



Westminster Christian Academy

8TH GRADE SUMMER READING

FOUNDATION OF WRITING AND LITERATURE 8

As we work together with families to create lifelong learners, Westminster Christian Academy expects that our students will continue reading throughout the summer months. In working towards this goal, over the summer, all incoming eighth grade students will be required to **read *The City of Ember* By Jeanne DuPrau and write a 1-2 page essay responding to one of the two prompts below.** Students, if you have read this book before, rereading it is still a worthwhile exercise. Please read the following prompts, and read this book through a new lens. We are hoping that students can engage with a story that is easily accessible and understood while reflecting on and analyzing the story from a deeper perspective.

STEP #1 **READ the two prompts below and READ *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau** with those prompts in mind. As you read, annotate your book by marking any passages that work to answer the prompt you've chosen.

STEP #2 **CHOOSE ONE PROMPT & WRITE** (type) an essay response to your book.

CHOOSE ONE PROMPT:

PROMPT 1: When reading any novel, one may find themselves reading words of wisdom, nuggets of truth or wise counsel that feels applicable to real life outside of the novel. As you read the novel, be on the lookout for wise words from either a character or the narrator. Choose one or two excerpts from the text in which you found wisdom that is applicable to real life, and explain the significance of those one or two quotes. Write your response in paragraph form, utilizing claim, support, analysis structure (see rubric below). Make sure to include the full quote(s) in your writing, and use an in-text citation.

PROMPT 2: In *The City of Ember*, people's perception of reality is missing a key piece of truth. This story has parallels to our world today, especially for people who do not know God. Show the parallel between the people in the City of Ember and people in our world today. Describe the similarities that are evident between the state of the City of Ember itself and the condition of our current human culture. There is a plot twist in the novel. Compare a citizen of Ember's perception of her/his life and situation to the perception that person who doesn't know the reality of God might have about our world. Describe the hope about reality (a parallel) that a Christian has after reading this novel all the way to the end that a non-Christian might not see. Can you see it? Show it!

For help with structuring your essay and specific essay requirements, see the rubric on the next page.

STEP #3 Please **submit the essay** to summerreading8@wcastl.org by **Friday, August 11.**

- Please title the email with the student's first and last name.
- If possible, please submit the response **as a PDF**; if you aren't able to submit a PDF, please type your response in the body of the email.
- You will get an automatic email response when you submit your essay. If you do not receive this, please double-check the email address and resend your response.

STEP #4 Please **bring your annotated copy** of the novel with you the first day of school.

THE RESOURCES

A. Rubric for Essay (20 points)

Essays should be 1-2 pages long, double spaced, size 12 font. Writers should choose ONE prompt only to write about. Essays should include an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Body paragraphs should be well structured with topic sentences, specific supporting details from the text, and analysis and reasoning. When applicable, students should use direct quotations from the novel in their responses, and be sure to provide the page number for the direct quote.

Introduction:

Creatively grab your readers attention, introduce the book title and author. Also clearly present the prompt to which you are responding.

Body Paragraphs :

These paragraphs have a clear structure and address the prompt.

- Topic Sentence/Claim
- Supporting Details:
- Analysis:
- Clincher:

Conclusion:

Wrap up your thoughts in a clear way.

Grammar & Mechanics:

The writer pays careful attention to grade-level appropriate grammatical standards: spelling, capitalization, use of complete sentences (no fragments, run ons, or comma splices), subject-verb agreement, and correct word usage.

Remember, your written response must be received via email by **Friday, AUGUST 11** in order to avoid a late grade penalty. Students will receive a one-point grade deduction per day that the written assignment is late (up to a 50% total reduction). This will be reflected and noted in the first quarter grade.

B. How to quote a text and cite a page number.

Basic Formatting of a quote and citation:

“Quote” (pg #).

- **If the quote ends in a period**, then you do not need to include the period in your quote:

EXAMPLE: “Then we heard the first crash. The three of us froze” (5).

- **If the quote ends with a unique punctuation mark (- ? !)**, then include that punctuation mark inside the quotation marks surrounding the quote. You will still need to include a period after the citation

EXAMPLE: “Why? What’s happening?” (5).

Example in a paragraph:

In the novel, *Projekt 1065*, author Alan Gratz creates characters who are wise and characters who are foolish. One character who is wise beyond his years is Michael O’Shaunessey. When talking with his mother about the Nazi’s plan to attack the Jewish population, Michael reveals his wisdom. He says, “What good is that when people are dying?” (10). Michael, even as a young boy, can see that the Nazi’s plan is evil. In his desperation and fear, Michael is ultimately worried about valuing human life more than his own safety. In his wisdom, he knows that people matter, no matter their race, political leanings, or religion. He wants so desperately to stand up for what is right and protect others.