

Greetings Rising Eighth Graders!

Our summer literature includes themes which correspond with the ideas and conflicts of the twentieth century which we will be studying in Humanities this year. The Lord of the Rings series by J.R.R. Tolkien is an epic battle of survival between the free races and those in bondage to a tyrant.

Your summer assignment is to read books I and II. Often this is found in a single volume called, *The Fellowship of the Ring*. I recommend the following version:

Series: The Lord of the Rings (Book 1)

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Mariner Books; Reissue edition (September 18, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0547928211

ISBN-13: 978-0547928210

Start early! While the story is awesome it is lengthy! You'll need plenty of time to digest it. For students who struggle with reading proficiency and comprehension I highly recommend getting an audio version of the book so that they can listen and follow along in their copy of the text. My favorite source for audio books is Audible.com. You can get a 30-day trial membership for free! If you need it for longer than that, I think the cost is somewhere around \$15/month. Remember, the audio book should NOT replace the text! Students will need a print copy of the text to complete the accompanying written assignment (see below); they will also need to bring their copy of the book to class during the first few weeks of school.

Read thoroughly! Be on the lookout for actions and dialogue that demonstrate the following virtues: **fortitude, temperance, justice, prudence, faith, hope, love, compassion and humility**. Use a highlighter and be sure to mark those passages -

Once you have completed the reading, plan and write an essay according to the instructions below:

8th Grade English - Summer Reading Essay Assignment

One of the greatest of all moral teachers was Aristotle. He was a Greek philosopher during the 300's B.C. who had a major impact on history, science, and theology for hundreds of years. Aristotle, one of the most intelligent people who ever lived, thought a great deal about virtues. He came up with a list of what we now call the "four cardinal virtues": **fortitude, temperance, justice, and prudence**. The word *cardinal* comes from the Latin word meaning "the hinge of a door." All of these pivotal virtues "open the door" to moral strength. The Christian thinkers have added to this list: **faith, hope, and love** which are referred to as the "theological virtues." We will also add two more: **compassion and humility**.

Defining the Virtues:

1. *Fortitude*: Moral courage, the strength to persevere and do the right thing in the face of adversity or challenge.
2. *Temperance*: Self-discipline, ability to control appetites and passions, to say no to excesses, to live in moderation.
3. *Justice*: Virtue that enables us to treat one another fairly--rendering to others what we owe them and treating others without unfair presence.
4. *Prudence*: Taking care with the decisions one makes.
5. *Faith*: Realizing our need for something beyond us, the understanding that we cannot function on our own strength--trusting God with our well-being when we cannot foresee circumstances.
6. *Hope*: Looking beyond the circumstances to see the hand of God working through every situation for our good, not for our harm.
7. *Love*: The greatest of all virtues, the ability to act toward others with sacrificial disregard for ourselves.
8. *Humility*: Seeing ourselves as we truly are; being realistic about our true condition.
9. *Compassion*: To feel with others, learning to put ourselves in the place of others.

Your assignment is to write a 5 paragraph essay. Choose one of the nine virtues above and explain three ways that this virtue is seen in the novel, *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Follow the basic 5-paragraph essay model which includes an introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. Use SPECIFIC examples from the book including appropriate quotes and citations. The paper may be typed using Times New Roman font, size 12 and double-spaced or handwritten in cursive, also double-spaced.