

June 14, 2016

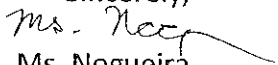
Dear Parents and Guardians,

Summer is often a time for students to let loose and take a break from the busy and demanding school year schedule. They have worked hard and deserve a break. However, we do not want them to lose the reading and writing skills they worked so hard to attain.

For that purpose, I am requesting that each incoming fourth grader completes the attached Summer Reading Assignment. Students have been given a copy of Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo. This story is written from the point of view of a ten year old girl named Opal who is new to town and quite lonely. She goes off to the store with a grocery list and comes back with a dog that changes her life forever. This book allows students to look deeply at the themes of friendship, acceptance, and understanding. As we delve into our curriculum next year this book will be a focal point which we use to launch new topics and ideas. Once the book is completed, your child is required to write a three paragraph letter to me, their fourth grade ELA teacher. This packet includes the information that is required for each paragraph. It also includes a graphic organizer your child may use to help them plan their writing and to remind them of the five key parts of a letter.

If you have any questions regarding this assignment please contact me at any point at rnogueira@swanseaschools.org.

Thank you for your cooperation and support. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Ms. Nogueira

Summer Reading Assignment Friendly Letter

Student Directions:

Read your copy of Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo. Then write a letter to me, Ms. Nogueira, telling me about the book using the format below. Your letter may be hand written or typed on a computer. Please use the attached friendly letter organizer to help plan what you are going to write.

1st Paragraph - Tell your teacher about the book you just finished reading. This paragraph should include the title and author of the book.

You may write a summary of this book or base this paragraph on one of the following leads:

- I think the author wrote this book to...
- One theme in this book is...
- I wish the author would have...
- My favorite part of the book was...
- Something I learned from this book was...

2nd Paragraph - Tell your teacher about how you connected with the book. You may use one of the following leads to help you get started.

- This book reminds me of another book I read.
- If I was (character's name), I would...
- I am like or different from (character)...
- I felt like the character when...

3rd Paragraph – Tell your teacher about who you are as a reader. How do you feel about reading? What type of books interest you?

Heading

Date: _____

Greeting

Dear Ms. Nogueira,

BODY

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Friendly Letter
Graphic Organizer

Please do not hand this in as your letter.

Closing

From/Sincerely,

Signature



We Talk With Kate DiCamillo About the Importance of Summer Reading

by Elizabeth Mulvahill

Beloved, award-winning children's author Kate DiCamillo has been named the 2016 National Summer Reading Champion by the Collaborative Summer Reading Program. Recently we were privileged to have the opportunity to sit down with her and ask her a few questions about her experience with, and advice about, summer reading.

WeAreTeachers: How do you ignite a passion for reading in children?

Ms. DiCamillo: Reading aloud to children is one way kids fall love with books and stories. Another way, I think, is by conveying to kids that reading is a joy, a pleasure, a privilege.

WeAreTeachers: Do you think some people are just wired to be readers?

Ms. DiCamillo: I do. But at the same time, I think humans are story animals. I think it is how we make sense out of the world. We need story.

WeAreTeachers: Do you think extrinsic rewards help kids become readers?

Ms. DiCamillo: I think the story itself can be the reward. But I do think that for the reluctant reader, prizes can help. I was a kid who loved to read and who needed no encouragement, but I was still out of my mind with joy when the public library gave out prizes for summertime reading.

WeAreTeachers: What can teachers do to develop passionate readers?

Ms. DiCamillo: Read aloud to them. Read aloud to them. Read aloud to them. Also, encourage them to read EVEN when they're not in school. Encouraging them to sign up for the summer reading program at the local library is a great example of encouraging the joy of reading outside of the classroom.

WeAreTeachers: If parents are not readers themselves, how can we convince them of the importance of modeling for their children?

Ms. DiCamillo: One thing I think we can encourage is parents and children reading a story aloud together.

WeAreTeachers: You speak about libraries being magical places. What images do the word "library" conjure up for you?

Ms. DiCamillo: Safety, freedom, possibilities, magic.

WeAreTeachers: You describe books as a source for having great experiences and meeting heroes. Who are some of your favorite heroes from reading when you were a child?

Ms. DiCamillo: I had a biography of Abraham Lincoln that I read many, many times as a kid. And also one of George Washington Carver that I checked out of the library. Those two men were heroes to me. Also Beverly Cleary was a hero. Laura Ingalls Wilder. E. B. White. Stuart Little. Ralph S. Mouse. The list goes on and on.

