

The Woodward School



THE WOODWARD SCHOOL
1894

Middle School Summer Reading 2026



June 2026

Dear Families:

Summer reading at Woodward is an important part of keeping students engaged in their learning, even outside of school. All books are thoughtfully chosen and intended to be high-interest.

All students are required to read *the chosen book below* over the summer and complete the related assignment.

Incoming 6th and 7th graders should bring their projects to school on the **second day of classes**.

Incoming 8th graders should be prepared for their in-class writing on the **third day of classes**.

As always, we encourage outside reading in addition to these chosen novels. We sincerely hope you have a wonderful summer, and happy reading!

Sincerely,

Gretchen Petersen

Associate Head of School

**Middle School Summer Reading
English Department**

Students must bring their required summer reading **assignments** with them **the first week of school**.

Incoming 6th Grade

Book: *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio

Students entering 6th grade are **required** to read the novel *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio. As you read, think about the characters, the challenges they face, and the important lessons the story teaches. After finishing the book, you will choose **one creative project** from the list below to show your understanding of the story's characters, setting, plot, conflict, and theme.

Choose ONE Creative Project:

1. Character Collage

Create a collage (digital or paper) that highlights at least **five characters** from *Wonder* (e.g., Auggie, Via, Jack, Summer, Julian).

Include: Pictures, symbols, quotes, and descriptive words.

Explain how each character relates to the **main conflict** and **theme** of the novel.

2. Wonder Journal

Write 5 journal entries from Auggie's or another character's point of view. Choose important moments from the story.

Include: Emotional reactions, thoughts on the setting and conflict, and reflections on the story's themes.

Optional: Add illustrations, quotes, and decorative elements to bring the journal to life.

3. Wonder Character Trading Cards

Design at least 5 "trading cards" for different characters.

Each card should include:

- Character name
- Traits and personality
- A meaningful quote
- Role in the story
- Connection to a central theme

Incoming 7th Grade

Book: *Refugee* by Alan Gratz

Students entering 7th grade are **required** to read the novel *Refugee* by Alan Gratz. As you read, think about the characters, the challenges they face, and the important lessons the story teaches. After finishing the book, you will choose **one creative project** from the list below to show your understanding of the novel.

Choose ONE Creative Project:

1. Refugee Journey Map + Travel Journal

Art: Create a map and travel journal tracing the journey of one character from the novel (Josef, Isabel, or Mahmoud).

- Draw or digitally create a map showing at least 5 major locations from the character's journey.
- Include symbols, illustrations, or color-coding to represent important events and emotions.
- Add captions to each stop.

Writing: Write a 3 page travel journal from your chosen character's perspective. You should:

- Describe **3 key events** along their journey. These can include:
 - Challenges the character faced
 - The character's thoughts and emotions
 - How the journey is changing the character
- These can be typed or handwritten.

2. Theme Collage and Analysis

Create a collage that represents one major theme from the novel and write an essay describing that theme.

Possible themes:

- Hope
- Family
- Survival
- Courage
- Belonging
- Sacrifice

Art: Create a poster collage no larger than 18' by 24' using drawings, magazine images, photographs, symbols, quotations, and colors. Include at least 10 visual elements connected to the theme.

Writing: Write a 3-paragraph essay that does the following:

- Explains the theme that you chose.
- Discusses how the theme appears in at least two of the three storylines.
- Explains how the images in the collage connect to specific moments in the novel

Incoming 8th Grade

Students entering Grade 8 are **required** to read *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman and complete the related assignment below:

Choose one of the following to write about based on the book *Coraline*:

- Sequel-what happens next?
- Prequel-what happened before?
- Alternate ending

The structure of your paper should be as follows:

Creative Title

- 1st paragraph
 - o Set the scene: who, what, when, where
- 2nd paragraph
 - o What happens first
- 3rd paragraph
 - o What happens next
- 4th paragraph
 - o What happens last
- 5th paragraph
 - o Conclusion

You will handwrite this story in-class on the third day of your English class. Please come prepared with notes about your writing plans.