

**Concord Christian School**  
**Middle School**  
**Required Summer Reading 2020**

**6th Grade (Standard and Honors)**

Student will read two books:

*A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

And

**One** spiritual emphasis book from the following options (**with completed journal, see details below**):

*Take Your Best Shot* by Austin Gutwein

*A Girl after God's Own Heart* by Elizabeth George

*A Boy after God's Own Heart* by Jim George

*Little Pilgrim's Progress* by Helen Taylor

*Hinds Feet on High Places (Illustrated Edition)* by Hannah Hurrand

**7th Grade (Standard and Honors)**

Student will read two books:

*Holes* by Louis Sachar

And

**One** spiritual emphasis book from the following options (**with completed journal, see details below**):

*Lose Your Cool* by Zach Hunter

*The Heavenly Man* by Brother Yun

*Lies Girls Believe* by Dannah Gresh

*Case for Faith Student Edition* by Lee Strobel

**8th Grade (Standard and Honors)**

Student will read two books:

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry

And

**One** spiritual emphasis book from the following options (**with completed journal, see details below**):

*Do Hard Things* by Alex and Brett Harris

*A Young Woman's Guide to Making Right Choices* by Elizabeth George

*A Young Man's Guide to Making Right Choices* by Jim George

*Case for Christ Student Edition* by Lee Strobel

*The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom

# A Snapshot of the Required Summer Reading

## **6th Grade**

*A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

Meg Murry and her little brother, Charles Wallace, have been without their scientist father, Mr. Murry, for five years, ever since he discovered a new planet and used the concept known as a tesseract to travel there. Joined by Meg's classmate Calvin O'Keefe and guided by the three mysterious astral travelers known as Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who and Mrs. Which, the children brave a dangerous journey to a planet that possesses all of the evil in the universe.

## **7th Grade**

*Holes* by Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats, a boy who has bad luck due to a curse placed on his great- great-grandfather, is sent to Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention camp, for a crime he did not commit. Stanley and the other boys at the camp are forced to dig large holes in the dirt every day. Stanley eventually realizes that they are digging these holes because the Warden is searching for something. As Stanley continues to dig holes and meet the other boys at the camp, the narrator intertwines three separate stories to reveal why Stanley's family has a curse and what the Warden is looking for.

## **8th Grade**

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry

*The Giver* is a young adult dystopian novel written by Lois Lowry in 1993. It explores life in a community in which choice has been eliminated. The novel presents themes on the value of the individual life and what it means to be human. There are multiple Biblical integration opportunities as we discuss the value of human life and free will. Parents who have had limited discussions with their child about euthanasia will want to read along and discuss with their child. Our study of this novel will introduce us to literary analysis, theme analysis, and writing to support your perspective which we will use throughout the school year.

## 2020 Journal Assignment for the Spiritual Emphasis Book

- 1) While reading, think about answers to the following questions:
  - a. How did the book make you see something in a different light?
  - b. How did the book help you understand something?
  - c. How did the book prompt you to re-evaluate your spiritual walk?
  - d. How did the book prompt you to change your behavior or attitude toward something?
  - e. How did the book support an idea you already had?
  - f. How did the book cause you to live that moment with the author?
- 2) Share your answers to the questions with your parent.
- 3) Write a 4 to 5 sentence paragraph to respond to **each** of the questions. You should have six (6) total paragraphs. Make sure you include complete sentences and well-thought out insight in your responses.
- 4) You may type the journal, if you choose.

### EXAMPLE:

How did the book prompt you to change your behavior or attitude toward something?

I realized how often I am consumed with material things that we will not last forever. I thought about what the Bible says about storing up treasures in Heaven. I need to shift my focus to things the Bible says are eternal. The souls of people matter more than material possessions. I was reminded of how what I think is a must-have today will be out of date within a year or so. Hebrews 13: 8 tells me Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

- 6) Add a cover sheet which includes your name, the date, the title of the assigned book, and the author's name.

## Summary of Spiritual Emphasis Books

Which spiritual emphasis book should you choose? Check out these descriptions written by the MS teachers to help you decide.

### Sixth Grade Options

*Take Your Best Shot* by Austin Gutwein

The book is written from Austin's point of view. It is not necessarily a boy book, because the central challenge is that we should find a need and meet it with our own passion. I like this book because Austin is actively serving and helping others as a missionary in Africa. Also, it is motivating for Christian teens to "do something" and not to wait for others or wait until they are older. Our students should be awakened to the many opportunities to serve others and be lights in a dark world for the glory of Jesus. There are a couple of sensitive topics in the book: the HIV epidemic and prostitution, so parents would want to know these issues are a part of the story.

*A Girl after God's Own Heart* by Elizabeth George

Elizabeth George breaks down issues that today's pre-teens are facing. She gives scripture to challenge the way God calls young girls to think and act in these specific areas (tidiness, parents, siblings, school work, and friends). *A Girl after God's Own Heart* provides questions that help develop a Godly way of responding to the challenges going on during this time in a girl's life. This book does not address anything about boys, dating, or sex, but does give some other good topics for rising middle school girls.

*A Boy after God's Own Heart* by Jim George

This interactive book is geared for today's pre-teen boys. An abundance of Scripture and questions challenge boys to think about key topics: school, family, friends, church, and time. This book does not address anything about girls, dating, or sex, but does give some other good topics for rising middle school boys.

