

Hero Quests in Children’s Literature

Summer Reading Club (2022)

**Instructor:** Madeleine Kirkpatrick

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**Eligible Students:**

**Grades 4-6**

**Prerequisites**:  
Students should be able to read at a upper-elementary level, smoothly and with understanding. Students should be able to read aloud with ease, clarity, and appropriate emotion.  
Students should be able to narrate a story back to the teacher, recalling both the main idea and pertinent details.  
Students should be able to identify the characters, setting, and plot of a given book.  
Students should be able to answer text-based lower-order comprehension questions and be able to reflect on higher-order thinking questions.

**Course Description:**

This reading club will explore the classic hero's journey in two contemporary children's novels: "The Tale of Despereaux" by Kate DiCamillo and "Where the Mountain Meets the Moon" by Grace Lin. As a class, we will plot these two stories on Joseph Campbell's Hero Quest diagram, discuss the nature of a true hero, and discern how sacrifice and transformation can mold even the weakest of us into more Christ-like heroes. Students will practice reading and discussing literature on an interpretive level and learn how to identify real heroes in unlikely places.

There will be no outside assignments or homework for this club. The summer programs are meant to cultivate wonder, increase joy and interest in learning. Summer programs are relaxed and accountability is left to the parent.

**Schedule for Classic Children’s Literature*:***

**Class Dates:** Begin Tuesday, July 5, 2022; running through Thursday, August 4, 2022.

**Class Times:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00pm-2:00pm ET

*\*Please note the above dates and times are the anticipated class sessions for this course. However, all dates are subject to change as the instructor’s circumstances might dictate (e.g. illness, family emergency). Any classes canceled by the instructor will be made up at an alternate time designated by the instructor.*

**Office hours**: *By appointment*. (Please include time zone in your appointment request.)

**Course Texts:**

**NOTE ON TEXTS: I also supplement the readings with primary sources and excerpts from other books., short stories, poems, etc. PDFs of additional texts used will always be provided. Students are only responsible for obtaining required books**

* *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo
* *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin

**Required Materials**

**•** Spiral-bound blank sketchbook\*  
**•** Ruled notebook  
**•** Colored pencils

\**Students will frequently respond to what they’ve read through art.*

**Reading Club Projected Schedule:**

This is a five week course with twice-weekly classes, totaling 10 hours of class time. The reading load will require substantial reading time outside of class, however level of student involvement is up to the parent. If the reading amount is too lengthy, parents may choose what amount students read.

The projected schedule is as follows:

July 5 – July 19: *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo

July 21 - August 1: *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin

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**Student Expectations: Executive Function Skills**

Students enrolling in Scholé Academy’s Classic Children’s Literature will be expected to show development of Executive Function throughout the year. Executive Functioning is the brain’s work of planning, prioritizing, controlling impulses, recollection, etc. These six areas of execution are important in this class, and ultimately, in the student’s life.

**1. Engagement:** An engaged student is one who is willing to step into the arena of class discussion, to ask questions, to supply answers, and to generate the internal dialogue necessary to determine if a discussion is important and relevant to himself. Students should be viewing the class via Zoom and should not be browsing the internet instead. Scholars should be prepared to take notes on the text and on class discussion.

**2. Attention to Detail & Preparedness:** Summer reading clubs do not issue grades to students. Students are expected to have done the reading in order to participate in class, but these clubs are meant to be a joyful and relaxing experience. Level of work is left up to the parents of students.

**3. Self-Monitoring:** Students who successfully self-monitor can evaluate their own performance. This is the action of perceiving both one’s own strengths and weaknesses. These students determine which problems they can complete alone and which require peer, teacher, or parent support.

**4. Task Initiation:** This student recognizes the time to begin working and is able to do so without procrastination. A student who can initiate tasks easily adjusts from a Zoom classroom to a breakout room while still maintaining a scholarly attitude.

**5. Problem Solving:** A student with well-developed problem-solving skills is willing to persevere, even when he is unable to successfully overcome a challenge on the first try. Good writing involves the problem-solving skills of perseverance; looking at a story from a new perspective; finding an additional source or doing research; taking a rest to refresh the mind and body; or asking for help from a teacher, parent, or the Lord.

**Student Expectations**

*“The intelligence can only be led by desire. For there to be desire, there must be pleasure and joy in work. The intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy. The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is in running. . .It is the part played by joy in our studies that makes them a preparation for spiritual life, for desire directed toward God is the only power capable of raising the soul.” [Simone Weil]*

Recognizing that the purpose of education is not merely a gaining of information nor a competition for achievement but rather the directing of the desire towards God in worship, thanksgiving, and prayer, these are the student expectations in class participation:

**During class time, students should. . .**

• *Arrive prepared.* I will assume that students have done required reading for our class time, but again, level of work is left up to the parent.  
*• Arrive on time.* Though it is courteous to arrive to class on time, attendance is not tracked for summer reading clubs.

*• Participate.* I understand that not all students are equally comfortable in being extroverted and conversing, but I appreciate consistent effort in this area!

*• Exercise judgment and polite habits in the Zoom classroom.* Students should raise hands to speak, pause the video to use the restroom, or adjust the camera to limit the activity shown in the background of the student’s setting. Other than when students need to step out of the room, the camera should be on at all times.

**Student Evaluation: Grading**

**Summer clubs do not require homework or grading. The summer programs are meant to cultivate wonder, increase joy and interest in learning. Summer programs are relaxed and accountability is left to the parent.**

**The Virtual Classroom:**

We will be using the free online “virtual classroom” software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provides such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio, text chat and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the Technology in the Classroom section of the Student Parent Handbook.

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**About the Instructor:**

Madeleine holds her Bachelor of Arts in English and Multimedia Journalism from Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri. She is currently pursuing her Master of Arts in English Literature at Missouri State University. Madeleine was classically educated all the way through high school and is passionate about seeing others fall in love with learning. She has gotten to see, throughout all of her education, the value and power of critical thinking, reading well, and skillful, effective communication.

Madeleine’s hobbies include reading, writing, building her personal library, trail-running, travelling, cooking, and thrift-shopping. She lives in Springfield, Missouri with her husband, Nathan, in a renovated 1890’s carriage house.