

## **Freshman Summer Reading Assignment 2026**

### **The John Carroll School**

**Welcome to the John Carroll School, Class of 2030!** We look forward to formally welcoming you into our John Carroll Patriot community during Orientation in late August.

To prepare for your new start as a Patriot, you will complete a Summer Reading experience that is threefold: you will read a dramatized retelling of a real person's experiences, *Salva Dut*, and then complete an assignment for your English, Social Studies, *and* Religion classes in response to it. The text is titled *A Long Walk to Water* and was written by Linda Sue Park. *Note: Honors and Advanced English 1 students will also complete activities for an additional text.*

Your assignments will do two things: 1) introduce you to the fundamental expectations, thought processes, and skills that these three courses will require of you during your four years at John Carroll, and 2) get you thinking about our school's identity, values, and Mission, which will guide your student life during your years as a Patriot and beyond. Our Mission Statement is copied below:

***The John Carroll School is a Catholic, co-educational, college-preparatory learning community empowering a diverse student population to attain its highest potential. Through innovative practices and curriculum, we prepare students to positively influence a global society as critical thinkers and creative problem solvers while being socially responsible, spiritually centered and morally grounded in our Catholic beliefs.***

Enjoy your reading, and good luck! First impressions count - try your best this summer and come to Orientation prepared with your assignments.

See you soon, New Patriots!

#### **To Parents:**

**Welcome to the John Carroll School, Patriot Families!** Being a John Carroll Patriot family is a special experience, and we look forward to supporting you as you work to prepare your child for their first year in our school community. Please know that I am available to answer any questions you may have throughout the summer as your child completes their Summer Reading and three assignments for *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park. Please note: assignments must be **printed** and ready for *use* at Orientation Day and *submission* during the first day of their English, Social Studies, and Religion classes during our first week of school.

**Thank you, Patriot Families!**

**Mrs. Lindsey Galicki**

[lgalicki@johncarroll.org](mailto:lgalicki@johncarroll.org)

Freshman Orientation Coordinator

## Honors English 1 Summer Assignment: Choice Literature on *Identity* and *Empathy*



Welcome to **Honors English 1: Foundations of English Language and Literature**. This is a comprehensive introduction to the English Language & Literature Advanced Placement (AP) courses at John Carroll that focuses on themes related to discovering oneself, one's values, and one's voice through literature.

We begin with a Choice Novel Unit showcasing a variety of perspectives, all united by the themes of **identity** and **empathy**. Furthermore, students will read *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park, the whole-grade Summer novel.

Whether students select contemporary, historical fiction, or dystopian science fiction as their genre, they will explore a unique voice on this theme and its connection to identity, values, and the power of language. Furthermore, they will engage in meaningful discussion, collaboration, and comparative analysis upon starting their first year at John Carroll.

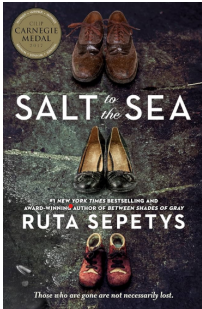
We will begin Freshman Year by asking ourselves about who we are and what stories our own voices would tell, focusing on the complexity of what it means to be a human being in a vastly rich and nuanced world. I challenge you to consider the ways in which you relate to your novel's protagonist and the ways in which their experiences excite, frustrate, or inspire you.

Good luck! Please email me at [lgalicki@johncarroll.org](mailto:lgalicki@johncarroll.org) if you have any questions.

*Mrs. Galicki*

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE NOVEL CHOICES

Please research and select your novel with care to ensure it is the best book option for you. All texts are Young Adult Fiction. Consider factors like genre, style, issues, tropes, language, and themes.

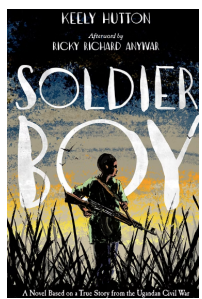


### **SALT TO THE SEA**

2017 Winner of *CILIP Carnegie Medal for Best Children's Writing*

**Genre & Style: Historical Fiction, Male/Female Multi-POV**

*"[H]aunting, heartbreaking, hopeful and altogether gorgeous...one of the best young-adult novels to appear in a very long time." – Salt Lake Tribune / "Sepetys excels in shining light on lost chapters of history, and this visceral novel proves a memorable testament to strength and resilience in the face of war and cruelty." – Publishers Weekly*

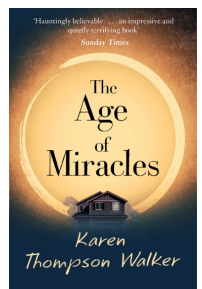


### **SOLDIER BOY**

*The Children's Book Review's The Best Young Adult Books of 2017*

**Genre & Style: Historical Fiction, Male Multi-POV**

*"A story that stands up for the unrelenting power of the human spirit to reject evil, the nigh-impossible odds that must be conquered to escape enslavement, and the deep scars that remain for a lifetime . . . Unapologetically searing and catastrophically truthful." – Kirkus Reviews*



