

# 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9th Grade Summer Reading: Visit to a Ruin

Read George MacDonald's *Fairy Tales*, Visit a Ruin, Write Your Own Myth

**Part 1:** Read **George MacDonald's *Fairy Tales*** in its entirety. We suggest you finish by mid-July.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What ruin did you visit? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the date of your journey? \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2:** Visit a ruin. It could be an ancient ruin like a castle or a temple, a modern ruin like an old factory or the foundation of an old cabin, or some other kind of ruin—you decide. Choose a place that you would be allowed to visit that isn't dangerous. As you visit, record some observations about the ruin by answering the questions below. **Do this in sentence form.** Add extra paper if necessary.

Where was the ruin located? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the weather like when you visited this place? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did this ruin used to be? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you imagine daily life was like here before this place became a ruin?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What ideas, objects, or activities do you think the people who used to live or work in this ruin cared about, and how do you know?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What new denizens have taken over this ruin now? Record any you see below:

Plants: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Animals: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of hero might have spent time in this place? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part 3:** Take the inspiration you gained above and write your own myth about a hero who used to dwell in your ruin, using the ruin you visited as inspiration. Let your imagination run wild! Just make sure it's legible, sensible, and in paragraph form. Start your myth below in your own handwriting and add other handwritten or typed pages.

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**Parent Signature:** I certify that my student read MacDonald's *Fairy Tales* in its entirety and completed this assignment according to instructions.

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