



August 23, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At Northwest Junior High, we encourage students to develop the habits of lifelong readers. We know the importance of regular, sustained time with books—that students who are surrounded by books at school and at home read more, and that students who read more read better. I ask students to read for at least 30 minutes each weekday (I will give them 10 minutes to start this each class period, which equates to reading outside of class for at least 20 minutes each weeknight) and for at least 30 minutes on the weekend—for a total of at least 180 minutes each week. THIS is the primary “homework” for this course. I know that they are busy individuals, but because I know how important reading is, I will also tell them, “No excuses. Make the choice to make the time.” This is of the utmost importance to me.

Please sit down tonight with your student and talk about the best time and place for reading to happen in your home. Some students find that to be right after school; for others it’s just after dinner. Or perhaps your child will join the book lovers who like to read themselves to sleep at night. I will remind students that whenever they choose to read, they need an environment that will allow them to dive into the story: no distractions—cell phone and TV included—and good light.

I encourage you to be actively involved in your child’s reading. Read aloud to him or her, or switch roles and have your child read to you. No one is too old to enjoy the experience of reading stories together—I will read aloud to students throughout the school year. Make recommendations for your child’s next novel, and stay in touch with what books he or she is devouring. Encourage your child to branch out and try new authors and genres, and let him or her catch you with your nose in a great book.

From the first week of school, we make time for looking at both fiction and nonfiction texts, listening to stories, talking about the ideas and people in books, learning how to read critically. We will spend the next few weeks finding “just right” individual reading material. I will conference with students each week about their books and will continually ask them to push themselves as readers, knowing that high expectations—with appropriate support—yield high achievements.

Students will get books from a variety of places this year—from home, from public libraries, from our school library, from friends, etc. I have worked hard to develop my own classroom library, hoping students will be able to find and select books they enjoy. I want you to be aware that my classroom library, just like any other public library, has a wide range of material. While I have tried to be sensitive in selecting suitable books for our classroom library, I know that what is considered “appropriate” may vary from one parent/guardian to another. I won’t remember the details of every book, and I ask you to remain aware of the books your child chooses to read and assist in determining appropriateness. I respect your role as parents, and if you want me to more closely monitor your child’s choices this year, please e-mail or call me and we’ll work out a plan we can both contribute toward.

If you want more information about the books your child is reading, I recommend the following websites:

- American Library Association (www.ala.org)
- School Library Journal (www.slj.com)
- Common Sense Media (www.commonsensemedia.org)
- Amazon (www.amazon.com)

Also, I am excited to add a new feature to my Canvas course page this year called “Ms. L’s Lit Picks.” This link will take you to a Google Doc where I hold a constantly replenished list of titles I highly recommend for my students.

This school year, I will offer students opportunities to help them fall in love with books, see themselves as readers, spend significant time reading, and grow strong. I know that the richness of their early experiences as readers will serve them well their whole lifetimes, and I look forward to partnering with you as adults who nurture readers. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your support,

Brooke LeWarne

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Northwest Junior High School

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P.S. We are always looking to add to our classroom library. If you have books you no longer need at home, please send them with your student to school. Or perhaps you would like to come to class and share a book with us—we would love to get to know your passion for reading.

I have read and agree to the contents of this letter.

Parent Name (Print)

Student Name (Print)

Parent Signature

Date

X _____

→Please read this letter and return **ONLY the signature slip** to Ms. LeWarne by Wednesday, September 5th.