



*Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School*  
The 2026 Summer Reading Program

- Bishop McGuinness values the transformational growth that takes place when teachers and students experience the joy of learning together. A collaborative academic culture nurtures intellectual courage, curiosity, and creativity.
- Bishop McGuinness values relationships that connect members of the school community to each other and to the larger world. BMHS aspires to be a nurturing community that respects the dignity of every human being.
- Bishop McGuinness is an academically talented and diverse community that prepares students for college and active citizenship in a global society.

Incoming freshmen and all other new students receive the summer reading assignment at New Villain Night on **Thursday, May 14**. Returning students will receive the summer reading assignment in class on **Friday, May 15**.

This year's summer reading theme is **Around the Summer in 80 Days**. Students will choose books from the pre-selected list of nonfiction and fictional stories that detail journeys that are physical, moral, and/or spiritual in nature. Book summaries are included in this document. Additionally, students will keep a written *summerlogue*. Written requirements are also detailed in this document. It is our hope that we have created an opportunity for students to continue reading and reflect on their own vast experiences as they move through their summer days.

**Parents should help students select a book or books they consider appropriate. Parental involvement assures us that the book's theme and content are suitable and respect a family's values and interests.**

\*All book descriptions come from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).\*

### **9th Grade English Students**

ALL 9th grade students will read *All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot.

### **Honors English II and English II**

**Honors English II** students will choose **ONE** book from the list provided, as well as **ONE** book of their own choosing.

**English II** students will choose **one** book from the list provided.

### **AP English Language and Composition, Honors English III, and English III**

**AP English Language and Composition** will choose **two** books from the list provided. One book **MUST** be a female author, while the other book **MUST** be a male author. Students will also complete any assigned reading and writing assignments detailed on a separate AP Language assignment sheet.

**Honors English III** will choose **ONE** book from the list provided, as well as **ONE** book of their own choosing.

**English III** will choose **one** book from the list provided.

### **AP English Literature and Composition, Honors English IV, and English IV**

**AP English Literature and Composition** will read **TWO books** from the list provided. One must be *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen. The second book is your choice from the list provided. Students will also complete assigned writing assignments detailed on a separate AP Literature assignment sheet.

**Honors English IV** will choose **ONE** book from the list provided, as well as **ONE** book of their own choosing.

**English IV** will choose **one** book from the list provided.

**All students must choose from the following list of journey stories:**

***All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot**

In *All Creatures Great and Small*, we meet the young Herriot as he takes up his calling and discovers that the realities of veterinary practice in rural Yorkshire are very different from the sterile setting of veterinary school. Some visits are heart-wrenchingly difficult, such as one to an old man in the village whose very ill dog is his only friend and companion, some are lighthearted and fun, such as Herriot's periodic visits to the overfed and pampered Pekinese Tricky Woo who throws parties and has his own stationery, and yet others are inspirational and enlightening, such as Herriot's recollections of poor farmers who will scrape their meager earnings together to be able to get proper care for their working animals. From seeing his patients in the depths of winter on the remotest homesteads to dealing with uncooperative owners and critically ill animals, Herriot discovers the wondrous variety and never-ending challenges of veterinary practice as his humor, compassion, and love of the animal world shine forth.

***Around the World in 80 Days* by Jules Verne**

Fogg, a man of meticulous routines and unyielding punctuality, wagers half of his fortune on this audacious journey. Accompanied by his loyal servant Passepartout, Fogg encounters a series of exhilarating challenges, from navigating the Indian jungles to crossing the vast American plains. As the clock ticks away, the duo faces unexpected obstacles, a persistent detective hot on their trail, and the ever-present uncertainty of 19th-century transportation.

Verne's narrative is a celebration of human ingenuity and the spirit of exploration. His vivid descriptions transport readers to bustling markets, exotic landscapes, and the sheer thrill of a high-stakes adventure. "Around the World in 80 Days" is more than a mere travelogue; it's a testament to the indomitable human spirit and the boundless possibilities that come with embracing the unknown.

***Around the World in 80 Trains: A 45,000-mile Adventure* by Monisha Rajesh**

From the cloud-skimming heights of Tibet's Qinghai railway to silk-sheeted splendour on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express, *Around the World in 80 Trains* is a celebration of the glory of train travel and a witty and irreverent look at the world. Packing up her rucksack – and her fiancé, Jem – Monisha Rajesh embarks on an unforgettable adventure that takes her from London's St Pancras station to the vast expanses of Russia and Mongolia, North Korea, Canada, Kazakhstan, and beyond. The journey is one of constant movement and mayhem, as the pair

strike up friendships and swap stories with the hilarious, irksome and ultimately endearing travellers they meet on board, all while taking in some of the earth's most breathtaking views.

