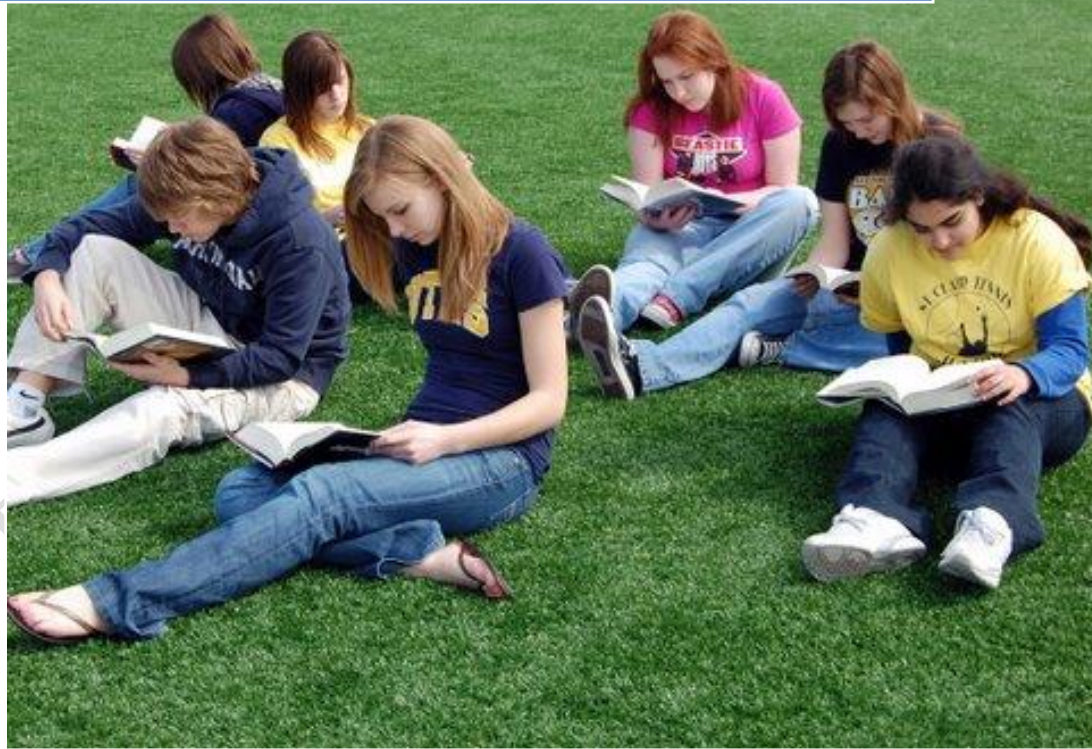


2010

O'Fallon Township High School
Summer Reading Program



O'Fallon

Parent Packet

Summer Reading Program: Information Packet for Parents

This summer, we will be requiring summer reading for all incoming freshmen (class of 2014) and sophomores (class of 2013). To design this program, we looked at research and successful programs throughout the country to help best meet the needs of our students. In addition, we made changes suggested by parents, students, and faculty to improve it from last year's program. This packet is designed to introduce you to the program and answer some of the questions you may have.

“Why do we have to do this?”

Many of your children may be asking this question when they are told of the new requirement, but we have the best intentions for your children. Research has shown that summer reading helps students succeed by increasing their reading ability, which translates to more success in all courses. This increase in reading has been shown to improve word recognition, vocabulary knowledge, grammatical skills, and writing ability. Additionally, we hope to elevate their motivation to read, give them a chance to choose books they truly enjoy, and help make reading a more enjoyable part of our students' lives. Then, we will be more effective at creating life-long readers! Last year, our freshmen program was very successful and truly created a love for reading that was greater than we could have expected. Books were a topic of conversation in our classes more than before, and statistically, we noticed book checkout rates for our freshmen students were up 154% over the year before.

What is required?