### **THE AGE OF MIRACLES**

*Dublin Literary Award 2014 Nominee*

**Genre & Style: Science Fiction, Female Single-POV**

*"If you begin this book, you'll be loath to set it down until you've reached its end... The Age of Miracles reminds us that we never know when everything will change, when a single event will split our understanding of personal history and all history into a Before and an After." – The San Francisco Chronicle*



### **THE SERPENT KING**

*American Library Association's William C. Morris YA Debut Award 2017*

**Genre & Style: Contemporary Fiction, Male/Female Multi-POV**

*"A book you won't be able to resist or forget. The Southern boy in me savored every syllable and the reader in me fell in love with every page." – John Corey Whaley, National Book Award finalist and Printz Award winner / "[T]his sepia-toned portrait of small-town life serves as a moving testament to love, loyalty, faith, and reaching through the darkness to find light and hope." – Publishers Weekly*

## Summer Assignments & Recommended Timeline

- 1) Before Reading Choice Novel: *June*
  - Complete the **Establishing Background Context** steps on the next page, submitting handwritten notes (submission 1)
  
- 2) During Reading Choice Novel: *June*
  - Take high quality **Chapter Notes**, handwritten (submission 2)
  
- 3) After Reading Choice Novel: *July*
  - Create three unique products using the **Tiered Choice Board**, submitting typed paragraphs to [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) (submissions 3, 4, 5)
  
- 4) Read & annotate *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park *August*
  - There are no English assignments related to this novel for you
  - Annotations will be checked
  - You are still required to complete your Social Studies and Religion assignments associated with this text

**\*Note 1:** Keep in mind that the purpose of a summer assignment is to introduce you to the nature of the course, set a strong foundation for the year, and provide me with a first impression of you as a student: a reader, a writer, and a thinker. Please consider this as you complete your work.

**\*Note 2:** Upon return to school, be prepared for both written and verbal assessment: quiz, discussion, and essay. Both your Choice Novel and *A Long Walk to Water* will also be on your Midterm Exam. On assessments, you may only use your books and one 3x5 notecard front and back, so it is highly recommended that you annotate your texts.

**\*Note 3:** [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) flags both plagiarism and AI use. Per the English Department's policy on academic dishonesty, any flags above 25% will result in point deductions according to Mrs. Galicki's discretion, up to a zero on the assignment.

## Submission 1: Establishing Background Context

For the tasks below, be prepared to submit along with your handwritten notes a **References Page** with all sources documented.

1. Conduct a search on your **author** and read their biography. This can usually be found on the author's website or under the novel's description on its Amazon or Goodreads page.
2. Explore a variety of **media sources** based on the introductory resources below (use only as a starting point) to gather background information related to your novel and demonstrate your research skills.
  - a. [\*Salt to the Sea\*](#)
  - b. [\*Soldier Boy\*](#)
  - c. [\*The Age of Miracles\*](#)
  - d. [\*The Serpent King\*](#)

## Submission 2: Chapter Notes: *Read-Pause-Reflect* Method

- Break up your novel into 4 equal parts, note which chapters fall within each part, & break up your notes into those sections. **Notes that you want to remember for assessments (quizzes and essays) should be annotated in the margins of your text or on sticky notes placed within your text.**
- As you read, create a bulleted list of notes and quotes, labeling each with a page number when possible.
- On each line, jot down shorthand notes for any interesting observations about any of our Core Elements:
  - **Plot/Conflict:** key plot events, cause & effect, types of external and internal conflict, plot structure, tension and stakes
  - **Character:** direct or indirect characterization, STEAL character profiles, relationships, character types (flat/static/round/dynamic), complexity
  - **Technique:** figurative language (i.e., personification, metaphors, similes), sensory imagery, literary devices (i.e., symbolism, irony, foreshadowing), and style (i.e., diction, syntax, tone and mood)
  - **Theme:** big ideas, concepts, and what the author might be arguing about them

### **Additional Ideas:**

- **Consider chapters** – Is there any thematic significance to the organization of the story? Do chapter titles, if chapters have titles, have any significance? Do chapters ever change points of view, and if they do, when of significance?
- **Consider the characters** – Address how they have changed and the significant events that have affected them in each chapter or section of the novel. Notably, when do characters resist change?
- **Note the Setting** – List the locale, time period, and length of time that passes in each section of the novel. How do settings reflect and reinforce social values, ideals, and cultural attitudes?
- **Consider themes and motifs** – Reflecting on your earlier notes can be helpful with this, especially as you progress through the piece. Do you see any repetition of concepts? Images? Symbols that develop over time? Significant meaning in the piece?
- **Consider the author's style** – What techniques are important to the author's style? Which are used most often? What effect do they have? How would the story be different if the author chose different techniques?
- **Quotations** – Make note of powerful lines or scenes, lines that are well-written or are particularly interesting to you, and lines that reflect important qualities or changes in characters. Record in your notes the page number and some description of the quotations that you find important.

## Submissions 3, 4, and 5: Tiered Choice Board

Use the following choice board as a menu of options for your creative products. You will create three: one in Tier 4, one in Tier 3, and the third in either Tiers 1 or 2.