***Girl Meets God: On the Path to a Spiritual Life* by Lauren Winner**

The child of a Jewish father and a lapsed Southern Baptist mother, Lauren F. Winner chose to become an Orthodox Jew. But even as she was observing Sabbath rituals and studying Jewish law, Lauren was increasingly drawn to Christianity. Courageously leaving what she loved, she eventually converted. In *Girl Meets God*, this appealing woman takes us through a year in her Christian life as she attempts to reconcile both sides of her religious identity. Here readers will find a new literary voice: a spiritual seeker who is both an unconventional thinker and a devoted Christian. The twists and turns of Winner's journey make her the perfect guide to exploring true faith in today's complicated world.

***Peak: A Thrilling Expedition about Climbing Everest and Risking Everything* by Roland Smith**

After Peak Marcello is arrested for scaling a New York City skyscraper, he's left with two choices: wither away in juvenile detention or go live with his long-lost father, who runs an overseas climbing company. But Peak quickly learns that his father's renewed interest in him has strings attached. Big strings. As owner of Peak Expeditions, he wants his son to be the youngest person to reach the Everest summit—and his motives are selfish at best. Even so, for a climbing addict like Peak, tackling Everest is the challenge of a lifetime. It's also one that could cost him his life.

***The Ride of Her Life; The True Story of a Woman, Her Horse, and Their Last Chance Journey Across America* by Elizabeth Letts**

In 1954, sixty-three-year-old Maine farmer Annie Wilkins embarked on an impossible journey. She had no money and no family, she had just lost her farm, and her doctor had given her only two years to live. But Annie wanted to see the Pacific Ocean before she died. She ignored her doctor's advice to move into the county charity home. Instead, she bought a cast-off brown gelding named Tarzan, donned men's dungarees, and headed south in mid-November, hoping to beat the snow. Annie had little idea what to expect beyond her rural crossroads; she didn't even have a map. But she did have her ex-racehorse, her faithful mutt, and her own unfailing belief that Americans would treat a stranger with kindness.

### ***Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen**

Jane Austen's first published novel (1811), following the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne, as they navigate love, heartbreak, and societal expectations after their father's death forces them to move to a modest cottage. The story contrasts Elinor's rational "sense" with Marianne's passionate "sensibility," exploring their romantic pursuits with characters like Edward Ferrars, Colonel Brandon, and Mr. Willoughby, ultimately teaching that true happiness requires a balance of both reason and emotion.

### ***The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells**

When a Victorian scientist propels himself into the year a.d. 802,701, he is initially delighted to find that suffering has been replaced by beauty, contentment, and peace. Entranced at first by the Eloi, an elfin species descended from man, he soon realizes that these beautiful people are simply remnants of a once-great culture—now weak and childishly afraid of the dark. They have every reason to be afraid: in deep tunnels beneath their paradise lurks another race descended from humanity—the sinister Morlocks. And when the scientist's time machine vanishes, it becomes clear he must search these tunnels if he is ever to return to his own era.

## Summerlogue Requirements for ALL Students

- Summerlogues must be kept in a composition book, spiral notebook, or binder.
- Students with typing accommodations may type entries.
  - Entries should be in ONE document.
- All entries must be clearly labeled with the date they were written, as well as the entry category.
- Entry categories include:
  - Experiences
    - Work
    - Service
    - Family
    - Spiritual/Prayer/Meditation
    - Friends
    - Fun
- 3 entries per category (18 entries total)
- Minimum 10 lines per entry
- Complete sentences (no bullet points)
- “I” is acceptable as this is their personal experience
- Illustrations/photos in addition to written entries are encouraged and appreciated, but NOT required!
- Summerlogues will be turned into English teachers on the first day of school (August 18)

### Note for Freshmen:

Hi, wonderful incoming freshmen! Since personal writing might feel awkward or new, here's a bit of additional help. Structure your entries this way, please:

1. Describe the moment or event that prompted the entry. Be as clear and creative as you can: this is a wonderful place to talk about what you see, hear, touch, smell, taste, or feel. We (your teachers) want to imagine the moment with you.
2. Talk about why this moment is worth writing about. What does it make you think, feel, learn, or remember? We would love to see your mind and heart at work!
3. Does this moment connect to anything you've read in *All Creatures Great and Small*, or to any other book you are reading? Not every moment will, and that's ok. If something strikes you as you read, we would love to hear about it.