

Dear Providence Academy Families,

Summer provides excellent opportunities to read! Providence Academy, through the English department, has developed an exciting summer reading plan that encourages students to read age-appropriate, excellent literature! According to *Learner*, an online resource for educators and students alike, students who read over the summer break return to school more able and ready to learn, experiencing a smoother transition between grade levels, especially in reading. We hope that you will join your children as they embrace the beauty and joy of reading great literature and trust that this may also be an opportunity for you to read alongside your children as research supports the value of parent involvement in a child's growth in reading skills. The English teachers are looking forward to conversations about the novels at the start of the new school year. "First weeks of school activities" in English classes will directly relate to the content of these stories, so we trust you will consider when students read these selections so that students arrive prepared for discussions and assessments.

Families are responsible for purchasing the summer reading book for their students; except for upcoming ninth graders and seniors, a specific edition is not required. Please ensure your students bring their copy of the summer reading book to class the first two weeks of school. Details regarding specific book selections for each grade and suggestions for how you can participate in your students' education this summer are listed below. Thank you for encouraging your children to love great literature and for supporting their success during the first week of the 2025-2026 academic year!

In Christ,

Mr. Paul Davidhizar
High School Principal

9th Grade
***The Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle**

The classic story, *The Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle, takes readers on an adventure alongside Robin Hood, a hero who battles injustice and oppression. In his actions against the villainous Prince John and the Sheriff of Nottingham, Robin Hood is determined to outsmart his opponents! He takes refuge in Sherwood Forest, where he plots to restore order in Nottingham. Please note that many different editions of this book are available; however, the one we will use in class is published by SeaWolf Press, ISBN 9781949460520. Copies may be purchased at most local bookstores or online book sites.

Here are some ideas to enhance your reading and possibly guide family discussions:

- Have you ever felt the need to uphold justice by speaking on behalf of those who did not feel confident speaking for themselves? What was the circumstance? How did it make you feel? What did you want to say/do?
- Robin Hood gives to others. Consider how you might make and/or buy something that you could give to someone in need.
- Nottingham is a real city in England. Spend time mapping the city of Nottingham. Most map apps have “street view,” and virtual tours may be a fun way to explore the city.
- Consider learning more about England, including Sherwood Forest and other popular places in Nottinghamshire, England.

As you read, consider these questions:

- What does it look like to love our neighbors and pray for those who persecute us? What does the Bible say about facing situations that appear to be circumstances of injustice.
- How does Robin Hood seek to restore justice? Do you agree with his approach? Why or why not? What actions do these characters take that helped you determine this?
- Did the actions of Robin Hood sometimes seem unethical? If so, when and how might you modify the actions?
- What does it look like to speak on behalf of those who feel oppressed or unloved? How might actions speak louder than words? How were the actions of characters in the book indicative of unspoken thoughts?
- How does the Bible call us to seek justice for the oppressed?

10th Grade
***Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë**

This beloved classic by Charlotte Brontë is sure to become a favorite. An orphaned child, Jane reminds readers that strength and courage assist in overcoming adversity. The novel explores societal norms, begging a response to unequitable socioeconomic rules of marriage. Be reminded of how the Lord sustains us in all of life's trials as you read a story where pain and heartache appear to be a consistent reality. Note: For consistency, we recommend that students purchase the Dover Thrift edition of the novel.

Here are some ideas to enhance your reading and possibly guide family discussions:

- Review what students have learned in history about betrothal, social status, and hierarchy. If you are traveling to a place where these practices were, or remain, common, consider how this may have affected everyday life.
- Consider visiting Biltmore, where estate living is on display. Try to imagine, through Jane Eyre's eyes, the experiences she may have had.
- If you decide to watch the movie, do so after you finish the book. Then compare and contrast the book with the movie.

As you read, consider these questions:

- What does the Bible say regarding widows and orphans? How does this contradict or support what the novel reveals?
- How does society display bias toward/against something or someone? How have you displayed bias in your life? What was the reason? Do you feel it was justified, and/or is bias ever justified?
- What does the Bible say about adversity and trials? When you experience trials, what is your first reaction? Why is self-awareness regarding your response to trials important?
- In the book, someone sees Jane Eyre and assists her. Think about someone in your life who has helped you overcome adversity. How might you show your gratitude to people who help bear burdens?
- What is the greatest thing you learned by observing Jane Eyre's perseverance?