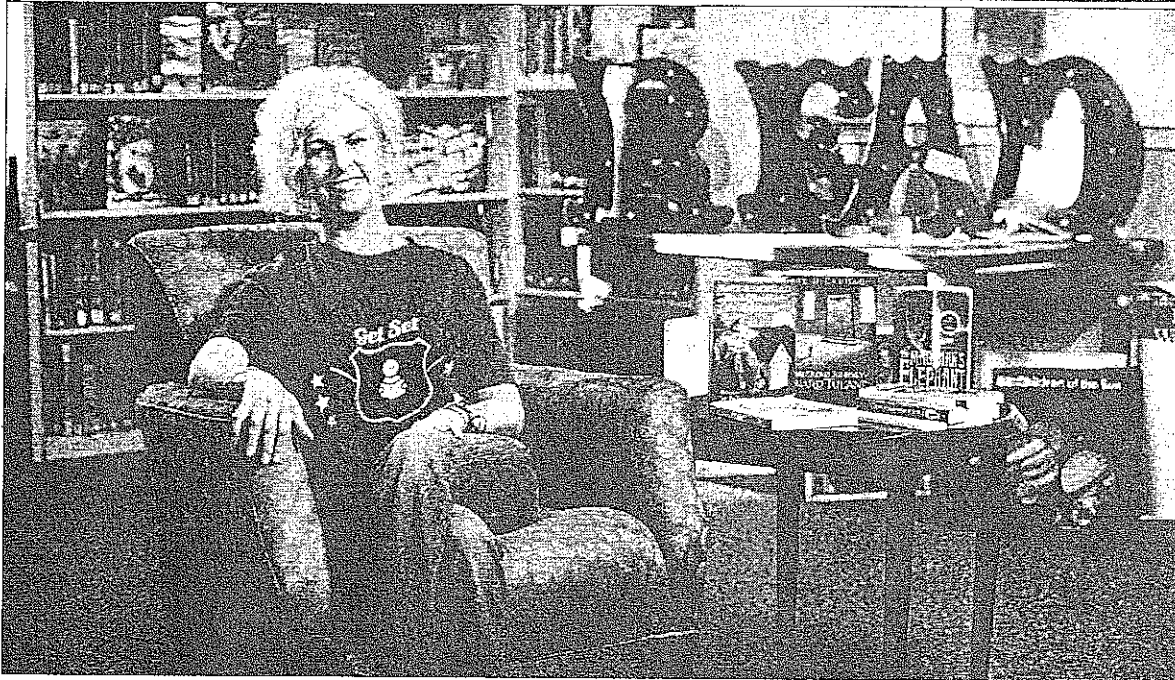
WeAreTeachers: I still remember intricate details of the settings of some of my favorite childhood books. Do you have places that you experienced through reading that still linger in your mind?

Ms. DiCamillo: Absolutely. I can still see Paddington Station and the inside of the little house in the big woods, and the Borrowers' house in the floorboards.

WeAreTeachers: In your opinion, can you identify 5 books (or authors) without which no child's education would be complete?

Ms. DiCamillo: E.B. White, Beverly Cleary, Katherine Paterson, Christopher Paul Curtis, Kwame Alexander, Gene Yang (look, again, I could go on and on).

Kate DiCamillo's Recommended Reading List for Summer 2016

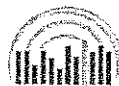


Two-time Newbery award winning author Kate DiCamillo is the 2016 Summer Reading Champion for the Collaborative Summer Library Program. "The library was such a magical place for me as a kid—a place of possibility, safety, and promise," says DiCamillo. "And my being a Summer Reading Champion is all about hoping that kids and their families will get the chance to feel the same way about their own local library."

Here are Kate DiCamillo's Recommended Reads for Summer 2016:

- IDEAS ARE ALL AROUND by Philip C. Stead (ages 4-8)
- OH NO, ASTRO! by Matt Roeser, illustrated by Brad Woodard (ages 4-8)
- THUNDER BOY JR. by Sherman Alexie, illustrated by Yuyi Morales (ages 5-8)
- WEEKENDS WITH MAX AND HIS DAD by Linda Urban, illustrated by Katie Kath (ages 6-9)
- THE WILD ROBOT by Peter Brown (ages 6-11)
- THE GREAT GILLY HOPKINS by Katherine Paterson (ages 8-12)
- BOOKED by Kwame Alexander (ages 10-12)
- BROWN GIRL DREAMING by Jacqueline Woodson (ages 10 and up)
- THE HIRED GIRL by Laura Amy Schlitz (ages 12 and up)

Look for all these books—and more—at your local library this summer!



collaborative
summer library program™

