

# St. Mary of the Hills School

## Students Entering Grade 5

### Summer Reading

Before the start of school in September, incoming 5<sup>th</sup>-graders are REQUIRED to read TWO books. There is one required reading for ALL 5<sup>th</sup>-graders and one free-choice book. Students must bring the book reports/projects with them on the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, Wednesday, September 2, 2009. There is one specific assignment for the required reading and each student can choose one of the free-choice assignments for his/her free-choice book. The projects will be graded on the rubrics provided, which should be turned in WITH the project.

### REQUIRED READING:

**The Magician's Nephew** by C.S. Lewis

The novel begins in London in the early 1900s. The principal characters are two pre-adolescent children, Digory Kirke and Polly Plummer, Digory being the boy who becomes the Professor Kirke appearing in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The pair are transported to other worlds by the magical experiments of Digory's evil Uncle Andrew and become caught up in the creation of Narnia and the introduction there of the evil queen Jadis, antagonist of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

\*\*The first novel we read together as a class is The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, so it is very important that every 5<sup>th</sup>-grader read this story to jumpstart us into our first novel! There will be a test on this book during the first week of school.

### ASSIGNMENT

The assignment for The Magician's Nephew is to become an advice columnist for one of the characters in the story who goes through the MAIN CONFLICT (problem) of the story. For the assignment, you should have TWO letters in total:

- 1) A letter from the character to the advice columnist (Dear Abby, Dear WHOEVER...be creative!!) explaining what the conflict is and why this character is struggling with the conflict.
- 2) A letter from you, the advice columnist, giving advice to the character on how to deal with this conflict. Since you have already read the story, you should have special insight on how to resolve (fix) the problem!

This letter should follow the letter-writing format you have learned in previous years and should include: the date each is written on, a proper greeting, a proper salutation ("Sincerely," "Fondly," etc.), and also your SIGNATURE (CURSIVE!!!!).

## **FREE-CHOICE:**

Each student may choose ONE of the following for his/her free choice books. This list has been built to be accessible to all levels of readers, so do some research to be sure you have chosen the book that is a good fit for you!! Challenge yourself and be amazed at what you can do!

### **Mr. Popper's Penguins** by Atwater and Atwater

A children's book written by Richard & Florence Atwater, originally published in 1938. It tells the story of a poor house painter named Mr. Popper and his family, who live in the small town of Stillwater in the 1930s. The Poppers unexpectedly come into possession of twelve Adelie penguins, and something must be done before they eat the Poppers out of house and home.

### **Dear Mr. Henshaw** by Beverly Cleary

Boyd Henshaw, a writer, does not actually appear in the book. The story is actually about Leigh Botts, a young boy who lives with his divorced mother and misses his father. The beginning of the book is a collection of letters written from Leigh to Mr. Henshaw, his favorite author. The letters show increasing emotional and literary complexity as Leigh grows. They also show his desire to become a writer.

### **Holes** by Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats IV is an out-of-luck teen who suffers constant misfortune as a result of a curse placed on his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing, great-great grandfather. When sneakers suddenly fall from the sky and hit Stanley, he finds himself in a whole new type of bad luck as the sneakers were a special donation to a charity from a popular athlete, and the police decide Stanley stole them. With the choice between jail or a juvenile correction camp, Stanley chooses the latter, and thus arrives at Camp Green Lake. There, Stanley and the other boys are forced to dig holes five feet deep, and five feet wide in the now dry bed of the camp's eponymous lake every day. Stanley eventually realizes that they are digging these holes because the Camp Warden is searching for something likely hidden in the lake bed. As Stanley continues to dig holes, he befriends the other boys at the camp, and learns to adapt to this new misfortune.

### **Mr. Tucket** by Gary Paulsen

The first novel in *The Tucket Adventures* by Gary Paulsen. It is about 14 year old Francis Tucket who strays from his family's wagon on the Oregon Trail and is captured by the Pawnee.

### **Soldier's Heart** by Gary Paulsen

A fictionalisation of the true story of the farmboy Charley Goddard, who at the age of 15 enlisted in the Union Army in the American Civil War, was involved in combat at Bull Run and Gettysburg, and returned traumatised and suffering from "soldier's heart" (Da Costa's syndrome). Soldier's Heart is based on a true story about a fifteen-year-old boy in Minnesota named Charley Goddard who lies about his age to join the First Volunteers of Minnesota to fight in the Civil War. Some of the events and time sequences are not completely factual, but the essential elements of the book's story are true.

### **Rules** by Cynthia Lord

Catherine's brother, David, is autistic, and their family life revolves around his needs. Catherine loves her brother and cares enough about him to attempt to help him by compiling lists of rules for living like an ordinary person: "If someone says 'hi,' you say 'hi' back." "If the bathroom door is closed, knock (especially if Catherine has a friend over)!"

But Catherine is also frustrated and embarrassed by David and by the way her needs seem secondary, if not nonexistent, to her family. When a girl her age moves in next door, Catherine hopes to be friends but worries that David will ruin the relationship. And her growing friendship with a mute paraplegic boy makes things even more complicated.

### **Nory Ryan's Song** by Patricia ReillyGiff

As Patricia Reilly Giff writes in her note to the reader, the Great Hunger of 1845 to 1852 was a tragic time for the Irish. Enough food to feed double the population was sent out across the sea, while an indifferent government ignored the starving masses. More than one million of the eight million people in Ireland died. Nory Ryan's Song, a fictionalized account based on this terrible era in history, describes the heroic struggles of one girl who refuses to give in to hunger, exhaustion, and hopeless circumstances. Young readers may have heard of the Irish Potato Famine, but they won't truly understand it until they meet Nory.

### **Sarah, Plain and Tall** by Patricia MacLachlan

The novel is set in the midwestern United States (Kansas) during the late 19th century. Jacob Witting, a widowed farmer who is still saddened by the death of his wife several years earlier finds that the task of taking care of his farm and two children, Anna and Caleb, is too difficult to handle alone. He writes an ad in the newspaper for a mail-order bride. Sarah, from Maine, answers his ad and travels out to become his wife.

## FREE CHOICE ASSIGNMENT:

Choose one of the following projects to complete for your free-choice book.

- 1) Make a book jacket for the book you read. The book jacket must include: illustrations from the story, a short summary of the book, and recommendations of the book to other readers. See books you have read for inspiration!!
- 2) Make a mobile for your book. Draw pictures of important features from your book and create a spinning summary of the book! On the back of each picture, be sure to provide a description of what that picture means to the book.
- 3) Make a character scrapbook. Pick a character from your book and create a scrapbook of that character's life. You can make it be from the time the character was born until the day he/she died or simply from the time you meet the character in the story until a few years after the book ends.