



2026-2027

Rising 7th Grade Summer Reading

The goal of summer reading for all students is to maintain some of the skills that have been taught in the past years and to allow students and teachers to begin the next school year with a common book to discuss.

All middle school grades will be assigned one common book for English Class and one book of student choice from the provided list for History Class. Students will be held accountable for reading both books through writing, projects, discussions, and activities.

For both English and History class, students will bring their book and their required book assignments on the second day of school, Thursday, September 3.

English Class Grade Level Required Book:

Rising 7th Grade:

***Ungifted* by Gordon Korman**

1. Assignment for the required reading: After completing the novel, students will complete six activities from the attached choice board and bring them on the first day of school.
2. Reading Choice: Students will keep a list of any books they read for pleasure over the summer and bring the list with them on the first day of school.

History Class Grade Level Required Book:

Students should select **one book from their rising grade-level list** to read over the summer. They are encouraged to choose a book that sounds interesting, readable, and manageable for them.

While all of the books are appropriate for middle school readers, some include historical events or themes that may lead to thoughtful questions or conversations at home. Parents may wish to preview or research a book before their student begins reading.

1. Assignment for the required reading:
 - **Student Reflection**
 - Students will write a one-paragraph reflection on the book they chose. It will contain the title, the author, and the historical time period. In the body of the paragraph students will write about the following:
 - Three things I learned about the time period
 - One character or person I found interesting
 - One question I still have
 - Would I recommend this book? Why or why not?



Focus: Ancient Rome, Europe during the Middle Ages, Medieval Japan, Maya, Inca, Aztec, Renaissance, Reformation, Age of Enlightenment, Age of Exploration

***The Eagle of the Ninth* by Rosemary Sutcliff**

Topic: Ancient Rome / Roman Britain

Summary: A young Roman officer tries to discover what happened to his father's lost legion. This is a great choice for students interested in Roman military power, empire, and life on the edges of Roman control.

***Crispin: The Cross of Lead* by Avi**

Topic: Europe During the Middle Ages

Summary: A poor boy in medieval England becomes a fugitive and must figure out who he really is. The book gives students a strong feel for feudalism, peasants, religion, towns, and power differences in medieval society.

***Catherine, Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman**

Topic: Medieval Europe

Summary: Catherine is a spirited medieval girl who does not want the marriage her father is arranging. The book is written like a diary and gives students a funny but useful view of medieval family life, gender roles, marriage, and social class.

***The Midwife's Apprentice* by Karen Cushman**

Topic: Medieval Europe

Summary: A homeless girl becomes an apprentice to a village midwife and slowly discovers her own worth. This is a short, powerful look at village life, work, medicine, and survival during the Middle Ages.

***Samurai Shortstop* by Alan Gratz**

Topic: Medieval / Early Modern Japan

Summary: A Japanese boy balances school, baseball, family expectations, and samurai traditions during a time of change. It works well for discussions about Japanese culture, honor, modernization, and the lasting influence of samurai values.

***Heart of a Samurai* by Margi Preus**

Topic: Japan / Exploration / Cultural Contact

Summary: Based on the true story of Manjiro, a Japanese boy rescued by an American whaling ship. This book helps students think about isolation, exploration, cultural exchange, and what happens when two very different worlds meet.

***Secret of the Andes* by Ann Nolan Clark**

Topic: Inca Civilization

Summary: A young llama herder in the Andes learns about his identity and Inca heritage. This book connects well to Inca geography, mountain life, traditions, and the importance of the Andes.



ST. MARTIN'S *-in-the-field* EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

***The Second Mrs. Gioconda* by E.L. Konigsburg**

Topic: Renaissance

Summary: This historical fiction story connects Leonardo da Vinci, the Mona Lisa, and Renaissance society. It is great for students learning about art, humanism, patrons, and why the Renaissance changed European culture.

***Pedro's Journal* by Pam Conrad**

Topic: Age of Exploration

Summary: A fictional cabin boy travels with Christopher Columbus and records the voyage in journal form. This book gives students an accessible way to examine exploration, uncertainty, European goals, and the impact of contact.

Please contact Associate Head of School, K-8 Heather Bosanko (hbosanko@stmartinsmd.org) with any questions.

Have a great summer!