



Summer Reading Requirement
School Year 2025-2026
Required for All Incoming 7th – 12th Grade Students
DUE DATE: Friday, August 22, 2025

Dear Castle Hills Parents and Students,

The Christian School at Castle Hills is committed to promoting a habit of lifelong reading for every student. Using a variety of lists and resources suggesting quality books for young adults, we have endeavored to curate literature appropriate to the age, maturity level, and life experience of each grade. Selections are therefore intended to be challenging and thought-provoking without undermining our Christ-centered worldview. However, in portraying real human problems, including suffering and sin, negative elements will inherently be included. Indeed, it is nearly impossible to find novels that do not include characteristics that could be considered offensive by someone. Humanity is flawed, and literature reflects this, often with the express purpose of highlighting the corresponding virtues, the triumph of good over evil, the opportunity and need for redemption, and so forth.

We recognize that every student is different, and some may not be ready to encounter various selections, even ones that are routinely suggested for that grade, and we are happy to accommodate if needed. To help you and your student make selections from our summer reading list, we have included links to reviews whenever possible. *We encourage you to investigate these books further as may be appropriate for your family and the needs of your individual student and to consider reading along and discussing the book with your student.*

Listed below are the directions and expectations for the assignment, which will count as a test grade in English the first week of school. Students will read **two** books this summer: one class novel and one chosen from a list.

Reading Selections

SEVENTH GRADE

7th grade required book: *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/bud-not-buddy/>

Read the book and be prepared to participate in assignments, group work, and/or projects based on the book when school begins as determined by your teacher. Specifics will be given within the first week of school. No written work is required unless your teacher assigns it when you return to school.

7th grade choices–

select one of the following and complete the Summer Reading Response Questions, found at the end of this packet:

- *Know Apologetics*, Peter Sargent, No parent preview found
- *When You Reach Me*, Rebecca Stead, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/when-you-reach-me/>
- *Caddie Woodlawn*, Carol Ryrie Brink, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/caddie-woodlawn/>
- *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*, Elizabeth George Speare, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/witch-of-blackbird-pond/>

EIGHTH GRADE

8th grade required book: *Johnny Tremain* by Esther Forbes, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/johnny-tremain/>

Read the book and be prepared to participate in assignments, group work, and/or projects based on the book when school begins as determined by your teacher. Specifics will be given within the first week of school. No written work is required unless your teacher assigns it when you return to school.

8th grade choices–

select one of the following and complete the Summer Reading Response Questions, found at the end of this packet:

- *Anne of Green Gables*, L.M. Montgomery, <https://www.pluggedin.com/movie-reviews/anneofgreengables/>
- *White Fang*, Jack London, No parent review found
- *The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkien, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/hobbit/>
- *True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, Avi, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/true-confessions-of-charlotte-doyle/>
- *Robinson Crusoe*, Daniel Defoe, No parent review found

NINTH GRADE

9th grade required book: *Animal Farm* by George Orwell <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/animal-farm/>

Read the book and be prepared to participate in assignments, group work, and/or projects based on the book when school begins as determined by your teacher. Specifics will be given within the first week of school. No written work is required unless your teacher assigns it when you return to school.

9th grade choices–

select one of the following and complete the Summer Reading Response Questions, found at the end of this packet:

- *Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens, <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/great-expectations>
- *Little Women*, Louisa May Alcott <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/little-women/>
- *The Chosen*, Chaim Potok, No parent review found
- *This Present Darkness*, Frank Peretti, http://squeakycleanreviews.com/review.cfm?review_id=261
- *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/the-hound-of-the-baskervilles>
- *The Time Machine*, H. G. Wells, No parent review found
- *Christy*, Catherine Marshall, http://squeakycleanreviews.com/review.cfm?review_id=1125
- *The Red Badge of Courage*, Stephen Crane, <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/the-red-badge-of-courage>

TENTH GRADE

10th grade required book: *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells, No parent review found

Read the book and be prepared to participate in assignments, group work, and/or projects based on the book when school begins as determined by your teacher. Specifics will be given within the first week of school. No written work is required unless your teacher assigns it when you return to school.

