

# Upper School of Logic and Rhetoric

## Summer Reading Assignments 2024



*Students in the Upper School of Logic and Rhetoric read one Common book and one English book assigned by grade. Scroll down for the assignments related to each book, including the Common Read. This year most of our Summer reading experiences involve two important elements that are worth highlighting:*

**READING ALOUD:** Various studies abound showing a multitude of advantages to reading aloud. It is a given when children are young, but what about our Logic and Rhetoric students? According to recent articles cited in *The Atlantic*, the BBC, and *The New York Times*, the benefits continue into these years and throughout adulthood. We are asking USLR families to read our Common Read aloud as a family. The idea here is different from individuals listening to an audiobook, as one of the benefits we are after is connection and community. This is an experiment and we will have a call for feedback about the experience in the early fall. ***Please note the assignments below involve three family conversations around the dinner table so students (and families) will need to plan ahead.***

**EXPERIENCES:** Another new element to this year's summer reading is that each English assignment (for grades 8-12) involves an experience. Students in grade 8 have a choice of books and are asked to visit a local library for their book selection. Students in grades 9-12 are guided through an experience at a location relevant to the assigned text. Students should complete the grade level assignment fully and bring this assignment on the first day of class.

**Common Read (grades 7-12):** Read aloud *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson and discuss at three family dinners. Fill out the worksheet after these conversations.

**Grade 7 English:** Read *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* and complete the assignment as outlined by Mrs. Russell.

**Grade 8 English:** Follow the prompts on the assignment sheet to select your text after a visit to the library. Then have a family member interview you (recorded!) about your text.

**Grade 9 English:** Read George MacDonald's *Fairy Tales*, visit a ruin, and write a myth.

**Grade 10 English:** Read *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, visit a wilderness, find a green chapel, and draw a picture.

**Grade 11 English:** Read *My Antonia* by Willa Cather and visit a farm or homestead, take photos, and write an accompanying poem.

**Grade 12 English:** Read Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, visit a city, and create your own invisible city.

*\*CCA students enrolled before August 1st should complete these assignments in full by the first day of classes and bring the assignments with them on the first day. New students enrolled after August 1st will be exempt from the written work but should read as much of the text as they are able.*

**USLR Common Read:**  
**Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island***

*READ ANY FULL VERSION OF THIS CLASSIC TALE OF ADVENTURE **ALOUD TOGETHER AS A FAMILY**. THEN DISCUSS  
COMPASSION, ELOQUENCE, AND DISCERNMENT DURING THREE FAMILY DINNERS.*

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(A separate form must be completed for each USLR student)*

When did you and your family finish the book? \_\_\_\_\_

On what dates did you have your dinner discussions?

Dinner Discussion 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner Discussion 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner Discussion 3: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1:** Read *Treasure Island* in its entirety **out loud as a family**. All aspects of this assignment are vital and required. We suggest you finish by late July.

**Part 2:** On three evenings after you've finished the novel, sit down as a family and discuss the following questions over dinner, jotting down your favorite quotes from those discussions in the blanks below.

**Dinner Discussion 1: Compassion**

Compassion is "Knowing the value of all people; cultivating a just and flourishing community."  
Did Jim's adventures give him a greater sense of compassion? Which aspects? What about his adventures can teach us compassion?

What is your favorite example of compassion from the text:

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What was your favorite quote from this discussion?

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Who said it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Dinner Discussion 2: Eloquence**

Eloquence is “Speaking the truth beautifully and convincingly.” Were there characters in *Treasure Island* who could speak with both of these qualities? Were there characters who could speak with only one? Or none? Did eloquence make any of these characters good or bad?

Who is the most eloquent in the text and why?

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What was your favorite quote from this discussion?

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Who said it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Dinner Discussion 3: Discernment**

Discernment is “Distinguishing the bad from the good and the good from the best.” Were there any moments when Jim was unable to do this? Were there any when he was able to? What made the difference?

What is the best example of discernment from the text?

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What was your favorite quote from this discussion?

