



SANDHILLS SCHOOL

Elementary Summer Reading 2025

Reading builds fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, knowledge, creativity, imagination, and improves a student's overall academic success. Because of this, regular reading is an important part of everyday life and all students are encouraged to read for approximately 20 to 30 minutes daily.

Students may read books silently, aloud, with audio while following along in the book, or on an electronic device. You can find many recommended titles on Audible, Apple Books, Hoopla and other free and paid platforms.

For students that struggle with sitting for 20 minutes, break reading time into two sittings (10-15 minutes in the morning and 10-15 minutes before bed). Elementary students love to be read to! Take turns reading pages in a book they are enjoying. Read-alouds are a great way to expose them to stories that are age-appropriate, but beyond their reading level.

Many libraries offer free summer reading programs, story times and other activities for ages preschool through adult. We are excited to share that Richland County Library branches offer **decodable readers!** The most extensive collection is located in the Education Studio of the Main Library at 1431 Assembly Street in Columbia, but readers are available in all branches.

For elementary students, the best book is one that they enjoy! Help your child pick books about things they like (animals, sports, history, a specific activity). We find that many students enjoy reading books that are part of a series. Some popular early chapter book series include:

Henry & Mudge

Zoey & Sassafras

Ghost Patrol

Mercy Watson

Nate the Great

Swindle

My Weird School

Hank Zipzer

Field Trip Mysteries

Narwhal and Jelly (graphic novel series)

I Survived (Historical fiction)

Whole Phonics Books (decodable readers)

High Noon Books (decodable chapter books)



Parents and students are encouraged to read reviews on Common Sense Media, Good Reads, or other sources to choose books that will be most appropriate and enjoyable for their student.



SANDHILLS SCHOOL

Middle School Summer Reading 2025

Reading builds fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, knowledge, creativity, imagination, and improves a student's overall academic success. Because of this, regular reading is an important part of everyday life and all students are encouraged to read for approximately 20 to 30 minutes daily.

Students may read books silently, aloud, with audio while following along in the book, or on an electronic device. You can find many recommended titles on Audible, Apple Books, Hoopla and other free and paid platforms.

For students that struggle with sitting for 20 minutes, break reading time into two sittings (10-15 minutes in the morning and 10-15 minutes before bed). Many middle school students still enjoy being read to or reading as a family! Read-alouds are a great way to expose them to stories that are age-appropriate, but beyond their reading level.

Many libraries offer free summer reading programs, story times and other activities for ages preschool through adult. We are excited to share that Richland County Library branches offer **decodable readers!** The most extensive collection is located in the Education Studio of the Main Library at 1431 Assembly Street in Columbia, but readers are available in all branches.

For middle school students, the best book is one that they enjoy! Help your child pick books in a genre they enjoy (fiction, historical fiction, graphic novels, non-fiction) We find that many students enjoy reading books that are part of a series. Below are a list of summer reading recommendations from our Middle School team:



High Noon Books (decodable chapter books)

Ralph S. Mouse by Beverly Cleary

The Last Mapmaker by Christina Soontornvat

Small Spaces by Katherine Arden

The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman

Shouting at the Rain by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

No Fixed Address by Susin Neilsen

Wink by Rob Harrell

Faker by Gordan Korman

Parents and students are encouraged to read reviews on Common Sense Media, Good Reads, or other sources to choose books that will be most appropriate and enjoyable for their student.



SANDHILLS SCHOOL

High School Summer Required Reading 2025

Freshmen & Sophomores (choose one):

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

Maze Runner by James Dashner

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban

Juniors & Seniors (choose one):

The Brave by James Bird

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jaqueline Woodson

Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting Book Clubs for the required texts during the 25-26 Academic year. Book Clubs will begin on Friday, August 15, 2025. High school students will use this time to review their selected summer reading and prepare for the response questions below the reading selections. The responses should:

- be written in complete sentences
- be in MLA format
- Fully answer all components of the question -
 - Restate the question
 - Answer the question in your own words
 - Cite evidence from the text
 - Explain how the evidence proves the answer

Work will be due to English teachers on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, and will serve as the first assessment grade for the semester.

Parents and students are encouraged to read reviews on Common Sense Media, Good Reads, or other sources to choose books that will be most appropriate and enjoyable for their student.

Required Reading Questions for Freshmen & Sophomores:

1. Describe one character's problems or a choice they had to make. What advice do you have for the character? **(20 points)**
2. Explain why you think a character of your choosing acts the way he/she does. **(15 points)**
3. From what you have read, make predictions about what could happen next, explaining the reason(s) for your predictions. **(15 points)**
4. Explain why you would or would not like to have lived in the time and place of the novel. **(15 points)**
5. Write questions about a part of the novel that you had difficulty understanding. Choose one question and explore possible answers. **(20 points)**
6. What real person or event(s) are you reminded of by characters or events in the story? **(15 points)**

Required Reading Questions for Juniors & Seniors:

1. Exposition: Identify the setting—the time and place—in which the story develops. Consider its importance to the main characters, their conflicts, and the theme as they unfold to you. **(25 points)**
2. Characterization: Describe the novel's protagonist, including the character's weaknesses as well as strengths. What is the personal problem/dilemma/crisis that the character struggles with? What options are available to the character? Consider as part of this answer the character's motivation. **(25 points)**
3. Conflict: Identify the point of complication when the protagonist is forced into a struggle with an antagonist: whether natural forces, another individual, or the society at large—perhaps more than one. Consider how the conflict develops but also the climax—when it becomes apparent how the story will resolve. **(25 points)**
4. Theme: What overall (universal?) statement has the author made with this novel? Remember that a theme (a well-expressed position) is more than a topic, which can be merely an abstract, such as "prejudice," "love," or "illusion vs reality." **(25 points)**

Parents and students are encouraged to read reviews on Common Sense Media, Good Reads, or other sources to choose books that will be most appropriate and enjoyable for their student.

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Additional summer read recommendations:

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Not if I Save You First by Ally Carter

My Antonia by Willa Cather

The Great Trouble by Deborah Hopkinson

We Are Okay by Nina LaCour

The Life of Pi by Yann Martel

The Boy in the Black Suit by Jason Reynolds

Unwind by Neal Shusterman

Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

Advanced Text Due to Time Period Language

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Moby Dick by Herman Melville

Note: Students may read books silently, aloud, with audio while following along in the book, or on an electronic device. You can find many of the recommended titles on Audible, Apple Books, Hoopla and other free and paid platforms.

We also highly recommend checking out the Richland County Library Teen Center!

Parents and students are encouraged to read reviews on Common Sense Media, Good Reads, or other sources to choose books that will be most appropriate and enjoyable for their student.