



I don't know about you but I love to read over the summer. I suddenly have a few extra minutes to enjoy books. We want to have our students have that same experience enjoying the love of reading. It is also important to continue to enhance their literacy skills over the summer so this required summer reading program is the first grade students will get in September. Summer reading programs are usually based on required reading, but ours is based on student choice. Saint James School summer reading requirement is for students to read books at their level over the summer vacation and record it in some way. Our summer reading program is based on research that shows how students succeed in reading when they read what they enjoy so this is based on student choice. A journal is provided so they can record these books in some way.

Here are some examples of things you can do but it is not limited to these examples. For the very young reader, they might just make a list of books they like and those that were so-so and those that they did not like. They might draw pictures or find words they learned or write a summary or write how the book reminds them of another book they read or something that they did.

Is your child artistic? Maybe they will draw a picture of their favorite part? Design a new cover? Draw the characters? Draw the setting? Make a cartoon strip depicting the book or the plot? Create a movie poster putting actors into the characters?

Does your child like to write? Maybe they want to write a review? Maybe they want to write a letter to a character? Maybe they want to write a new ending? Perhaps they want to write a teaser about the book for a poster? Maybe they just want to write a little bit about the story? Possibly they could explain a funny, surprising or puzzling part of the story.

For the upper grades, maybe they want to compare books or compare authors or relate the book to the real world. Perhaps they want to imagine that they meet a character from the book and write the dialogue that they would have with the character. They can write a letter to the author or the illustrator about the book and tell them what they liked or disliked. Maybe they want to write their own test and an answer key about the story or they could just have a conversation with somebody else that has read the book. They can write down some new vocabulary words that they learned and write what they meant. They can make a list of great adjectives or describing words used in the book or just words they like. Maybe they want to create a pretend FaceBook page or Twitter conversation that one of the characters would have.

In addition, the middle school has the requirement to read at least one book on the following topics which will provide an opportunity to have rich discussions in class when school begins. Please be sure children in sixth grade read a book on Ancient EGYPT (but not The Egypt Game, as that will be read in class). Students in seventh grade should read a book in the Revolutionary War time frame and students entering eighth grade should read a book on the Westward Expansion (Lewis and Clark Expedition, Gold Rush in California or Alaska) or the Industrial Revolution. Miss Anglin can answer any question that you might have about an appropriate book to read. After they read that one book on this topic, they can read other books, of their choice. It is not a requirement to read just one book but a requirement to read one book on this topic and then several other books, of their choice and record it in their summer reading journal.

The list is really endless. These are just listed as ideas but the requirement is that your child reads over the summer and the books read are recorded in these story journals in some way. They will return these in September and this will be their first grade in September.

In order for this to be successful, children will need time and books. So, please give your child a time to read. Is it right before bedtime? Is it a quiet time after supper? Is it in the car when you are driving? Give them access to books. The libraries all have a lot of appropriate age level books for your student to read. If you have difficulty, feel free to contact me. Let students choose the books and let's celebrate the fact that they read over the summer!

Research shows that when parents are involved, it is more successful so if you read to your younger student, that would count. Maybe you want to have a family reading time where you model reading with your child. Just keep them reading books of their choice and have them record in some way. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call me.

Happy reading, Nancy Naimey