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Who said it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** I certify that my family read *Treasure Island* out loud in its entirety and held these discussions according to instructions.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

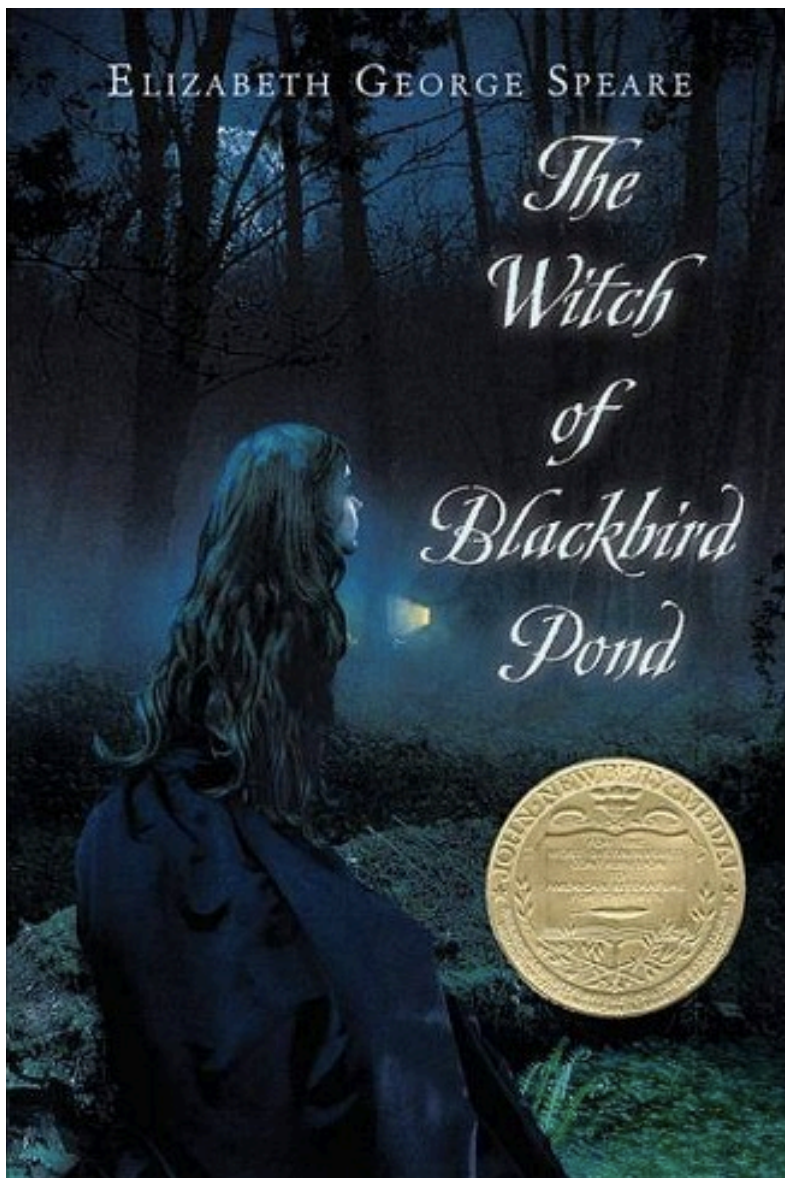
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Summer Reading for Mrs. Russell's In-Coming 7th Graders

# The Witch of Blackbird Pond

by Elizabeth George Speare

ISBN-13: 978-0547550299



*Travel back in time to Puritan New England in this Newbery Medal-winning historical fiction story of a young girl from Barbados arriving in America and trying to find her place.*

## One-pager:

*Use my guide to create a neat and colorful mini-poster about this book.*

*Grading will be based on:*

- *Understanding of the book*
- *Required elements*
- *Thoroughness*
- *Neatness*
- *Use of color*

*These mini-posters will be displayed in the hallways, so make them beautiful!*

*I will collect the posters during the first week of school.*

♥ Mrs. Russell

Character Names with brief descriptions (mini sketches - optional) around this border

Cultural Differences between Barbados and the Colony of Connecticut

Making Connections (choose one):

- this book to yourself
- this book to another book
- this book to modern life

Sketch a scene from this book. Add the Title & Author of the book.

Write out your favorite quote from the book. Use quotation marks and include the page number. Add a symbolic vignette (little drawing) to go with the quote.

Write about or illustrate a relationship from the book.

Quote vivid language (simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, etc) from the book, with page number.