*Little Pilgrim's Progress* by Helen Taylor

*Pilgrim's Progress* is a classic that has been translated into over 200 languages, has never been out of print, and stands as an extremely significant religious work. Little Pilgrim's Progress is the adapted version of the original literary work written specifically for 8-12 year olds. The book is an allegory and walks the believer through his spiritual journey until he reaches heaven. Using creative storytelling, the struggles and journey of walking with Jesus comes to life. Students who read this book can see so much of themselves in Christian's struggles and find tools to fight victoriously in the spiritual journey God has called them to walk.

*Hind's Feet on High Places (Illustrated Edition)* by Hannah Hurrand

Young Christian, do you ever struggle with fear, anxiety, doubt, or insignificance? This book may be a wonderful help to encourage you in your walk with the Lord. God has called you to confidence in His great Name. He is the One who enables us to walk with power, peace, grace, and victory. *Hind's Feet*, written as an allegory, follows the journey of a young lady named Much Afraid. Much Afraid learns to conquer her fears and be steadfast in her faith as she journeys to freedom from being bound by fear, anxiety, doubt, and insignificance and into a place of confidently walking out all that God has called her to do. This book is designed as a simple but powerful illustration of how we allow small things to control us in big ways. Each chapter has devotions that would be well served for both parent and child to experience together.

## **Seventh Grade Options**

*Lose Your Cool* by Zach Hunter

Zach Hunter was a teenage boy at the time of writing this book. He discovered his passion for a social injustice and began working to raise awareness and funds to challenge that injustice. He became a teenage activist to end modern day slavery. He writes to encourage other teenagers to find a passion and pursue ways to make a difference. By sharing stories of other people throughout history who have made a difference, teens will be encouraged to think of the abilities and opportunities they have to encourage change.

*The Heavenly Man* by Brother Yun

*The Heavenly Man* is powerful, and it is eye-opening for students to realize that it is a true story. Miracles really do happen, Jesus really is with us through hard times, things don't always go as we wish they would go, and God intervenes and guides us when we surrender to Him. Brother Yun's life parallels the Apostle Paul's. There are some difficult events as he endures torture, but he also experiences God's supernatural sustaining and deliverance.

*Lies Girls Believe* by Dannah Gresh

This fun, easy-to-read book engages young girls in the twenty most important truths they need. This study allows girls to solve problems using fun sidebars and it's packed with wisdom, quizzes, games, exploded quotes, and graphics to help absorb the message. Girls will learn how to equip themselves with the Biblical truth needed to combat the lies of the world. This book addresses common lies about God, how you view yourself and family, sin, friendship, the future and more. Young girls will discover the lies that they have been believing and learn how to uproot the lies with God's truth. This book also addresses lies about being a girl and lies about boys. The chapter, *Lies about Being a Girl* focuses on God's truth that two different genders were created and being a female is something to celebrate and embrace. The chapter, *Lies about Boys* focuses on the ability to say "no" to boy craziness and the need to always seek wise advice. *Lies Girls Believe* is designed with 14 chapters to help young girls live the way God meant for them to live --- Free! *A Mom's Guide to Lies Girls Believe* is an available book for moms to read to walk alongside their daughters and help facilitate discussions.

*Case for Faith Student Edition* by Lee Strobel

I recommend this book very highly. It is a concise and slightly simplified version of the classic book by Strobel. It is divided into short chapters and simple charts that would both be easy to read over the summer and springboard discussions in class. The question and answer format is very effective. It is superb - very profound, yet the student version here is very easy to read and very straightforward.

## **Eighth Grade Options**

*Do Hard Things* by Alex and Brett Harris

The purpose of this book is to free teens from the shackles on their minds placed there by society and their own low expectations. The Harris twins give readers a historical glimpse of what the age of adolescence was meant to be versus what it has become and why. The authors then attempt to motivate and inspire readers by looking at the lives of famous teens from history (George Washington, David Farragut, and Clara Barton), as well as modern-day young people who have aspired to and who have done hard things in order to fulfil God's purposes in their lives.

*A Young Woman's Guide to Making Right Choices* by Elizabeth George

*A Young Woman's Guide* walks through challenges and temptations today's teenage girls face. Elizabeth George focuses on the importance of good choices in areas such as clothing, eating, gossip, friends, education, and relationship with boys. The book is packed with Biblical examples and scriptures that will challenge ladies to make Godly choices. Chapter 10 and 11 discuss sexual, mental, and physical purity as a treasure.

*A Young Man's Guide to Making Right Choices* by Jim George

*A Young Man's Guide* follows a fictional teen boy as he makes choices in everyday life. The book is packed with Scripture and descriptions about the importance of good choices. Boys will be challenged to think about basic choices that can lead to a godly life. Chapter 9 discusses choices in relationships with girls, and Chapter 10 discusses temptation. The main character is faced with a choice about pornography. This issue is handled in a way that is appropriate for a rising 8<sup>th</sup> grader, but will be best discussed with a parent as well.

*Case for Christ Student Edition* by Lee Strobel

I would strongly recommend this book. It is a concise and slightly simplified version of the classic book by Strobel. It is divided into short chapters and simple charts that would both be easy to read over the summer and springboard discussions in class. The question and answer format is very effective. The entire book could be read in one to three sessions. This would be a great basis for introduction to apologetics.

*The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom

This book follows Corrie's life as a child and through adulthood and explores her and her family's ministry throughout Nazi Holland. She and her family are arrested for providing food stamps to Jews when they were really hiding Jews who ended up getting away. God's fingerprint is littered throughout this story, and it nearly made me cry every time she saw God's faithfulness and sovereignty and remembered how they were suffering but how Jesus suffered already for us. Inspiring and well written. Definitely a book that young people should read!

