

ACA Summer Reading Initiative - 2026

· Middle School, Grades 6-8 ·

Rationale:

Summer reading provides all students the opportunity to enjoy books in a relaxed and leisurely setting while developing a lifelong love of reading. At American Christian Academy, we encourage all students and their families to engage in reading together this summer by exploring books of all kinds for both information and enjoyment.

Research has shown that students who read during the summer months retain more learning and move into the new school year more prepared than those students who do not engage in reading. In fact, numerous studies have shown that reading over the summer prevents “summer reading loss,” which can be a cumulative loss affecting a student's reading comprehension throughout their academic career. This is due in part to the fact that children do not easily “catch up” on their lost reading skills in the fall, especially when classes begin with an assumption of appropriate, grade-level reading skills. By the end of 6th grade, children who lose reading skills over the summer are potentially two years behind their classmates! For this reason, it is important that all students continue to pursue this essential academic skill.

Who Participates in Summer Reading?

- **Currently Enrolled Students** – All currently enrolled ACA students are required to participate in the Summer Reading Initiative.
- **New Students** – New students are also required to participate in the ACA Summer Reading Initiative, though the assignment may be modified depending on the date of enrollment at ACA. Once you have registered, please reach out immediately to your English teacher to determine the scope of your summer reading assignment.

Summer Reading Assessments:

Over the summer, students entering grades 6-8 are required to **read one assigned novel**. At the start of the upcoming school year, students will be given a multiple-choice test on the reading material in their English class, along with an in-class essay. They will receive the following grades:

1. Multiple-Choice Test on required summer reading, entered as a 100-point test grade
2. In-Class Essay on the required summer reading, entered as a 50-point test grade (6-7th grade) or a 100-point test grade (8th grade).

Assigned Novels:

Required novels differ based on grade level. Students should identify their required novel in the chart below based on the grade level they will be ENTERING in the upcoming school year.

If you are ENTERING...	...your REQUIRED summer novel is:
6 th Grade	<i>Hatchet</i> by Gary Paulsen
7 th Grade	<i>The Watsons Go to Birmingham</i> by Christopher Paul Curtis
8 th Grade	<i>The Hiding Place</i> by Corrie ten Boom

Please review the above information with your student and encourage him or her to begin reading early in the summer. Procrastination can often be the biggest challenge of a summer reading assignment, leading to unnecessary stress on students and parents alike! However, as there will be multiple test grades based on the required summer novel, we also encourage students to review their novels for a few days before the start of the new school year. This way, the information and ideas are fresh in mind.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Tucker (stephanie.tucker@acacademy.com) or Josh Riley (josh.riley@acacademy.com), as clarifying questions now will prevent any issues in the fall. We hope that you and your child enjoy this opportunity to explore new authors and titles, and that through this, students and parents alike develop a greater love for literature.

Happy reading!

- ACA English Department