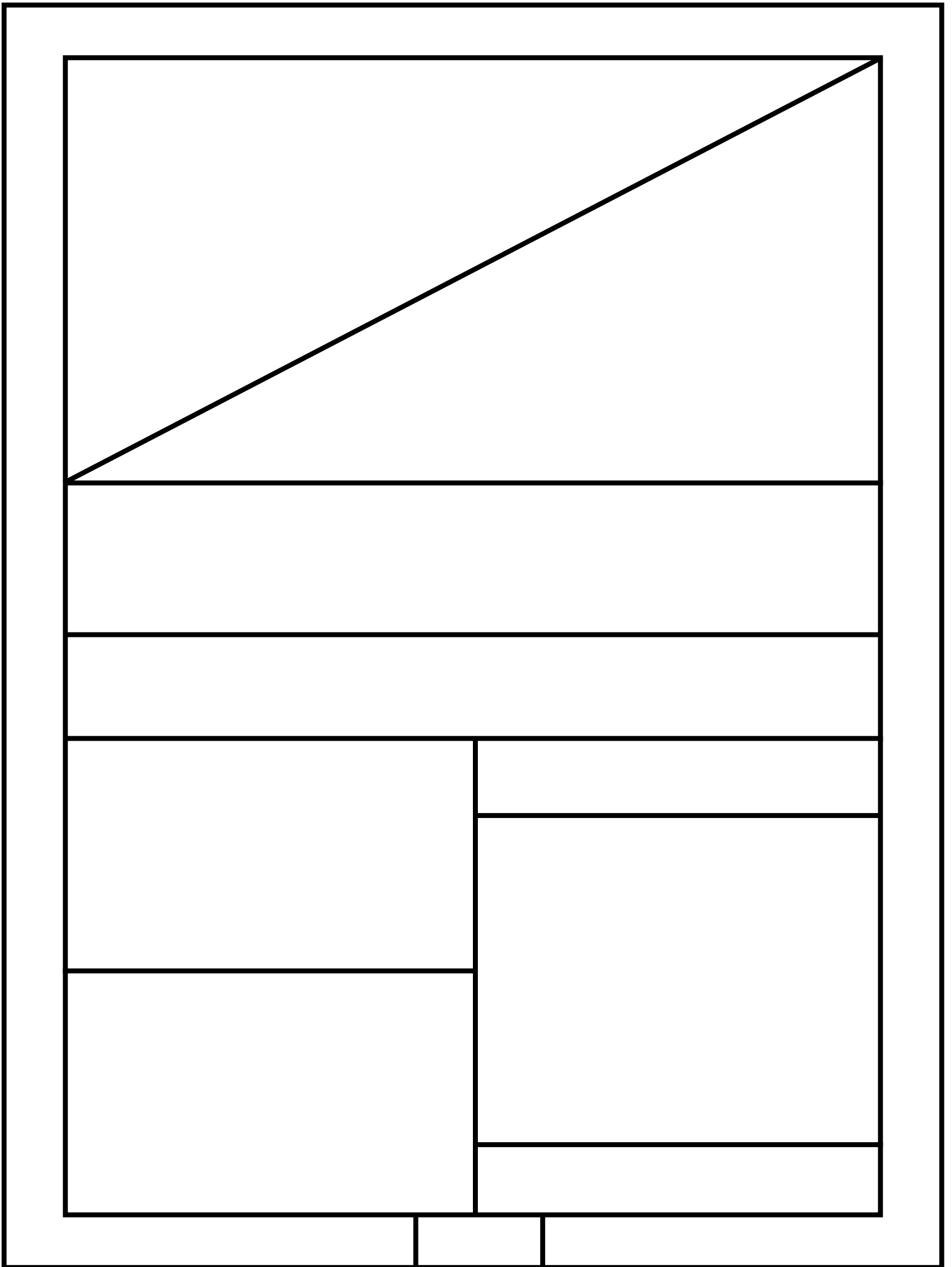
What is a lesson the reader could learn from reading this book?

Free choice!



Quote vivid language (simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, etc) from the book, with page number.

Your Name





Kit Tyler: From Barbados • carefree  
Main character • orphan



Judith: Kit's cousin, impulsive, flirtatious

Warmth  
Respect for Kit  
Freedom  
Laughter  
Colors  
welcoming

black + white  
Judgement  
Mistrust  
harsh bland

COLONY OF CONNECTICUT  
cold  
Rules

BARBADOS



This book reminds me of Jane Austen's book, Northanger Abbey where a young country girl ends up living with relatives who are social elites, in a mansion. She has to get used to a whole new way of life.



Mercy: Kit's cousin • Kind  
• warm hearted • crippled

# The Witch of Blackbird Pond

By: Elizabeth George Speare



candle-making

"From that first moment, in a way she could never explain, the Meadows claimed her and made her their own." p. 76



"The fields stretched like a carpet of jewels, emerald and topaz and garnet." p. 147

**This is an unfinished sample**  
...to give you an idea of what I'm looking for.

"Mercy's laugh was a ripple of silver." p. 39

Mrs. Russell