



“Creating an Educated Community
To Serve Christ and One Another
With Integrity and Respect”

Dear Rising 8th graders,

The following are opportunities for summer exploration. The items below ARE NOT required. Social studies ideas ARE NOT extra credit assignments. Science ideas ARE extra credit assignments.

History (this IS NOT for extra credit)

Reading

There is not required reading, per se, for History. I recommend that you do some nonfiction reading this summer that broadens you knowledge about something! Also, you should start following the news or increase the sophistication with which you do follow it.

- If your family gets a newspaper, look at it every day. Find a general topic and start following it on a regular basis. The economy. China. The Arts. Science discoveries. Sports (not just scores, but commentary on sports and society). With time, you will start to understand what you are reading! And you will start to know something.
- TV news shows. Be sure not to limit yourself to partisan cable news (FOX, MSNBC). Try a variety or stick to PBS News Hour and network news.
- News websites. I do not follow any regularly, so I do not have a recommendation, but give it a try.

One of the great challenges you will face in being an educated citizen for democracy is choosing your information sources. You will need to start understanding what people mean when they use terms like “liberal,” “conservative,” “partisan,” “left-leaning,” “far right,” etc. in dismissing and/or choosing their news sources. (And, if you figure it out, explain it to me!) Dig in!

Movies

Many great movies can expose you to historical context or significant people in history. Do some searching and find a few that interest you. If you would like some recommendation, be in touch via school email. I can recommend 40 or 50!

Have a great summer.





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Science (this IS for extra credit)

Option 1 – Science in the Summer

Visit a science or discovery museum, a nature center, a National Park, or an outdoor museum such as a botanical garden or zoo. Spend some time investigating the exhibits and/or speaking with the park ranger or docent. Write a one-page report and include:

- Your name, “8th Grade Optional Summer Science Work,” name of museum or park visited, and date of visit;
- Two well-written paragraphs describing what you saw and something new you learned (as it relates to science and your observations); and
- A list of ten things you (1) wondered about and/or (2) found most fascinating.

Drawings or photos always welcome in addition to what you write!

Option 2 – Reading and Writing about Real Scientists

Read a biography or autobiography about a scientist or inventor. Write a five-paragraph essay that includes:

- Your name, “8th Grade Optional Summer Science Work”, name of scientist;
- Introductory paragraph including when and where the scientist lived and why he/she is significant (why there are books about him/her);
- One paragraph that summarizes highlights from his/her life, including scientific work and achievements;
- One paragraph describing any particular challenges the scientist faced (personally or in the work);
- One paragraph about how his/her life is similar to and/or different from your own;
- A closing paragraph that tells what you found most interesting about that scientist; and
- Bibliographic citation: title, author, publisher, and publishing date of book.

Summer Science work should be turned in to your science teacher on the first day of science class.

Option 1: You will receive extra credit toward your first trimester science grade.

Option 2: You will receive extra credit toward your first trimester science grade

