book and why?
2. What factors does the author use to define the characters' identity in *The Hobbit*? Are the persons in the plot determined by race, family and other static factors, or do they have power over their personal development?
3. In what ways does Bilbo Baggins develop or change over the course of the narrative in *The Hobbit*? What deeper, underlying significance is there to his development?

You will need to submit a hard copy of your *Hobbit* thesis paper on the first day of class; please do not plan on printing your paper in the Literature classroom. You should use as a model the thesis papers that you wrote in your literature class in 7th grade. Remember that you are not focusing on summary but instead you are writing analytically, meaning that you are discussing the deeper meaning and significance of the story. You are supporting your interpretation of the deeper meaning with evidence in the text (i.e., significant and important quotes). Internet research is not permitted.

AR: Do not take your Accelerated Reader quiz early. You are free to take notes on your book and use them on the quiz. Notes must be hand-written and are limited to one page.

Please Note: The book chosen for Summer Reading should *not* be a book that you have previously read *nor* should it be a book on which you have already taken an Accelerated Reader (AR) quiz. If you are a new student or you have already read everything on the list, please contact Mr. DiGeorgio at:

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