

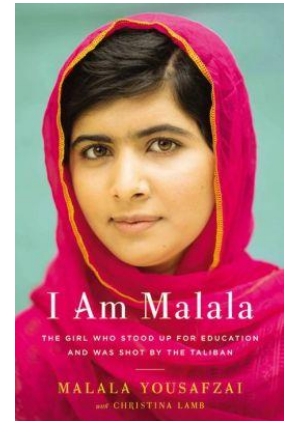
Vermont Commons School Summer Reading List 2014



June 4, 2014

Dear Parents, Students, and Friends,

We are pleased to announce the 2014 Common Text at Vermont Commons School. This year, students and faculty will be reading Malala Yousafzai's memoir *I Am Malala*, an account of her life before and after she was shot by a member of the Taliban. An outspoken advocate for girls' education, this Pakistani girl is the youngest person ever to be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.



Marie Arana of *The Washington Post* writes, "It is difficult to imagine a chronicle of a war more moving, apart from perhaps the diary of Anne Frank." In addition to Malala's incredible account of her life, students will learn about the political and cultural context of Pakistani life through which her story unfolds.

I Am Malala is only available in hardcover, which we recognize can be expensive. We encourage students to find the book at their local libraries. You can also find the text at the following places (both on-line and in stores):

Buy local at Phoenix Books in Burlington: 20% discount for \$20.30
Barnes & Noble online: \$15.47
Barnes & Noble in store: \$26.00
Amazon online: \$14.69

There is a Young Readers edition of *I Am Malala* that will be available on August 19th. Seventh and eighth graders have the option of reading this version when it becomes available, or reading the standard version.

When school begins in late August, students will have three assignments associated with their summer reading: a presentation, an author imitation, and a quiz on the Common Text. The assignments are described in more detail below.

We anticipate an engaging and informative Common Text Day on October 10th, 2014, when we will meet as a community to discuss and celebrate the book.

Feel free to email us with any questions. Enjoy your summer reading!

Christie K. Beveridge

Cara M. Simone

Jennifer B. Cohen

2014 VCS Summer Reading List & Assignments

First Step: Choose. Choose two books and read. Don't forget that your third book is the Common Text, *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai. Seventh and eighth grade students may choose to read the Young Readers version available on August 19th.

Second Step: Read. Read at night, at camp, or in a hammock.

Third Step: Think. We encourage summer readers to read with a pen in hand. Add questions, comments, and circle unfamiliar words in the margins. Consider noting your predictions and connections and identifying key ideas.

When summer ends and school begins, you can expect the following assignments:

1. Presentation (2nd week of school)

Requirements and Grading:

You must speak from between five to ten minutes about your book. You should touch on the following elements.

1. Describe the protagonist, the main conflict, and a little about the plot, but do not reveal the ending.
2. Discuss an important image, scene, or character that you connect with, and explain why you find this part significant.
3. Comment on whether you would recommend or not recommend this book to others, and be specific. Why would you recommend it (or not recommend it)? Who would like this book?

You will be assessed on the content of your presentation, your preparedness, and your presenting style (did you speak slowly, clearly and with confidence, and make eye contact with your audience?)

2. Author Imitation/Deleted Scene and Reflection (3rd week of school)

Requirements and Grading:

In this assignment, students should try to approximate the voice and style of the author of one book from the Summer Reading List. This assignment lends itself to fiction, but some nonfiction could work. Write a "deleted scene," or a scene that occurs after the ending. After writing the imitation, students should write a *half page* reflection that identifies which literary devices they used. Students should also include a photocopied page of the author's work so that we can compare their writing to the author's.

Author Imitation (75 points)

The length of the imitation should be one and a half pages, double spaced.
Consider some of the literary devices in the list below before you begin.

- Point of view (1st person or 3rd person). From what perspective is this story being told?
- Tense (past or present). Is the action unfolding in the moment, or is the story being told after the fact, perhaps many years later?
- The length of your author's sentences, as well as his or her word choice. Does this author write long sentences with lots of adjectives? Short, clipped sentences? Both?
- Does your author use dialogue? Internal monologue? Letters?
- Description. Does your author use ornate descriptions? Was there concrete detail that allows the reader to conjure an image of a scene?

Reflection (25 points)

In a follow-up, please discuss how the author's choices affected the meaning of the text. In addition, identify which literary devices you chose to imitate and why. (*half a page*)

3. Quiz on Common Text (Week of September 29th)

A 20 question multiple-choice quiz on Malala's life, as well as the culture and history of Pakistan.