10th grade choices–

select one of the following and complete the Summer Reading Response Questions, found at the end of this packet:

- *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/jane-eyre/>
- *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens, No parent review found
- *A Separate Peace*, John Knowles, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/separate-peace/>
- *The Ring of McAllister*, Robert Marantz, No parent review found
- *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair, No parent review found
- *All Creatures Great and Small*, James Herriot, No parent review found
- *The Invisible Man*, H. G. Wells, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/invisible-man/>
- *A Girl of the Limberlost*, Gene Stratton-Porter, http://squeakycleanreviews.com/review.cfm?review_id=1041
- *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/sense-and-sensibility/>

ELEVENTH GRADE

11th grade Dual Credit required book: *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton
<https://www.kclibrary.org/blog/book-reviews/classics-reviewed-age-innocence>

11th grade non-Dual Credit required book: *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, No parent review

Read the book and be prepared to participate in assignments, group work, and/or projects based on the book when school begins as determined by your teacher. Specifics will be given within the first week of school. No written work is required unless your teacher assigns it when you return to school.

11th grade choices–

select one of the following and complete the Summer Reading Response Questions, found at the end of this packet:

- *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/great-gatsby/>
- *The Three Musketeers*, Alexandre Dumas, http://squeakycleanreviews.com/review.cfm?review_id=1105
- *Don Quixote*, Cervantes, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/don-quixote/>
- *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis, No parent review found
- *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/uncle-toms-cabin/>
- *The Greatest Generation*, Tom Brokaw, No parent review found
- *Mansfield Park*, Jane Austen, http://www.squeakycleanreviews.com/review.cfm?review_id=1481

TWELFTH GRADE

12th grade Dual Credit required book: *Silas Marner* by George Eliot, No parent review found

12th grade non-Dual Credit required book: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
<https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/frankenstein/>

Read the book and be prepared to participate in assignments, group work, and/or projects based on the book when school begins as determined by your teacher. Specifics will be given within the first week of school. No written work is required unless your teacher assigns it when you return to school.

12th grade choices–

select one of the following and complete the Summer Reading Response Questions, found at the end of this packet:

- *Rebecca*, Daphne du Maurier, No parent review found
- *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte, <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/wuthering-heights>
- *Emma*, Jane Austen, <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/emma>
- *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville, No parent review found
- *Hiroshima*, John Hersey, <https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/hiroshima/>
- *David Copperfield*, Charles Dickens, http://squeakycleanreviews.com/review.cfm?review_id=1559

Summer Reading Response Questions for Grades 7-12, Summer 2025

These questions are for the book you have chosen to read from the list for your grade level. Please read all directions carefully, type your responses to each of the following, and be prepared to submit **by Friday, August 22, 2025**, at the beginning of your English class. Include an MLA heading.

1. Create a bibliographic citation for your book following MLA guidelines. It should look like this:

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher's City: Publisher, Copyright Date. Print.

Example:

Levine, Gail Carson. *Writing Magic*. New York: Harper Collins Children's Books, 2006. Print.

2. Please thoroughly answer each of the following questions in complete sentences:

Questions for FICTION books:

- What is the setting (when and where the story takes place)?
- Who is the protagonist (lead character, hero/heroine)?
- Who/what is the antagonist (villain, adversary)?
- What is the climax (decisive moment that is of maximum intensity or the major turning point in a story)?
- What is the main conflict (struggle between opposing forces)? What two characters/forces are involved in the conflict?
- What is the conclusion to the story (how is the conflict resolved)?

Questions for NONFICTION books:

- Do you disagree, or only partially agree, with any of the author's claims? Why? Explain in detail.
- List at least two questions that occurred to you as you read the book.
- List at least two unanswered questions you still have after finishing the book.
- How will you apply what you have learned from reading this book?
- Do you recommend that others read the book? Why or why not?

3. Please thoroughly answer the following questions regarding your thoughts about the book. Use complete sentences and support your answers with text references:

- What life lessons did you learn from this book? Be specific, and explain how the book demonstrates this lesson.
- What history, culture, events, and issues did you learn about while reading this book? Explain your answer.
- A classic is a book that educators and readers still find valuable even though it may not be modern. Why do you think people would consider this book a classic? Explain your answer using text references.
- Sometimes books touch you, reminding you of your own life, as part of the larger human experience. What are at least 3 connections you made between the book and your own life, an event (or events) that happened to someone you know, and/or what happened in another book you've read? Explain.
- What are your three favorite lines/quotes?
 - Copy them from the book using correct punctuation and the page number.
 - Then, summarize each passage in your own words and explain why each passage individually stood out to you as significant.