



Using the 1st - 4th Grade Summer Reading Lists: Tips for Parents

Summer is a time for students to pursue their reading interests and to discover new and exciting reading choices. Our lower school reading recommendations are divided into two lists. There is one list of combined recommendations for rising first and second graders and one list for rising third and fourth graders. By presenting the lists in this way, we can offer a broader range of choices that are appropriate for the continuum of readers in each grade. You will also find that the lists are categorized by genre to guide readers in choosing a balanced diet of summer reading. Generally we list only one title per author, but we encourage you to explore additional titles by the same author. We have prepared a menu of wonderful choices; here are some tips for getting the most from the new lists:

Encourage your child to choose from each category on the list. We have made a particular effort to expand our nonfiction selections. Many children develop their love of reading through experiences with fiction and tend to keep reading what is familiar to them. You can help your child build a strong base of general knowledge by encouraging nonfiction for read-aloud and independent choices.

Encourage your child to continue reading picture books. For most children the chapter book is an important academic status symbol. It is an exciting milestone when a child can begin to read longer texts. However, there are picture books with language and subject matter sophisticated enough to use in middle and high school classrooms. When parents value picture books for third and fourth grade readers, their children are more likely to continue to include them in their repertoires.

Set a read-aloud time for your family this summer. Include harder texts and unfamiliar genres in your read-aloud selections. Many children delight in hearing poetry or learning about interesting people from the past when parents lead them into new literary territory. They benefit from exposure to vocabulary that is beyond their own reading level and subject matter that is unfamiliar.

Use the public library. Most all the titles on our lists are available at the library. It's much easier to experiment with new books and authors if you can return the books without any charge. You can use the library's on-line catalog service to reserve books and have them delivered to the branch of your choice. Go to <http://waldo.library.nashville.org>. Choose "Library Catalog." Choose the option of searching by "title/series." Enter the title of the book you want. To request the book, click on the key "request" at the bottom of the book's listing. Then enter your name, library card number, and the location where you want to pick up the books. It usually takes 1-3 days for the books to get there.

Set an expectation for daily reading. We all look forward to taking a more relaxed approach to the daily routine during the summer, but please don't be afraid to be firm about requiring twenty to thirty minutes of reading each day from lower schoolers who are reading independently. All but our most avid bookworms will need some adult structuring to get a reading routine established for the summer. Happy Reading!