11th Grade
***To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee**

Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* illuminates life in a small Alabama town where prejudice, racial injustice, and broken dreams manifest through the complex characters of the Finch family and Tom Robinson. Winner of the 1961 Pulitzer Prize, the novel highlights a child's exposure and enlightenment to racial tension. In the story, Tom Robinson is falsely accused, and Atticus Finch agrees to defend Robinson despite threats from the community. The novel is enveloped in sadness, as human behavior and the loss of innocence reveal mankind's depravity.

- Review what you have learned about The Great Depression. What made this time more difficult than most? Consider how stability and/or instability of a setting impacts stability and/or instability of thoughts.
- Conduct a short research study of Southern American photography from The Great Depression. Consider the expressions of those in the photos and make connections to daily Alabama life in the 1930s.
- If you decide to watch the movie, do so after you read the book, possibly with a group of friends. Discuss the movie by comparing and contrasting the book with the movie.
- Throughout your summer travels, or even locally, consider visiting a courtroom in the area. While there, if permitted, sit in various places in the courtroom, imagining what it would have been like to witness the case from each character's perspective.

Discuss

- How does context, prior experience, and education affect perspective?
- Compare and contrast the characters of Atticus and Scout Finch. How would you explain the similarities and differences between family members?
- Juxtapose yourself with one of the characters in the book; compare/contrast yourself with that character. What makes you similar to that character? What makes you different?
- When did you first become aware of social injustice and/or prejudice? How did you respond? Was your response justified? If not, how might you modify your response in the future? Find Bible passages that assist in an appropriate response to racial injustice.
- In what context does the Bible address preferential treatment? How did Jesus Christ treat people? What habits would you like to adopt from Jesus' example?
- How does education and environment affect the decisions of community members? Why is education an important part of belief systems?
- How are actions/behavior impacted by societal expectations? If you do not think these are affected, explain your reasoning.
- At what point do you think Atticus Finch was aware of his responsibility to defend an ideology rather than simply a person? How do you know?

12th Grade
***Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austin**

Pride and Prejudice, a quintessentially classic romance novel, tells the story of five sisters in waiting. At the turn of the 19th century, Jane Austen takes readers on the Bennet sisters' journey through the introduction of several eligible bachelors. Mrs. Bennet's overt interest in her daughters' marriages often allows for interesting humor, and Elizabeth Bennet takes the stage when she refuses several suitors, including the infamous Mr. Darcy. Elizabeth and Darcy's romance becomes the focal point of the novel, as Elizabeth is intelligent and witty, showing no interest in Darcy, while Darcy is the hierarchical heir to great wealth who shows sincere affection for Elizabeth. The primary plot is surrounded by secondary plots that display the other sisters' relationships. At the heart of the novel, as the title perfectly alludes, is the inevitable struggle with both pride and prejudice. Review what you have learned in history about European social status, entailment, and hierarchy as you read this book. Note: For consistency, we recommend that students purchase the Dover Thrift edition of this novel, though a particular edition is not required. Also, seniors will complete a full study of the novel rather than just a one-week overview.

Following are some activities to help you prepare for the study in August:

- Consider a virtual tour of the novel's setting of Hertfordshire, Derbyshire, and the Lake District of the United Kingdom. If nothing else, at least find these places on a map.
- If you decide to watch a movie rendition, do so after you finish the book, and choose a version that will do the book justice. Then compare and contrast the book to the movie.
- Plan a *Pride and Prejudice* party, where you discuss the following prompts:
 1. How do pride and prejudice affect perspective? What does the Bible say about pride and prejudice?
 2. How do each of the characters exhibit the pitfalls of pride and prejudice?
 3. How are pride and prejudice intertwined? Can you be prideful without also being prejudiced? Can you be prejudiced without also being prideful? Explain.
 4. Compare the characters of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy, analyzing similarities that lead the reader to understand Jane Austen's illumination of pride and prejudice.
 5. Juxtapose yourself with one of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. What makes you similar to that character? What makes you different?
 6. How do societal and hierarchical pressures affect judgment? In the book? In real life?
 7. What prejudices and pride do you exhibit? How can you work to ensure that personal bias does not cause additional strife in relationships?
 8. What societal manners of the Georgian Era are demonstrated in the book? How does the expectation of manners affect the characters' relationships with each other?