

 **Verulam School**

Independent Summer  
Reading Challenge

Years 7-9





## Independent Reading Challenge

This independent reading challenge will involve you reading a novel every two weeks over the summer holidays and then completing a series of activities based on what you have read. Below is a table which outlines the tasks.

Before we begin:

- Read the first chapter of your novel -
  - To develop the ability to read, understand and respond to a literary text.
  - To produce an Independent Novel Project that demonstrates an ability to respond to the text using textual evidence as appropriate.

| <b>Task</b>                         | <b>Complete on (add in completion date)</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Reader Response                     | Week 1                                      |
| Vocabulary                          | Week 2                                      |
| Character study                     | Week 3                                      |
| Creative Writing                    | Week 4                                      |
| Free choice from selection provided | Week 5                                      |
| Free choice from selection provided | Week 6                                      |



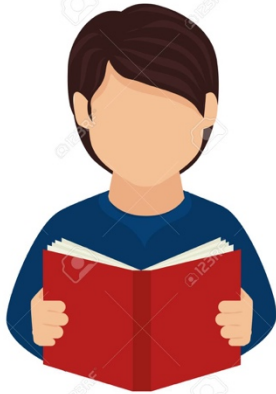


## Week 1: Reading response to text

For the first week of the summer read at least half of your first summer reading book. When you have got this far, respond in writing to the prompts below. Responses should answer/address the following questions but **need to be written in paragraph form**.

### Reader Response

- a) Where is your novel set? Think about the time and place.
- b) Name and describe the main character in the novel. Describe him/her physically and describe his/her personality (and history if known). Then give your impression of him/her.
- c) Name and describe a secondary character in the novel. Describe him/her physically and describe his/her personality (and history if known).
- d) Explain the relationship between the two characters.
- e) Describe one important event in the novel and explain why it is significant to the story (to the plot, the characters or ideas of the book.)
- f) What are your thoughts and feelings about the novel so far?





## Week 2: Vocabulary

By the end of this week you should have completed your first summer reading book – well done if you have done this. Now, choose **one** of the following assignments to complete. Include a title and any necessary headings.

- ★ 1. **Vocabulary Log:** Choose at least 15 words from your novel that you do not know the meaning of. Record the dictionary definition of each word.
- ★★ 1. Create a **Thesaurus**. List 20 words that seem overused or boring. Rewrite the sentence from the book in which the word was found with a better one.
- ★★ 2. List 15 **interesting, important or unusual words** from your book and explain your reasons for choosing each word.
- ★★★ 3. Create a **crossword** with 10 words across and 10 down. Provide a clue for each word and the answer key.
- ★★★★ 4. Create your **own assignment** using 10-20 words in a creative way that shows you understand the meaning and are learning new vocabulary.

## Guidance for Vocabulary

| Category                    | Not within expectation   | Approaching Expectations   | Meeting or exceeding Expectations  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Vocabulary selection</b> | Selected words are simple, limited selection.  | Some interesting or advanced words, some consideration taken when selecting.                 | Interesting or complex words. A wide selection.                              |
| <b>Vocabulary Usage</b>     | Many words are incorrectly used.   | Most of the words are used correctly in the assignment.                                      | All words are used correctly in the assignment.                              |
| <b>Presentation</b>         | The assignment is attempted but not completed correctly and/or is difficult to read and interpret. | The assignment is almost completed according to directions and is somewhat neatly presented. | The assignment is completed according to directions and is neatly presented. |



## **Week 3: Character study**

By the end of this week you should be half way through summer reading book number two. Choose one of the main characters from book two that interest you, complete the tasks below with relevant quotations that will help you create a character study.

**Make a list of quotations that provide you with factual information about the character e.g. age, address, appearance, friends, family etc**

| <b>Make a list of things that other people say about the character, and explain what this reveals to you as the reader about them.</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>What they say</b>   | <b>What this suggests about the character</b> |
|  |   |
|  |   |
|  |   |
|  |   |
|  |   |

| <b>Make a list of things that the main character says or does, then explain what this reveals to us about the character</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>What they say</b>  | <b>What this implies about the character</b> |
|   |  |
|   |  |
|   |  |

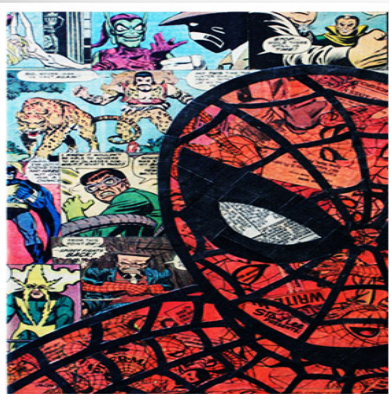


Now, to really push yourself and improve your writing skills use your notes to write up your inferences. Use the example below to help you.

| <b>Make a list of things that other people say about the character, and explain what this reveals to you as the reader about them.</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>What they say</b>   | <b>What this tells us about the character</b>  |
| Smiling evilly, he went through all the bags in the room and put all the money he could find into his pockets.                         | <b>The character is a thief and does not feel guilty about stealing from others.</b> |

Sebastian is not a likeable character, we can tell this when he decides to steal from his friends and enjoys doing it as well. When “he went through all the bags in the room and put all the money he could find into his pocket,” he was described as “smiling evilly.” This would suggest to the reader that Sebastian does not seem to care about how upset his friends will be feeling when they realise they have been robbed and also that he does not feeling guilty at all.

