

**Thornton-Donovan Middle School**  
**Summer Reading Assignments**

At Thornton-Donovan, we consider reading the foundation for learning. Therefore, our priority is to instill in our students a lifelong love of reading. **All students are required to read at least two books as their summer assignment. The first book is mandatory, and the second is a choice of their own from the given selection.**

**Assignment for the Mandatory Book**

Students, you are required to write a five-paragraph essay based on the topic for your respective grades. As you read, think about the main character and her struggles as well as the main themes of the novel. How is the character developing as a person? How is she handling the challenges of life? What character traits (such as courage, intelligence, persistence, endurance, empathy, resourcefulness) does she exhibit to meet those challenges? Your essay must have textual evidence, meaning it must have relevant quotes from the novel. So, as you read, note down at least two (2) quotes, including page numbers, that reveal how the main character is evolving or growing as a person.

**An outline to help you construct your well-developed essay.**

Your essay must have a title, an introduction (a paragraph), at least three body paragraphs, and a conclusion (a paragraph). Remember, it must also have at least two quotes from the novel to support your claims.

**Below are specific assignments for each grade:**

**6th Grade**

*Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

What have you learned in the story about the impact of war on a family?

**7th Grade**

*Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

Use Há and her family's experience to discuss the themes of war and migration in the story.

**8th Grade**

*Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

Discuss the circumstances under which Há and her family leave their homeland as well as the challenges that front them in their adopted country. Would they have been better off staying in their old country

rather than coming to their new country? Why or why not?

### For the Choice Book

You may choose from the options below.

- Create a poster detailing the plot of your novel. Include descriptions of the events in the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Write a statement of the main theme with quotes from the novel for support.
- Create an illustrated book cover for your novel. Include a summary of the story that describes the main character and the central conflict.
- Create a cartoon/storyboard (minimum of 8 panels) based on your novel. Focus on pivotal events and put them in chronological order
- Write a poem or song lyrics that connect to your novel. Focus on the plot, characters, and/or personal connections you have with the novel. (\*30 lines or longer)

### Required Summer Reading

	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
<b>Mandatory</b>	<i>Inside Out &amp; Back Again</i> By Thanhhá Lai	<i>Inside Out &amp; Back Again</i> By Thanhhá Lai	<i>Inside Out &amp; Back Again</i> By Thanhhá Lai
<b>Choice</b>	<i>Absolutely Normal Chaos</i> By Sharon Creech	<i>The Vietnam War: from Da Nang to Saigon</i>	<i>The Vietnam War: from Da Nang to Saigon</i>
	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> By L. Frank Baum	<i>The Wednesday Wars</i> By Gary Schmidt	<i>Vietnam: A History of the War</i> By Russell Freedman
	<i>Number the Stars</i> By Lois	<i>The Giver</i> By Lois Lowry	<i>Night</i> By Elie Wiesel

	Lowry		
	<i>The Call of the Wild</i> By Jack London	<i>The Book Thief</i> By Markus Zusak	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> By William Golding

All assignments must be submitted by Friday, September 19, 2025