



## OFFICE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION SUMMER READING FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

### COVID 19 Statement

The Office of Secondary Education acknowledges that the COVID-19 outbreak is having a significant impact on the lives of our students and families. In previous years students in accelerated, gifted and talented, and honors classes have been required to read one assigned book and one choice book from a pre-determined list. Due to the obstacles families have faced and continue to face as a result of COVID-19, a decision has been made to promote summer reading by allowing student choice.

### Purpose

The purpose of summer reading for students at both the middle and high school level is to assist with developing the life-long habit of reading. Summer reading encourages the enjoyment of reading and develops students' abilities to choose books for themselves. The Office of Secondary Education supports students being able to read and explore genres and topics of their own interest. By allowing students to practice choosing books, self-regulating when and where they read, and sustaining reading over the summer months, our hope is that students' identities as readers will continue to grow.

The students' choice of reading also fosters a vibrant and diverse community of readers. Their summer reading experiences can foster exciting conversations about books both with their peers, parents/guardians, and with their teachers, as well as expand their perspectives and stimulate their understanding of the world around them.

### Importance of Reading Over the Summer

Reading is defined as a complex, purposeful, social, and cognitive process in which readers simultaneously use their knowledge of spoken and written language, their knowledge of the topic of the text, and their knowledge of their culture to construct meaning (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999). Reading is not a technical skill acquired once and for all in the primary grades, but rather a developmental process throughout the reader's life. A reader's competence continues to grow through engagement with various types of texts and wide reading for various purposes over a lifetime. Summer reading is critical for students to retain knowledge and skills learned in the previous school year. Students who do not read are at risk of falling behind their classmates.

The information below provides resources for parents/guardians and students and ways to access books. We ask that you encourage your child to read throughout the summer.



### Resources for Parents/Guardians

- Encourage your child to read by showing that you are a reader! Read for enjoyment, instructions, connecting with others, etc.
- Connect English Language Arts (ELA) to the real world by asking your child how what they are reading and writing connects to the world.
- Engage your child in conversation about what they are reading and writing. Ask them what they see as their strengths and where they want to improve when reading and writing.
- Visit local libraries together and check out a book with your student! Libraries have sections specifically for young adult literature. <https://www.richlandlibrary.com/>
- Allow your child to dislike a book. If your child does not like a book, engage him/her in a discussion about what specific things were not appealing. This will also help them choose future texts as well.
- Help students see the importance of reading and writing by showing them how you use both at work and in everyday life.
- Visit Common Sense Media for independent ratings and reviews for nearly everything students want to watch, read, play, and learn. <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>

### Independent Reading Best Practices for Students

- Dedicate an amount of time every day for reading. You can start with a small amount of time and gradually increase the amount of time you read in one sitting.
- Set realistic and challenging weekly goals for reading.
- Read at a pace where the text makes sense. The goal is to understand what you are reading, not to show how fast you can read.
- Choose texts about topics and subjects that are of interest to you.
- As you read limit distractions so that you can ask questions, make connections, visualize, and synthesize information.

### Books Provided to Richland One Middle School Students

This year represents our fourth consecutive year providing free books to three-year-old – eighth grade students. Summer reading books are provided to prevent summer slide and to promote a joy for reading. Due to the pandemic students were not able to self-select books but were provided an individual pack of books. We believe that students should have access to high quality books to enhance their home libraries.

### South Carolina Association of School Librarians Book Awards

Each year the South Carolina Association of School Librarians creates the book lists for the South Carolina Book Award nominees.

Titles to be considered are nominated primarily by members of the Book Award Committees, but nominations are sought from anyone interested in encouraging students to read. Students, teachers, media specialists, and parents are encouraged to submit titles for consideration to the Book Awards Board Representative.

The purpose of the South Carolina Book Awards are to encourage students to read good quality contemporary literature and to honor the authors of the books annually chosen the favorites by student vote.

- 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> South Carolina Junior Book Award (<https://www.scasl.net/junior-book-award>) lists, information, links, resources, and activities
- 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> South Carolina Young Adult Book Award (<https://www.scasl.net/young-adult-book-award>) lists, information, links, resources, and activities