

Dear Seventh Grade Students and Parents,

Welcome to seventh grade! There is no need to become overly anxious or stressed about the upcoming year, but this summer is the perfect opportunity to relax, to reflect, to recharge, and to prepare and plan, so that come September you return a seasoned middle school student, ready for the rigors of the 7th grade curriculum.

Take time throughout this summer to think about the skills and strategies you have learned over the past year in sixth grade. Acknowledge and praise yourself for the areas where you have made growth and progress. Celebrate yourself and your accomplishments, but also take a few days to honestly assess those areas where you struggled. Maybe your struggles were with the academic content, or maybe homework or classwork completion was difficult, or still yet maybe it was organization or attention issues that were barriers?

After brainstorming these barriers, take time to jot down one to three goals devoted to tackling these struggles. Consciously think of ways that you can strategize to improve in these areas for the upcoming school year. Are there any supports that you need from the adults in your life (your parents, guardians, and teachers)? Make sure you list these, too. Taking time to reflect, to assess, and to plan helps with the growth process. Communicating with adults and peers about the supports that we need helps to develop agency and eventually leads to independence with tasks that were once difficult.

After all the reflecting, relaxing and recharging, the teachers are requiring you to read two engaging books this summer: *Angel on the Square*, Gloria Whelan's fictionalized account of royal servant during the Russian Revolution, and *The Family Romanov*, the bloody, true story of the fall of the royal Russian family. It is suggested that you tackle *Angel on the Square* first. Then use *The Family Romanov*, along with its index, to deepen your understanding of the historical content linked to first text. In addition to the required reading, be sure you find time to read something that you enjoy each day. Reading for pleasure is extremely important, edifying, and relaxing.

As for the required readings, you should interact deeply with them using the annotation and marking strategies that you have been taught in your sixth grade year. Remember these books can be written in, but be purposeful with your markings. You'll want to remember why you circled and underlined specific pieces of text, therefore marginal notes are helpful. These texts will be used for major assignments in both Literacy and Social Studies in the fall, so a cursory, casual read will not be sufficient (especially of *Angel on the Square*).

Finally, enjoy your summer. Visit places in your city; spend time playing and conversing with friends and family; be active and exercise; take time to wonder, draw, or write. Refresh your mind and body, so that come September some of the critical, significant decisions and choices you might have to make are ones you are prepared for and proud of making.

Sincerely yours,

Seventh Grade Team