

June 10, 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

At Archbishop Neale School, we believe that reading is an essential foundation for academic success, personal growth, and lifelong learning. We encourage all students to make reading a meaningful part of their summer.

One of the greatest benefits of summer reading is the opportunity for students to develop their own reading interests. Choice encourages engagement, and engaged readers are more likely to become confident, independent learners.

The Importance of Summer Reading

When students take an extended break from reading, they can lose some of the skills they worked hard to develop during the school year. This learning loss, often called the "summer slide," can impact reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and overall academic performance. Research consistently shows that students who read regularly during the summer are better prepared to begin the new school year with confidence. Even just 20 minutes of reading each day can make a significant difference.

Benefits of Independent Reading

Independent reading helps students:

- Maintain and strengthen reading comprehension skills
- Expand vocabulary and improve language development
- Increase reading stamina and concentration
- Develop critical thinking and analytical skills
- Build confidence as readers
- Foster a lifelong appreciation for literature and learning

We look forward to welcoming our students back in the fall and hearing about the books they chose, the characters they met, and the stories that inspired them throughout the summer.

Thank you for your support in helping our students grow in their independent reading skills!

- Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Schreyer

See reverse side for a fun, reading challenge over the summer!

Summer Reading Assignment

All students entering Grades 6–8 are required to read **one novel** from their assigned grade-level summer reading list.

Please Remember:

- Students should select **one book** from the list for the grade they will enter in the fall.
- Printed copies of books are strongly encouraged.
- Students should bring a copy of their selected book with them when they return to school in the fall, as it will be used for a classroom activity, discussion, and/or project.

Reading Notes and Preparation

As students read throughout the summer, they are encouraged to **annotate** important details and observations about the novel. This can be done using:

- Annotations for their personal book
- A reading notebook/ reading journal
- Sticky notes or page markers

Taking notes while reading helps students track important events, analyze characters, identify themes, and prepare for discussions and assignments when school resumes.

Titles:

For Students entering 6th Grade:

- **Holes** by Louis Sachar
- **The Wednesday Wars** by Gary Schmidt

For students entering 7th Grade:

- **Hatchet** by Gary Paulsen
- **Rules** by Cynthia Lord

For students entering 8th Grade:

- **The Pearl** by John Steinbeck
- **Chasing Lincoln's Killer** by James Swanson

Annotation Guide

Many successful readers do more than simply read the words on the page - they actively interact with the text. Annotating (making notes while reading) helps you stay engaged, think more deeply, and remember important details long after you finish the book.

Annotations Help You:

- Improve Comprehension
- Strengthen Memory
- Prepare for Class Discussions
- Develop Critical Thinking Skills
- Increase Reading Fluency

You can annotate using:

- Sticky notes
- A notebook or reading journal
- Note in the margins (if you own the book)

You do NOT need to annotate every page. Focus on important moments, confusing sections, strong reactions, and meaningful quotes.

What should I write?

- Character Notes (What motivates the character? What are their strengths/weaknesses?)
- Plot Notes (Major events, turning points, conflicts, resolutions)
- Theme Notes (lessons about Friendship, Family, Courage, Honesty, Responsibility, Faith)
- Vocabulary Notes (unknown vocabulary words and their meanings)
- Questions (What don't I understand? Why did a character make a certain choice? What will happen next?)

Before Returning to School

Make sure you have:

- Finished your novel
- Recorded important notes and annotations
- Identified major characters
- Tracked important events
- Found examples of themes
- Marked meaningful quotes

Please bring your book and notes to school to show to your ELA teacher.