All students will be required to read two books over the summer. Both books must come from our 2010 list, which is comprised of books from the Read for a Lifetime and Abraham Lincoln book programs. Both of these programs highlight books that interest teens and have been shown to be very successful at choosing books students actually enjoy. More information about the Read for Lifetime and the Abraham Lincoln Book programs can be found on the O'Fallon Media Center website under the “Read It” link.

Students enrolled in the honors curriculum must read a third book, from these choices: Freshmen: *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and Sophomores: *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton, OR *1984* by George Orwell.

While efforts have been made to choose highly acclaimed, appropriate, and meaningful books for your child, some books may contain mature content. As stated in the American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights, only parents/guardians maintain the right and responsibility to restrict their student's access to library resources, including inter-library loan selections (Section 53.1.4). We encourage parents/guardians to be actively aware of their student's resource selections.

How will my child be held accountable for reading?

Research shows that while students need accountability, reading should be as enjoyable as possible. For one book choice, students must complete the required Project #1 sheet to help them prepare for an introduction writing assignment that they will receive during their first week of school. For their second book, they must complete one project from the four options that we have created. Examples of successful projects are available on the Summer Reading portion of the OTHS website. **The project sheet is due the second day of school, and the project option is due on the first Friday after we return to school, August 20th.** They will turn in the assignments to their English teacher for a grade of 25 points each, for a total of 50 points. Students should also be prepared to discuss the books that they read with teachers and students. Rubrics and assignment sheets were handed out to students in their packet. You may wish to look them over and help your child find a good fit. Instead of a third project, honors students will have an additional test over their book on August 20th.

How can my child get books?

You have several ways you can obtain the books for this program. You can borrow these books from the OTHS Instructional Media Center, your local library, or purchase books on your own. The OTHS Media Center at the Smiley Campus will have copies of all books along with summer hours to accommodate this program. Please see the detailed information in the back pages of the student packet for more information on how to utilize the IMC during the summer. In addition, many local libraries, including the public libraries in O'Fallon, Lebanon, and Fairview Heights and the Scott Air Force Base Library, have the lists available and will help students who have a public library card find the books they need. To help with purchasing books, Borders and Barnes and Noble have been given the book lists and are creating easy access of titles. If you purchase books, we recommend sharing, if possible, to help more students access the books.

How can I help?

Your involvement can help us make this program a success. Here are some tips that other parents have found successful:

- Show excitement about the program – it's contagious!
- Help your child choose appropriate books that would interest him/her.
- Discuss book selections with your child by asking questions about what he/she is reading and his/her likes and dislikes about it. You can also ask him/her about his/her favorite part of the book.
- If desired, read the same book, so you can discuss the content with your child.
- Make reading "fun" by creating a reading area in your house, establishing a special time to read, or going somewhere special to read.
- Aid your child in setting goals for completing the reading and projects.

What if my child moves in the district during the summer?

We expect that all students who will be attending O'Fallon Township High School in August will complete the requirements, but we understand that if a student moves in the district at a later date, he/she will not have as much time to complete the reading and projects. If a student moves into the district after August 1st, that student may have until August 27th to complete the required project for one book off the required list. He/she does not have to complete the second reading and project. If the student is in the honors program, he/she should read the honors book to prepare for the test and skip the other two books. Please call the school to arrange checkout of books if needed.

Where can I get more information?

Students received a packet that includes all handouts today to help them be informed. To help with access over the summer, we will have all information, including links to more information about summer reading, on the Summer Reading web page. Extra forms can be downloaded off of this site in case they are needed. The web page is located on the OTHS homepage (www.oths.k12.il.us) and under the Instructional Media Center link on the right-hand sidebar. Click through the doors to enter the site and click the Summer Reading Program link.

Happy Reading!

This program is an exciting endeavor that we continue to improve every year! Please contact Jodie Seipp at seippj@oths.k12.il.us, Jennifer Gulotta at gulottaj@oths.k12.il.us, or the Media Center at imc@oths.k12.il.us with any questions that arise. We hope you have an enjoyable and reading-filled summer, and we look forward to a successful year at our new Milburn campus.