

# SPX Middle School Summer Reading Summer 2023

## Inspiring and Educating: How Literature Teaches Catholic Virtues

*Reading great literature well has the power to cultivate virtue. Great literature increases knowledge of and desire for the good life by showing readers what virtue looks like and where vice leads. It is not just what one reads but how one reads that cultivates virtue. Reading good literature well requires one to practice numerous virtues, such as patience, diligence, and prudence. And learning to judge wisely a character in a book, in turn, forms the reader's own character. — Karen Swallow Prior*

This summer, middle school students will complete a summer reading project helping them recognize how literature impacts the way we learn about and develop our shared Catholic virtues.

Students will read three (3) books:

Two (2) books will be books of the student's choice that are on grade level, or at their appropriate Lexile level. Books *may* be chosen from the list below or *may be completely of the student's choice*. Students may select any book as long as it is on grade level and will allow them to recognize a Theological or Cardinal virtue in the story. Please see the information below to help determine grade level or Lexile ranges for each grade level. For the two choice books, complete the attached assignment - one page for each book. This is **due the first day of school and should be turned in to your ELA teacher**.

One (1) book **must** be chosen from the list below and read at the end of the summer, close to the beginning of the school year. Students should be prepared to complete an assignment in class the first week of school on this book. Lexile levels are shown below, but students in grades 6-8 can pick any of these books regardless of grade level or Lexile.

Any of these novels may be experienced by physical book, ebook, or audiobook.

<i>The Secret Keepers</i> by Trenton Lee Stewart 820L
<i>Bluefish</i> by Pat Schmatz HL600L
<i>Death on the River of Doubt</i> by Samatha Seiple 1040L
<i>The Breadwinner</i> by Deborah Ellis 710L
<i>Song for a Whale</i> by Lynne Kelly 800L
<i>Treasure Island</i> by Robert Louis Stevenson 1070L
<i>Esperanza Rising</i> by Pam Munoz Ryan 750L
<i>The Trumpeter of Krakow</i> by Eric P. Kelly 1200L
<i>The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl</i> by Stacy McAnulty 530L
<i>The Seventh Most Important Thing</i> by Shelley Pearsall 760L
<i>Anne of Green Gables</i> by L.M. Montgomery 590L

<i>The Night Gardener</i> by Jonathan Auxier 690L
<i>Return To Sender</i> by Julia Alvarez 890L
<i>The Hired Girl</i> by Laura Amy Schlitz 810L
<i>Unlawful Orders: A Portrait of Dr. James B. Williams, Tuskegee Airman, Surgeon and Activist</i> by Barbara Binns 1090L

### Grade Level/Lexile Information

Lexile is a handy tool to help determine the complexity of a novel. Generally, Lexile measures how many and how often difficult words are repeated in a text. Many Amazon book information pages include the Lexile number. Simply scroll down until you find the Product Details part of the page. You will see a grade level and/or Lexile score for the book.

You can also visit Lexile.com to search for a book and find its Lexile score:

<https://hub.lexile.com/find-a-book/search>

General ranges for each grade level are:

Grade	Lexile Range
6th Grade	725-1150
7th Grade	770-1200
8th Grade	810-1250

Use this **Glossary** to help you answer the questions for each book. Virtue definitions taken from Education in Virtue materials.

<p><b>Theological Virtues</b> are “supernatural gifts infused by God which dispose one to live in relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” They are Faith, Hope, and Charity.</p>
<p><b>Cardinal Virtues</b> are “pivotal habits of right thinking, ordering of the passions, and moral conduct which aim to perfect human living.” They are Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. Prudence means good judgment; justice means fairness; fortitude means courage; and temperance means self-control.</p>
<p><b>Theme</b> is the universal idea or message explored in a work of literature. Examples of theme include war, love, revenge, friendship, redemption, forgiveness, etc.</p>
<p><b>Characterization</b> is the way an author introduces, describes, and develops a character in a work of fiction.</p>
<p><b>Imagery</b> is the way an author “paints a picture” in the reader’s mind. Using descriptive language and triggering the senses allows the author to put the reader in the scene or mind of a character.</p>
<p><b>Personification</b> is using human traits to describe non-human things. Author’s use this literary device to help illustrate human behavior and emotions.</p>

SPX Middle School Summer Reading  
Summer 2023  
**Literature and Catholic Virtues**

Complete the following form for **each choice book**. This is due on the first day of school. Please write legibly, in complete sentences with correct spelling and grammar. You may type your responses and paste them below.

Name and Author of **Book 1**: \_\_\_\_\_

This book portrayed the virtue of \_\_\_\_\_.

Explain how this book presents this virtue. Give details from the text to support your opinion.

Choose one literary device (theme, characterization, imagery, personification) and describe how the author uses it to illustrate the virtue for their reader.

SPX Middle School Summer Reading  
Summer 2023  
**Literature and Catholic Virtues**

Complete the following form for **each choice book**. This is due on the first day of school. Please write legibly, in complete sentences with correct spelling and grammar. You may type your responses and paste them below.

Name and Author of **Book 2**: \_\_\_\_\_

This book portrayed the virtue of \_\_\_\_\_.

Explain how this book presents this virtue. Give details from the text to support your opinion.

Choose one literary device (theme, characterization, imagery, personification) and describe how the author uses it to illustrate the virtue for their reader.