

SEAS Summer Reading 2026

Reading is one of the few summer activities that helps students maintain—and even strengthen—the academic skills they worked so hard to build during the school year. Just 20–30 minutes of reading each day can expand vocabulary, improve comprehension, strengthen critical thinking, and develop empathy by allowing students to experience the world through different perspectives. Few activities offer so many benefits at once, supporting both academic growth and character development while providing the enjoyment of a great story.

The purpose of a summer reading requirement is to provide a shared reading experience for our entire school community. While we hope students enjoy many books throughout the summer, this selected title gives all students a common point of connection as we begin the school year. It will help introduce themes and ideas that connect to our school's focus for the coming year. Additionally, it will act as a first assignment and a chance to "get ahead" in reading requirements in the fall.

This summer's required all-school read is *The Boys in the Boat* (Young Readers Adaptation) by Daniel James Brown. (Note...please make sure you order or read the Young Readers Adaptation) Here is a link to it on Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Boys-Boat-Young-Readers-Adaptation/dp/0147516854/ref=sr_1_1?crid=278IXKNZZIRKA&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.gK_HAQW7EEExk_uy2pTmbQht4ZWAy85XjP0pM8NYC6-Nt88u6q4ucKxAK53x-yKTMV21Uh1kYIiUI48LuB551SBL6CvuBDePJgBEqaz2sxS4jyoFPspNmJEsZY_t53Q9P4EVCoU4OpSDE8zaW5iNWBj9mEuuDhI7vIYd9V6Z9ukCKNXem4wLI1qyHTS1giS-d4x4zo8Edk_wdddepLRm3KmWW2xDE8QqTasf2CIn_M5w.oxY42gcccLO-Hl6f8UODK8_S6SrRIfNPEotuYEzjLU&dib_tag=se&keywords=boys+in+the+boat+young+readers+edition&qid=1784040534&sprefix=Boys+in+the+boat+%2Caps%2C192&sr=8-1

The Boys in the Boat highlights many of the virtues we strive to cultivate through a Catholic education: perseverance, humility, teamwork, sacrifice, courage, and respect for others. The story offers meaningful lessons about belonging, leadership, and community. Based on the true story of Joe Rantz's journey from abandonment and hardship to Olympic success, the book presents positive examples of resilience, responsibility, loyalty, and integrity.

As a work of narrative/historical nonfiction, *The Boys in the Boat* brings history to life without feeling like a textbook. Students may benefit from having a basic understanding of the Great Depression, the rise of Nazi Germany, and the significance of the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Familiarity with the culture and events of the time period will help deepen their appreciation of the story.

This book provides an excellent opportunity for family involvement. Consider reading the book alongside your child, discussing its major themes and life lessons, and then celebrating the experience with a family movie night to discuss similarities and differences between the two.

Suggested Reading Guide: **Because we will discuss this in September, it may be helpful to wait to begin this book until August.*

Before Reading:

Briefly explore life in America during the 1930s. What challenges did families face during the Great Depression? What were the Olympic sports at this time?

A Few Chapters In (could be applicable after each of several chapters):

Joe Rantz experiences significant hardship before joining the rowing team. How do his early experiences shape his character? In what ways can childhood experiences influence a person's future?

Halfway Through:

Coach Al Ulbrickson and boatbuilder George Pocock mentor the rowers in different ways. Which lessons from these men seem most important to Joe and the team?

After Finishing the Book:

What does the team's Olympic victory represent beyond winning a race? What message do you think the author hopes readers will remember long after finishing the book?

Movie Night:

Discuss the similarities and differences between the book and the movie. Which version did you prefer, and why?

*When students return to school, they will respond to a writing prompt in their English Language Arts class based specifically on the book. They will also have the opportunity to complete their first month's Accelerated Reading requirement by taking the online reading comprehension quiz.

In a world filled with countless distractions competing for our children's attention, we thank you for partnering with us in fostering a lifelong love of reading, a gift that will continue to benefit them long after summer ends. We hope you enjoy this summer's book selection!