

Dear Middle School Student,

Summer is here and it is time for some fun summertime reading. To continue the great work you have done this year, Epiphany is starting a summer reading program. During this summer, you will need to read each of the two selections listed below according to your grade level. We have included the ISBN numbers for the selections for your convenience.

However, it is not necessary for you to purchase the books. You can borrow them from a friend in an upper grade or from the Public Library. Additionally, the Culpeper County Public Library, Barnes and Noble, and TD Bank conduct their own Summer reading program and you can win prizes for the books that you read, so be sure to check it out for yourself as information is available through their websites and locations.

In addition to reading the books, you will need to complete an assignment. This assignment will assist in your reading. It will also assist you in preparing for the assessment on each book you will be given after we return from Summer vacation. There are different assignments depending on your grade So please read the directions carefully. Your language arts teacher will read and grade these in the fall so do your best work. Be sure to use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation in your finished product. Please bring the assignments with you when you return to school after summer vacation.

6th and 7th Grade Students:

**Sixth Grade**

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett ISBN-13: 978-1508695417

CreateSpace independent Publishing Platform (March 3, 2015)

The BFG by Roald Dahl ISBN 0141301058

**Seventh Grade**

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle ISBN-13: 978-0312367541

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin ISBN 0140386645

Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Graders will be keeping a dialectical journal for each book. For each book you should complete **ten** dialectical journal entries. Use a composition book for your dialectical journal entries; you will continue to use this composition book throughout the School year. Follow the guidelines for a dialectical journal entry. You will have two columns on your page. On the left-hand side of the page, write down a passage that stood out for you as you read. Be sure to include the page number. On the right-hand side of the page, write your response. Your response might be a question for the author, a prediction, a clarification of something you read, or a connection you made between this passage and your own life. Be Sure to vary the types of responses you are making. That is, do not always question the author, for example. This is going to be your first graded literature assignment when you return to school in the fall.

## **8th Grade Students**

Under A War Torn Sky by L. M. Elliott ISBN 0786817240

Walk Two Moons by Sharron Creech ISBN 9780060233341

In addition to their dialectical journals, Eighth Grade students will be writing one compare and contrast essay. In this essay, you are asked to select and discuss one of the common themes of the novels. When discussing the books, please remember to both compare and contrast the ideas. How is it treated the same and how is it treated differently in both books? Some students tend to Only tell how the books are Similar and fail to discuss how they are different. However, in Order to earn full Credit for the assignment, the essay must discuss both.

In the essay, please choose one of the following themes:

- Importance of family
- Patriotism
- Reliance on the kindness of Strangers

Additionally, you are asked to give Specific examples from the novels to Support your ideas. These examples will help give Credibility to your thoughts and opinions and will help focus your Writing. These Specific examples must be cited in your paper in MLA format. Please note that you Only place the punctuation after the parenthetical. The parenthetical only has the author's last name and the page number. No other information or punctuation is needed.

Example: In the book, the characters went on a picnic (Elliott 15).

The analysis must be typed and placed in your language arts binder or folder. All typed assignments must be double spaced, Times New Roman 12 Font. Please be as neat as possible because this is going to be your first graded literature assignment when you return to School in the fall.

Have a great summer and happy reading

Middle School Teachers

**Attached is an explanation of a dialectical journal.**

## DIALECTICAL JOURNALS

The term "Dialectic" means "the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer." Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts we read during this course. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts, your ideas about the themes we cover and our class discussions. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you're reading, prepare yourself for group discussion, and gather textual evidence for your Literary Analysis assignments.

### PROCEDURE:

- o As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column the chart (ALWAYS include page numbers).
- o In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)
- o You **must** label your responses using the following codes:
  - o (Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
  - o (C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
  - o (P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what's in the passage
  - o (CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
  - o (R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story/author of the article. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
  - o (E) Evaluate - make a judgment about what the author is trying to say

### Sample Dialectical Journal entry: Beyond the Yellow Highlighter

Passages from the text-- Must quote at least 10 per reading assigned. Make sure to number them.	Pg#/¶	EACH Passage you Quote must relate to one of the following codes above. Make sure to use a variety. Using the same codes for most or all of your entries will result in a lower score.
1. "The yellow marks in my college textbooks...did not help me very much."	82/1	(C) I can relate since I often used to highlight what I thought was important and then end up with most of the page highlighted.
2. "Annotations do make me read a lot slower and I wish I didn't have to do them. It is so much harder to fake read if you have to annotate like we have to do now. So now I actually read, because it's too hard to fake annotate"	87/2	(C) It is harder to fake annotate--it almost takes more time. (R) People are prone to find the easy way to do something. Since there's really no easy way to annotate--fake or real--it makes sense to really read and think about the texts. (Q) Is it really harder to fake read if you have to annotate? Or does it just take longer?

### **CHOOSING PASSAGES FROM THE TEXT:**

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record:

- Effective &/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that remind you of your own life or something you've seen before
- Structural shifts or turns in the plot
- A passage that makes you realize something you hadn't seen before
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs.
- Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
- Events you find surprising or confusing
- Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting

### **RESPONDING TO THE TEXT:**

You can *respond* to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be **specific and detailed**. You can write as much as you want for each entry. You can choose to type and save your journals as PDFs or you can write by hand and then scan and save as PDF.

#### **Basic Responses**

- Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
- Give your personal reactions to the passage
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- Write about what it makes you think or feel
- Agree or disagree with a character or the author

#### **Sample Sentence Starters:**

I really don't understand this because...  
I really dislike/like this idea because...  
I think the author is trying to say that...  
This passage reminds me of a time in my life when...  
If I were (name of character) at this point I would...  
This part doesn't make sense because...  
This character reminds me of (name of person) because...

#### **Higher Level Responses**

- Analyze the text for use of literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery)
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text
- Make connections to a different text (or film, song, etc...)
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole