

CKS 8th Grade Summer Reading (2020-21)

1. All students must have read The Outsiders, by S.E. Hinton, for the first day of school. I gave out hard copies of this book today. Students should read or reread this book close to the start of school, as it will be our immediate focus at the beginning of the year. There is a character analysis activity associated with this assignment; the form appears below.

2. Students should also have read Thrift Store Saints, by Jane Knuth, for the first day of school. Thrift Store Saints is about service, which is a major theme of Confirmation preparation. We will use it as our purpose-setting book at the beginning of the year in religion.

I am also asking parents - the first and best teachers of your children - to read a portion of this book (as chosen by your son or daughter) and to write a reflection about it. That assignment is included below.

3. Students who read a total of three more books over the summer (for a total of five including The Outsiders and Thrift Store Saints) will receive a non-uniform pass and five bonus points in literature during Trimester 1. Please verify the books read on the form below. Students should bring this form with them on the first day of school. Handwritten notes from parents are also acceptable if the form is lost.

- Erica Varo, 8th Grade ELA/Religion Teacher

NAME _____ DATE _____

As you read *The Outsiders*, please do the following prior to the first day of school:

1. **Read the book.**
2. **Complete TWO character analysis organizers**, one for the protagonist (main character) and one for the antagonist (character in opposition to the main character). Use the attached model based on *The Grinch* to see how to fill out these organizers. NOTE: Pay close attention to the topic headings in the boxes as they are not all the same. Also, be sure to answer questions #4 and 5 briefly. You will elaborate on Question #5 in the paragraphs you write.
3. **For each character, write a well-developed paragraph (8-10 sentences) in response to this question: "How does the writer use this character to convey a message or lesson?"**
Give EVIDENCE to support your argument.

GRADING NOTES: This is a 50-point assignment.

_____/20: **TWO character analysis organizers (10 pts. each)**

_____/30: **TWO well-developed paragraphs (15 pts. each)**

NAME _____ DATE _____
 CHARACTER ANALYSIS ORGANIZER FOR: The Grinch (MODEL)

For each box below, respond to character analysis questions 1-3 in phrases. Then UNDERLINE any items that are related. Finally, answer questions 4 and 5.

1. What do we know? OR, What can we safely infer?
2. How does it affect the character? (NOTE: No matter what we know, it affects the character.)
3. Why is it important? What does it reveal about his/her character?

<p>Family background/Upbringing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We aren't told much about The Grinch's family; he seems not to have any family left. He is alone except for his little sidekick. <u>We can infer he didn't receive much love growing up because he seems very bitter and unhappy.</u> 2. At least in the beginning in the story, The Grinch is bitter and unhappy. 3. The Grinch's bitterness infects his behavior: <u>he seems not to be able to care about anyone else</u>, so he plots to steal from the townspeople, to ruin their Christmas (possibly because he believes his Christmas will be lonely and unhappy, and he is lashing out). 	<p>How s/he is treated vs. how s/he wants to be treated</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The Grinch is alone</u> except for his little sidekick, who simply obeys him (not having any other choice). It's not clear at the beginning of the story how he wants to be treated since <u>he's not used to dealing with people</u>, but later, <u>the townspeople welcome him and treat him with the love he was missing.</u> 2. <u>Though at first alone, selfish, greedy, and bitter, The Grinch grows a bigger heart (literally and figuratively) as a result of how the townspeople treat one another and him. He becomes a happier person as a result of the way they treat him.</u> 3. <u>We learn that people—even those who seem mean and unhappy—can grow and change and become happier as a result of their interactions with other people.</u>
<p>Work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no mention of The Grinch's work. If he does anything, we can infer that it is not too meaningful or helpful to others because he does not seem to care about other people—at least, at the beginning of the story. 2. Not having work he loves may be a factor in why The Grinch seems so unhappy at the beginning. 3. <u>Not having work he loves seems to poison The Grinch's character. Also, he does not know how to deal with other people constructively. He lacks people skills.</u> 	<p>Philosophies/Values</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the beginning of the story, <u>The Grinch values material goods more than relationships with other people.</u> 2. The Grinch plans to steal the Christmas presents of the townspeople. 3. At least initially, The Grinch is selfish and greedy. Later, he learns a lesson and changes.

4. What ideas might this character represent?

First, The Grinch represents greed, selfishness, and unhappiness. Then he represents growth and potential.

5. How does the writer use this character to convey a message or lesson?

Dr. Seuss uses The Grinch to show us that even people who seem mean or unhappy can grow and change and become happier as a result of their interactions with other people; we can all help one another become better, happier people.

NAME _____ DATE _____

Protagonist: _____

For each box below, respond to character analysis questions 1-3 in phrases. Then UNDERLINE any items that are related. Finally, answer questions 4 and 5 with a few sentences each.

1. What do we know? OR, What can we safely infer?
2. How does it affect the character? (NOTE: No matter what we know, it affects the character.)
3. Why is it important? What does it reveal about his/her character?

Family background/Upbringing	How s/he is treated vs. how s/he wants to be treated
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
Work	Philosophies/Values
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

4. What ideas might this character represent?

5. How does the writer use this character to convey a message or lesson?

NAME _____ DATE _____

Antagonist: _____

For each box below, respond to character analysis questions 1-3 in phrases. Then UNDERLINE any items that are related. Finally, answer questions 4 and 5 with a few sentences each.

1. What do we know? OR, What can we safely infer?
2. How does it affect the character? (NOTE: No matter what we know, it affects the character.)
3. Why is it important? What does it reveal about his/her character?

Family background/Upbringing	How s/he is treated vs. how s/he wants to be treated
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
Work	Philosophies/Values
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

4. What ideas might this character represent?

5. How does the writer use this character to convey a message or lesson?

YOUR NAME _____

Protagonist: _____

“How does the writer use this character to convey a message or lesson?” Give EVIDENCE to support your argument. Write a well-developed paragraph (8-10 sentences).

Antagonist: _____

“How does the writer use this character to convey a message or lesson?” Give EVIDENCE to support your argument. Write a well-developed paragraph (8-10 sentences).

Thrift Store Saints Parent/Child Assignment

[Parents—Please note—only one parent needs to do this. If both of you would like to, so much the better!]

Students: As you read *Thrift Store Saints*, be thinking of what three chapters you liked the best or found the most interesting and/or powerful. Also remember what we have read at the beginning (and end) of the book about the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the author's description of how she found God "on the job and in the street...when the language is rough, the labor is mindless, and everybody is wearing old clothes." Then:

Write your parents a three-paragraph (or more) letter asking them to read three (or more) chapters of *Thrift Store Saints* which you have selected.

--Tell them first a little bit of background about the book—about the St. Vincent de Paul Society; about Jane and how she came to work there; about how she changes as she becomes more involved.

--Then tell them why you chose the chapters you chose—such as, the characters were interesting; the stories involved things you never knew or thought about; they made you think about the teachings of Christ and the Church in a new way, etc.

--Finally, ask them to write you a letter back, reflecting on these stories and sharing their thoughts. Remember—**only one of your parents needs to respond**—it does not have to be both.

Letters should be typed, 12 font, one-inch margin. Length: at least one page.

Parents: Read your child's letter and the three (or more) chapters he or she has chosen for you two to share. Write a letter back to him or her, reflecting on each of the chapters and what you gained from them.

Submit: Both letters as a unit on the third day of school.

Point value: 25 pts. per letter (50 pts. total) Religion.

Summer Reading Verification (Note: you may include *The Outsiders* and *Thrift Store Saints* as your first two books.)

Book

Author

Parent Signature

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

(if you've read more, keep on going!!!)

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____