**Aiming for the top? Your character study needs to include at least three detailed paragraphs about your chosen character. Remember to choose your quotations carefully, and explain in detail the writer’s use of language.**





## Week 4: Creative Writing

By the end of this week you should have completed summer reading book two – well done if you are keeping up! This week choose **one** of the following assignments and base your work on book number two. Include a title and any necessary headings.

- ★ 1. Imagine that you are a character in your novel; you can choose any character who interests you (it doesn't have to be the main character). Write a **diary entry** as that character as the story unfolds. Include 3 diary entries.
- ★ 2. Write an **interview** (with the answers) with one of the major characters, exploring the main event of the novel.
- ★★ 3. Write an **additional event** to include in the novel somewhere featuring the main character.
- ★★ 4. Write a **newspaper article** about an event that has happened in your book.
- ★★★ 5. Write a **poem** inspired by your novel (can be about a character, event, setting etc.)
- ★★★ 6. Describe an **experience** you (or someone else you know) had that was like the experience of a character in the book.

## Week 5: Challenge Tasks

This week you should be beginning summer reading book number three. Try to vary the genre of books you are reading – you could also mix fiction and non-fiction reading. This week's activity is your choice of one of the below tasks. This can be based on either book one or book two from your summer reading list.

1. Interview a character from your book. Write at least ten questions that will give the character the opportunity to discuss his/her thoughts and feelings about his/her role in the story. However you choose to present your interview is up to you.
2. Write a diary that one of the story's main characters might have kept before, during, or after the book's events. Remember that the character's thoughts and feelings are very important in a diary.
3. Write a sales talk, pretending the students in the class are clerks in a bookstore and you want them to push this book.
4. Make several sketches of some of the scenes in the book and label them.
5. Imagine that you are the author of the book you have just read. Suddenly the book becomes a best seller. Write a letter to a movie producer trying to get that person interested in

- making your book into a movie. Explain why the story, characters, conflicts, etc., would make a good film. Suggest a filming location and the actors to play the various roles.
6. Write a book review as it would be done for a newspaper. (Be sure you read a few before writing your own.)
  7. Write a feature article (with a headline) that tells the story of the book as it might be found on the front page of a newspaper in the town where the story takes place.
  8. Write a letter (10-sentence minimum) to the main character of your book asking questions, protesting a situation, and/or making a complaint and/or a suggestion. This must be done in the correct letter format.
  9. If the story of your book takes place in another country, prepare a travel brochure using pictures you have found or drawn.
  10. Write a FULL (physical, emotional, relational) description of three of the characters in the book. Draw a portrait to accompany each description.
  11. After reading a book of history or historical fiction, make an illustrated timeline showing events of the story and draw a map showing the location(s) where the story took place.
  12. Compare the plot or characters of the book that you are reading with another book or character within a text.
  13. Write an essay comparing the movie version with the book.
  14. Create a mini-comic book relating a chapter of the book.
  15. Write an original song that tells the story of the book.
  16. Be a TV or radio reporter, and write a script report of a scene from the book as if it is happening "live".
  17. Design a book cover for the book. I STRONGLY suggest that you look at an actual book cover before you attempt this.
  18. Create a newspaper for your book. Summarise the plot in one article, cover the weather in another, do a feature story on one of the more interesting characters in another. Include an editorial and a collection of ads that would be relevant to the story.
  19. Write about what you learned from the story.
  20. Write a different ending for your story. Explain your choice of resolution and how you want your reader to feel or learn as a result.
  21. Write a different beginning for your story. Explain your choice of language or point of view.
  22. Compare and contrast two characters in the story.
  23. Write your thoughts, emotional reaction to the events or people in the book.
  24. Make a map of all the events in the book.
  25. Make a message board of the characters' thoughts or reactions.
  26. Complete a character mapping, showing how characters reacted to events and changed.
  27. Make a character tree, where one side is event, symmetrical side is emotion or growth.
  28. Choose a quote from a character. Write why it would or wouldn't be a good motto by which to live your life
  29. Learn something about the environment in which the book takes place.
  30. Retell part of the story from a different point of view
  31. Choose one part of the story that reached a climax. If something different had happened then, how would it have affected the outcome?
  32. Create a 'if you like this book you should read...' list for your book.



