



May 2025

Dear Incoming 8th Grade Student,

With your summer vacation right around the corner, I know you are looking forward to having some time to rest, read a few good books, and enjoy the lovely weather.

For this summer, you will read **two books** and complete **journaling assignments** for **each book**. Please take note that you **must read** the **Required Reading** book, but for **your second book**, you do have a **choice** of selected options as listed below.

Book #1: Required Reading

Farewell to Manzanar Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston

ISBN-13: 978-1328742117

Book #2: Reader's Choice (choose one)

Chains Laurie Halse Anderson

ISBN-13: 978-1416905868

Dragon's Gate Laurence Yep

ISBN-13: 978-0064404891

Summer Reading Journal (SRJ) Assignment

For **both** books, you will complete a **Summer Reading Journal** by writing your response and analysis as you read. Your Reading Journal should include at least **10 entries per book** and **should reflect having read the entire story** - journal entries should incorporate quotes from the **story's beginning, middle and end**.

Directions:

1. First, use Google Docs or Microsoft Word to create a graphic organizer like the example shown on the back side of this letter. Label the left-hand column "Quote" and the right-hand "My Response". Include a proper heading in the upper right corner by listing **your first and last names, date and class with your grade level**.
2. Next, as you read, choose quotes or passages - Concrete Details (**CDs**) - that are meaningful to you. Then write your quotes or passages (**CDs**) in the left-hand column of the graphic organizer. Remember to always include the **page numbers**. Or, if you are reading a digital version, record the chapter numbers.
3. Finally, in the right column, write your Commentary (**CMs**), **3-4 complete sentences** responding and connecting to your quote or passage using one of the following **Journaling Codes**. Keep in mind that your Commentary focuses on your opinion, interpretation, insight, analysis, personal response, feelings, evaluation, reflection or thoughts. Remember; do not just summarize your quote. Look into the **deeper meaning**.
4. Additionally, all entries must reflect **Academic Writing** expectations including complete sentences, 3rd person point of view, **correct capitalization, grammar and spelling**,

sentence variation, transitional words/phrases and sophisticated vocabulary. Refer to the **sample responses** provided for you.

Journaling Codes

- (CH) Characterization – Analyze details or dialog the author gives you to build his/her characters.
- (C) Connect – Make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
- (P) Predict – Anticipate what will occur based on the passage
- (L) Literary Device – analyze the author’s craft using literary terminology
- (R) Reflect – Think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, about God, or just the way things work?
- (T) Theme - Determine the author’s overall message about some aspect of life through a close reading of a passage.
- (M) Mood – Determine the mood or tone of a scene and explain how that might be important.
- (BW) Biblical Worldview - Identify a passage that offers insight into the worldview of a character or the author

Sample Reading Journal Entries from *Little Women* Louisa May Alcott

Quote with p. #	My Response with Journaling Code
<p>“A second look showed her that the living eyes, under the bushy gray eyebrows, were kinder....and there was a sly twinkle in them.” (50)</p>	<p>(CH) In this quote, Alcott shows that all the earlier perceptions of Mr. Laurence were wrong. They thought him to be a grouch who kept his grandson shut up in the house all day, but when Jo actually met him he was a very nice and welcoming man.</p>
<p>“For love casts out fear, and gratitude can conquer pride.” (61)</p>	<p>(T) Alcott was trying to show the lesson of this whole ordeal with Beth being afraid of Mr. Laurence. She is showing that when two people are kind and loving to each other, they can break any barriers between them.</p>

Remember that the use of Chat GPT, SparkNotes or any online summary or resource as a replacement for reading the full text is considered cheating. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to read and enjoy these wonderful novels!

Please bring your **printed Summer Reading Journals (SRJs)** and **both summer reading books** with you on the **first day** of school. You will be completing activities in class about these books to kick off the year.

If you have questions, please contact me at kbehrens@fremontchristian.com. Enjoy your summer vacation!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Behrens". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and legible.

Mrs. Karen Behrens
Director of Curriculum & Instruction