

**Western Academy 2019 Summer Reading Assignment**  
***Entering Eighth***

The Summer Reading Assignment is designed to cultivate a love of reading among our students and prepare them for the fall academic culture at Western Academy. The books, stories and poems have been carefully selected to foster an enjoyable and thoughtful reading experience. Here are the steps to complete this assignment successfully. All readings and journal entries are due the first day of school.

- ~ **Obtain** an authentic leather journal with *ruled pages*. Minimum size must be 5 in. by 8 in.
- ~ **Read** all assigned books, stories, and poems listed on the next page.
- ~ **Write** one thoughtful journal entry for each assigned book.
- ~ **Copy** one of the poems, word for word, into your journal.
- ~ **Memorize** one poem to recite for the first week of school. Practice reciting it to your family.
- ~ **Write** a family story and be prepared to tell it on the first day of classes. It can be any length.
- ~ **Label & Date** each entry in your journal.
- ~ **Draw** a line between each entry in your journal.
- ~ **Receive** extra credit for reading other books from the book list and writing extra journal entries.
- ~ **Receive** extra credit for any colored drawings done in your journal, including maps.

**Journal entry length and suggestions**

When sitting down to write your journal entry, don't get caught up in how long it should be. That is the wrong approach! You've just finished reading a book and you should have plenty of thoughts in your head about the story, the characters, the setting, and the themes that have been brought to life in your imagination. All you need to do now is write down your reflections. Here are a few suggestions for your journal entry.

- Did you enjoy the book? Why or why not?
- What did you think of the characters?
- Who was your favorite character? What did you like about that character?
- What did you learn from this book?
- What could you criticize in this book? Did you disagree with anything?
- If you could speak with the author, what would you ask him or her?
- What part of this book would you most like to live out?
- Reflect upon the major themes (main ideas) of the story. What do you think the book was about? Justice? Courage? Mercy? Was the author trying to say something in this book?

By the time you are done reflecting, you almost surely will have written two paragraphs (which is the minimum journal entry length).

**Journal entry DOs and DON'Ts**

- DO write clearly and neatly
- DON'T give plot or story summary (we already know the story – we want to know what you think!)
- DO draw a line after each entry
- DO put a date on each entry
- DO label each entry like this: Reflection on     (Book Title)

EVALUATION: The journal will be graded for completeness, thoughtfulness, and neatness.

Entering 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are required to read FOUR books and write one journal entry per book. Three of the books are assigned, and the fourth may be chosen from the list below. If you would like to receive extra credit, you can read other books on the list and write entries for them as well.

If you order from [Blue Willow Bookshop](#) before **May 8<sup>th</sup>**, books will be delivered for free to your son's homeroom. The school will receive 15% of sales for any WA family purchases made through May 31<sup>st</sup>!

**Required for Literature**

[Fahrenheit 451](#)

by Ray Bradbury

Suggested ISBN# 9781451673319

[Animal Farm](#)

by George Orwell

Suggested ISBN# 9780451526342

**Required for History**

[The Tale of Troy](#)

by Roger Lancelyn Green

Suggested ISBN# 9780141341965

**Book List (choose one)**

[1776](#) by David McCullough (History, Non-fiction)

[Empires of the Sea](#) by Roger Crowley (History, Non-fiction)

[The Long Walk](#) by Slawomir Rawicz (Autobiography)

[The Wizard of Earthsea](#) by Ursula K. Le Guin (Fantasy/Fiction)

[Last of the Mohicans](#) by James Fenimore Cooper (Historical Fiction)

[Journey to the Center of the Earth](#) by Jules Verne (Science Fiction)

[Gulliver's Travels](#) by Jonathan Swift (Satire/Fantasy)

[Unbroken](#) (Young Adult Adaptation – History, Non-fiction)

Entering 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are required to memorize ONE poem for recital on the first day of school and copy ONE poem word for word into their journals.

Poems:

“Digging” by Seamus Heaney

“God’s Grandeur” by Gerard Manley Hopkins

“Mending Wall” by Robert Frost

“Musée des Beaux Arts” by W.H. Auden

**Summer Reading Assignment Grading Rubric**

Assignment	Label	Date	Complete	Thoughtful	Neat/Line Drawn	Total
Fahrenheit 451	/1	/1	/5	/5	/3	/15
Animal Farm	/1	/1	/5	/5	/3	/15
The Tale of Troy	/1	/1	/5	/5	/3	/15
Book #4	/1	/1	/5	/5	/3	/15
Copy of Poem	/1	/1	/5		/3	/10
Family Story	/1	/1	/5	Storytelling /5	/3	/15
Poem Recitation			/15			/15
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>/6</b>	<b>/6</b>	<b>/45</b>	<b>/25</b>	<b>/18</b>	<b>/100</b>

# 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Poems

Digging  
God's Grandeur  
Mending Wall  
Musée des Beaux Arts



## **Digging**

by Seamus Heaney

Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound  
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:  
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds  
Bends low, comes up twenty years away  
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills  
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft  
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.  
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep  
To scatter new potatoes that we picked,  
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade.  
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day  
Than any other man on Toner's bog.  
Once I carried him milk in a bottle  
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up  
To drink it, then fell to right away  
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods  
Over his shoulder, going down and down  
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mold, the squelch and slap  
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge  
Through living roots awaken in my head.  
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests.  
I'll dig with it.

## **God's Grandeur**

by Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.  
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;  
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil  
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?  
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;  
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;  
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil  
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;  
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;  
And though the last lights off the black West went  
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —  
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent  
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

## **Mending Wall**

by Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;  
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.  
The work of hunters is another thing:  
I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
But at spring mending-time we find them there.  
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;  
And on a day we meet to walk the line  
And set the wall between us once again.  
We keep the wall between us as we go.  
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.  
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls  
We have to use a spell to make them balance:  
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"  
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.  
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,  
One on a side. It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:  
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.

My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."  
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
If I could put a notion in his head:  
*"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it*  
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.  
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
What I was walling in or walling out,  
And to whom I was like to give offence.  
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,  
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather  
He said it for himself. I see him there  
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top  
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.  
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,  
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.  
He will not go behind his father's saying,  
And he likes having thought of it so well  
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

## **Musée des Beaux Arts**

by W.H. Auden

About suffering they were never wrong,  
The old Masters: how well they understood  
Its human position: how it takes place  
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;  
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting  
For the miraculous birth, there always must be  
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating  
On a pond at the edge of the wood:  
They never forgot  
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course  
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot  
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse  
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away  
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may  
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,  
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone  
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green  
Water, and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen  
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,  
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.