



ST. MARYS CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Each year all SMCMS have a school-wide summer reading and math program. Middle school students will be reading a novel over the summer and then will complete a guided reading assignment and activity sheet as part of their reading. Each grade will have the choice of three selections that align to topics covered in social studies:

Please note: The BL represents book level, the level of the vocabulary in the book. 3.9 would represent third grade, ninth month. However, the BL number does not measure the complexity of the concepts that are contained in the book. Based on concepts contained in the novels, they are all recommended for middle level students.

Incoming 6th Graders:

“Courage of Sarah Noble” by Alice Dalgliesh	BL: 3.9
“Molly Pitcher: Young Patriot” by Augusta Stevenson	BL: 3.4
“The Fighting Ground” by Avi	BL: 4.2

Incoming 7th Graders:

“Sarny, A Life Remembered” by Gary Paulsen	BL: 5.7
“Soldier’s Heart” by Gary Paulsen	BL: 5.7
“A Light in the Storm” by Karen Hesse	BL: 5.3

Incoming 8th Graders:

“Number the Stars” by Lois Lowry	BL 4.5
“The Devil’s Arithmetic” by Jane Yolen	BL 4.6
“Boy in the Striped Pajamas” by John Boyne	BL 5.8

For the book that the student selects, they will receive the accompanying directed reading/activities sheet. The sheet must be completed and returned to school in August. During the school year, the books and activities sheet will be discussed as part of the Social Studies curriculum.



Soldier's Heart

Answer the following questions in sentence form.

Chapter 1

1. How old is Charley?

2. Where does Charley live?
3. Where did Charley go to sign up for the war?
4. Who was in Charley's family?
5. What happened to Charley's dad?

Chapter 2

1. What did Charley get for a uniform?
2. What is a minie ball?
3. Describe what Charley's training was like.

4. Look at the map in the front of the book. Charley traveled from Winona, to Fort Snelling, then St. Paul, to LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and finally he headed east. What three methods of transportation did Charley use?

Chapter 3

1. What was special about the train ride across the country?
2. Why did Charley wonder if the slaves would be free after the war?
3. What might happen to a soldier who is hit with a bullet with dirty clothes on?
4. How does Charley compare the dirty clothes to bad language?

Chapter 4

1. What is the name of the battle that Charley fights in?
2. "Charley heard them going past his ears like horizontal hail and he decided to lie down." What literary device is used in this sentence?
3. What is Charley's reaction to the battle?

Chapter 5

1. Charley thinks he sees fireflies on the battlefield. What does he really see?
2. What are earthworks? How are they described on p.38?

Chapter 6

1. What positive things happened for the soldiers at the beginning of the chapter?
2. Who was the commander of the army?

3. Charley says the regiment "farmed" as they traveled. What does he mean?
4. On p. 50, what is the "blue line"?
5. What does Charley do for Nelson when he sees he is wounded?

Chapter 7

1. According to the story, who was able to take better care of themselves? (60)
2. Describe some of the problems in the camp.
3. Why do you suppose Charley ended up talking and trading with the Confederate soldier?

Chapter 8

1. This chapter starts with Charley having a difficult task. What does he have to do?
2. This fight is different from the others because it is the cavalry that comes at them. How do they stop it? Why is this hard for Charley?
3. What does "fix bayonets" mean?
4. Charley helps the doctor by making a windbreak. What is used to build it?

Chapter 9

1. Charley says, "It was the same and yet completely different." What is the same? And, what is different? (90-91)
2. What was Charley's advantage in this battle?

Chapter 10

1. How many years have passed? About how old is Charley?
2. What makes Charley old?
3. On p. 98 it says, "So many of the men he knew were there already, gone across..." What does this mean?
4. How did Charley get his revolver?
5. Do you think Charley is thinking about killing himself? Do you think he will do it?

Did you like this book? Why or why not?

Would you recommend it to a friend?



Sarny

Answer the following questions in sentence form.

Chapters 1-2 (pages 1-26)

1. What does Sarny do when she is 94 years old?
2. Where do Sarny and Martin get married? Why do they use this place?
3. Why does Sarny choose Tyler and Delie as names for her children?
4. What happens to Sarny's children?

Chapters 3-5 (pages 27-54)

1. Describe the freed slaves whom Sarny and Lucy pass on the road.
2. How does Lucy save Sarny?

3. What does the old black man say won't last? Does Sarny agree with him?

Chapters 6-8 (pages 55-76)

1. Why does Sarny go inside Sunacres Plantation?

2. How did Nightjohn save Sarny?

3. Whom will Sarny always remember?

Chapters 9-11 (pages 77-107)

1. What does Miss Laura ask Sarny and Lucy?

2. Why doesn't Sarny want to ask questions all the time?

3. What is Miss Laura's plan to get Sarny's children back?

Chapters 12-13 (pages 111-132)

1. Why does Miss Laura get books for Sarny?

2. Why is Tyler interested in Tyler Two?

3. Why do people give Sarny a coin when they leave the party?

Chapters 14-15 (pages 133-158)

1. Why is Sarny saving her wages?
2. Why does Stanley suggest Sarny teach others to read?
3. What happens to Sarny's Riverside School?

Chapters 16-27 (pages 159-178)

1. Why are the burial vaults in New Orleans above ground?
2. Why does Sarny laugh when she sees a movie about the West?
3. What does Sarny do when she is old?

Did you like this book? Why or why not?

Would you recommend it to a friend?



A Light in the Storm

Answer the following questions in sentence form.

1. Amelia writes that she is often angry with her mother because Mrs. Martin can't seem to see the goodness and the beauty around her. What are some of the reasons for her mother's unhappiness?

2. Describe the type of clothes that Amelia and other characters in the story wear. Compare them to the styles that are worn today.

3. Amelia's parents disagree about many things. Is there one topic about which they disagree more than any other?

4. Reread Amelia's diary entry for Sunday, August 4, 1861. What was in the package sent to the editor of *The Smyrna Times* and why was it sent?

5. Why do you think the author chose to set *A Light in the Storm* in the state of Delaware?

6. Why do you think the U.S. fought the Civil War?

7. There are some things in Amelia's life that remain the same – "constants" she calls them. What are the constants in your life? What changes have you experienced?

8. Write a letter from Amelia to both her parents, trying to convince them to compromise and calmly discuss the issues of slavery and abolition.

Did you like this book? Why or why not?

Would you recommend it to a friend?

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