

Murdock Middle School

2025



Dear Students and Families,

During the summer months, it is crucial that children continue to read daily to sustain their academic skills. The importance of summer reading cannot be overemphasized. Educational researchers note that some children's reading levels dropped as much as two grades when students did not read regularly over the summer months. It is really simple: the more students read, the better readers they become. Your support is a critical part of the Summer Reading Program.

All incoming grade 6-8 students are **required** to read one book (preferably at grade level and more than 120 pages) and complete the tissue box activity. For students who will be entering **Honors** English, there is a required second book and activity attached.

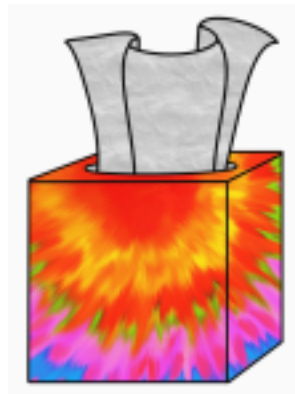
Summer assignments will be counted as a grade. The completed assignments are due to the student's ELA teacher by **September 5th**. If the assignment is not turned in on time, the expectation will be that the student will stay after school for support to complete it.

If you do run into any difficulties, please do not hesitate to let us know by contacting dhiggins@winchendonk12.org or cmaillet@winchendonk12.org.

Have an enjoyable summer and happy reading!

Sincerely,
The English Language Arts Teachers
Name: _____
Date: _____

SUMMER READING BOOK



Tissue Book Box Assignment:

- One of our Murdock Middle School students had the brilliant idea for us to offer an assignment where students could decorate a tissue box about a book they had read and voila! Tissue book boxes were born!
- Essentially, the idea is to create a visual representation of your summer reading book that you will present in the form of a tissue box (that we can stockpile the tissues and use them later on in the year when we run out!)

Materials Needed:

- ☐ A tissue box (not used - it should have tissues in it!)
- ☐ (Please let us know if you have any issues getting this and we can provide one!)

- ❑ Paper, pens, markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc. to decorate
- ❑ If you would like to type out certain elements or print out graphics to include on your tissue box, you may!

Directions and Requirements:

- **SIDE 1: BOOK COVER** - Design/create a (miniature) brand new book cover for your novel that somehow represents the book. Be sure to include the title of the book and the author's full name.
- **SIDE 2: CHARACTERIZATION** - Choose one major or minor character from your book. Include the character's name, a brief description of the character, and select **THREE** of the following elements of characterization to explain: (Please clearly label them)
 - **Speech:** Include a "direct quotation" from your character speaking and explain why this is important to their character as a whole, what traits this quote reveals, etc.
 - **Thoughts:** Include a "direct quotation" where your character is thinking privately or reflecting internally about something and explain why this moment is important to their character as a whole, what traits the quote reveals, etc.
 - **Effect:** What is your character's effect on other characters? How do others feel or behave in reaction to this character? What do others say about this character? Be as specific as possible in how your character has impacted others.
 - **Actions:** What are your character's most important actions in the book? How does this character generally act/behave? Do the character's actions change at all throughout the book?
 - **Looks:** What does your character look like and how does this impact the book? Is there anything unique about their appearance (age, race, gender, etc.) that influences their character? What is worth noting about their appearance or how they present themselves to others?
- **SIDE 3: OVERALL MESSAGE/THEME** - What is the overall message or biggest takeaway that any reader can take away from your book? This should be a full paragraph (6-8 sentences). Please **bold** or underline the overall message and then explain how it is shown/demonstrated throughout the book.
- **SIDE 4: RECOMMENDATION** - Give the book a rating out of 5 stars (1 star = the worst, 5 stars = the best) and write 3-5 sentences explaining your rating, why you liked/disliked it, who you would recommend it to, etc. Conclude by stating whether or not the school librarian should keep/add your book to the incoming 6th, 7th, and 8th summer reading list for next year!

*Don't forget to include **your name** and **class period** somewhere on your tissue box! (the bottom is fine)

OPTIONAL SPACE TO BRAINSTORM AND PLAN OUT YOUR FOUR SIDES:

SIDE 1: BOOK COVER SIDE 2: CHARACTERIZATION

SIDE 3: OVERALL MESSAGE/THEME SIDE 4: RECOMMENDATION
HONORS:

In addition to your tissue box, all students who are entering Honors ELA will be required to read a **SECOND** book of their choice.

Please write a 1-2 page paper addressing the following:

Summary: In your own words, summarize the plot of the book.

Character Analysis: Choose one main character and describe their personality, challenges, and how they changed throughout the story.

Theme Exploration: What is a major theme or lesson of the book? Provide examples from the story to support your answer.

Personal Connection: Describe how you related to the book. Did it remind you of something in your own life, or teach you something new?