

June 2017

Dear Incoming 8th Grade Students and Families,

Welcome to your final year at OLL! I am delighted to welcome you to a dynamic year of opportunities and challenges that will go by much quicker than you can ever imagine. It will be my pleasure to meet and get to know students and families as we begin a brand new year in September.

In the meantime, we have a glorious summer ahead of us and a few academic expectations to weave into it, so let's examine what this summer's reading responsibilities look like.

First of all , we have an exciting piece of nonfiction that has captured our hearts that we want to share with the entire middle school. We hope you love it as much as we do.

The book is called *I Will Always Write Back* by Caitlin Alifirenka, Martin Ganda, and Liz Welch. This is a summary of the book:

*"The true story of an all-American girl and a boy from an impoverished city in Zimbabwe and the letter that changed both of their lives forever.*

*It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. All the other kids picked countries like France or Germany, but when Caitlin saw Zimbabwe on the board, it sounded like the most exotic place she had ever heard of—so she chose it.*

*Martin was lucky to even receive a pen pal letter. There were only 10 letters, and 40 kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one.*

*That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives."* Little Brown Library.com

It is our hope that by reading this book, OLL's middle school students will become more aware of the struggles kids face around the world to gain an education and to escape poverty.

With that in mind, the summer reading final project is as follows:

1. Students will write a single paragraph response to each of the following questions:
  - a. In America all students are guaranteed an education, what have you learned about the struggle to gain an education in poor countries such as Zimbabwe? Does this change how you feel about your education?
  - b. Martin proves he is a hard worker. What could you learn from his examples? What do they make you appreciate? How do the examples change Caitlin?
  - c. What have you learned about the value of friendship? The friendship between Caitlin, Martin and Caitlin's family? Give specific examples from the story to illustrate these relationships. Make sure to include page #'s where you found the examples.
  
2. Do some research to come up with a possible service project in connection with this book. Some ideas for you to research are: pen pal organizations, schools to connect with in another country, organizations that support education in poverty stricken countries, organizations that support service projects in poor countries.
  - a. Write a one paragraph proposal explaining:
    - i. The name of the organization & contact information (website, mailing address, etc.)
    - ii. The purpose of the organization
    - iii. The reason you are interested in supporting or being involved with this organization.

**Requirements for this paper are:**

- This should be **typed and double-spaced**.
- You should write at least **4 paragraphs**.
- Make sure you include the **page numbers** in your paper for the “evidence” to support your answers.
- Have someone **proofread** your paper before you turn it in.
- This paper will be due on the first day of school (you can turn it in earlier if you want). You can either turn this in printed out or you can share it with me on Google Drive at [gschalk@ollseattle.org](mailto:gschalk@ollseattle.org)

Because American History is our curricular focus this year and because we start our study with the Revolutionary War, there is another required title for you to read this summer. Reading ***Chains* by Laurie Hulse Anderson** will be invaluable to your understanding of this pivotal period in our nation’s history.

*What would the possibilities be for a slave during the Revolutionary War? Who would guarantee freedom - the Patriots or the British - or neither? These are the life changing choices that young Isabel Finch must make. Her disabled younger sister, Ruth, has been sold by her cruel Loyalist owner, Madame Lockton, and now, frightened and incarcerated for running away and destroying property, she awaits her fate.*

**In short, read *I Will Always Write Back*, answer the questions and read *Chains* in preparation for class discussion and written work at the beginning of September. Work is to be handed in on or before September 5.**

**Please feel free to record newspaper, magazine and online articles you may find interesting. Non fiction is important too, and it doesn’t have to be an entire book. I would ask you to read broadly of a diverse variety of titles.**

**I hope you have a wonderful summer. Please contact me via e-mail, [gschalk@ollseattle.org](mailto:gschalk@ollseattle.org) with any questions about the attached information.**

**READ, READ, READ, READ, READ, READ, READ, READ, READ, READ!!!**

**Gail Schalk**

Items due September 5th, 2017 Checklist:

\_\_\_\_\_ 4 Paragraph Response to novel

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Chains

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2017 SUMMER READING LOG

	<b>Book Title and Author</b>	<b>Total # of Pages</b>	<b>Date Started</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>Parent Initials</b>	<b>Comments About the Book</b>
<b>1</b>	<u>I Will Always Write Back</u> by Alifirenka, Welch, Ganda	396				
<b>2</b>	Chains By Laurie Hulse Anderson	300				
<b>3</b>						
<b>4</b>						
<b>5</b>						
<b>6</b>						