TIER ONE		
<p><b>CHARACTER ANALYSIS</b></p> <p>Choose a character from the text and analyze their personality, motivations, and actions. Write 2 paragraphs of 8-10 sentences each about what you know about the character, how the author conveyed this characterization to you, and how the character contributes to the story's overall themes.</p>	<p><b>MAKE A BOARD GAME</b></p> <p>Create a board game based on the text. Include different events and characters from the story and create rules for how to play. Write a paragraph of 8-10 sentences that explain how the design and rules were influenced by the story's conflicts and themes.</p>	<p><b>WRITE A DIARY ENTRY</b></p> <p>Imagine you are your main character and write a diary entry of 16-20 sentences reflecting on your experiences throughout the course of the story. Include your thoughts and feelings about the people you met and the challenges you faced, showing a deep understanding of the character's journey.</p>
TIER TWO		
<p><b>CREATE A SOUNDTRACK</b></p> <p>Choose 10 scenes from the text and create a soundtrack that captures the emotions and themes of those scenes. Choose 10 songs that reflect the mood and tone of the book, and explain your choices in a written reflection of 3-4 sentences per song. Consider how the music enhances the reader's understanding of the story and the characters.</p>	<p><b>WRITE A SERIES OF POEMS</b></p> <p>Create a series of 6 poems inspired by the text. Each poem should be 8+ lines, connected to the other poems in some way, and written from a different character's perspective, exploring their emotions and experiences in depth. Write a paragraph of 5-8 sentences per poem that explains how the poetic choices made illustrate your understanding of the story.</p>	<p><b>REWRITE A SECTION</b></p> <p>Choose a section from the text and rewrite it from a different character's perspective. Use your knowledge of the other characters' experiences and motivations to shape the section. Write a two-paragraph reflection of 8-10 sentences each on the process and how it changed your understanding of the story.</p>
TIER THREE		
<p><b>LITERARY ANALYSIS</b></p> <p>Select a theme from the text and write 2 paragraphs of 8-10 sentences each about how it is shaped by literary technique (figurative language, imagery, literary devices, or style) in the text. For example, you might focus on how imagery develops a theme. Use quotes and specific examples from the book to support your analysis.</p>	<p><b>DIALECTICAL JOURNAL</b></p> <p>Complete 10 journal entries based on analysis of a literary technique: character or conflict development, figurative language, imagery, literary devices, or style. For each entry of 3-4 sentences each, you will 1) identify the technique in a quote, 2) explain how it is present in the quote, and 3) analyze how the technique adds, enhances, changes, and/or deepens meaning in the quote.</p>	<p><b>COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS</b></p> <p>Choose another book that you have read previously (<i>Water</i> is acceptable) and write 3 paragraphs of 8-10 sentences each about the similarities <u>and</u> differences in these two stories. You may choose to compare the two protagonists (main characters), the common theme, common techniques, or the common conflicts of the stories.</p>

## TIER FOUR

### LITERARY CRITICISM

*Critical approaches are different perspectives analysts - critics - can use to study a text. Think of each approach as a different set of Colored Glasses. For example, if you put on Pink Glasses, you'll see everything in your path through the Pink Lens. Nothing exists by itself anymore; you constantly interpret your surroundings through the color Pink. So, therefore, is each critical approach: when applying it, you must work hard to search the text using just this perspective alone using the guiding questions provided; no other perspectives!*

1. **Choose one of the following critical approaches.**
2. **Analyze the text from your chosen lens.**
3. **Write 3 cohesive paragraphs of 8-10 sentences each defending a unique interpretation of the text's overall meaning according to this lens.** Your first sentence can be your thesis statement; there is no need for introduction/conclusion. Make sure to include quotes and specific examples from the text to support your analysis.

*A note on selecting your approach: oftentimes, selecting the approach that seems to imperfectly align to your story actually produces the more fun & insightful analysis. Don't pick an approach just because it seems to align perfectly to your story - maybe even pick one at random by spinning a wheel! See what meaning you find!*

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**Historical:** This approach focuses on the connection of the work to the historical period in which it was written. When was the work written? How does the work's historical context impact the settings, conflicts, characters, and themes of the work? How does history influence the story?

**Psychoanalytical:** Focus on the psychological motivation of characters. Why do characters behave the way they do? What factors impacted their childhood and upbringing? What can we learn from their emotional responses? How does an understanding of psychology influence the story?

**Philosophical:** Focus on universal archetypes and themes, mythological and Biblical allusions, moral codes and views of life, the nature of good and evil, human nature, etc. What moral statement does the work make? What is the work's attitude toward fate, free will, and God? How does spirituality influence the story?

**Sociological Gender:** Focus on examining images of men and women, concepts of the feminine and masculine, and the presence or absence of men or women in the story. What gender roles, stereotypes, and/or power dynamics exist in the text? How does gender influence the story?

**Sociological Race:** Focus on examining issues of race, concepts of racial and ethnic identities, and the presence or absence of racial conflict or harmony in the story. What races and ethnicities, stereotypes, and power dynamics exist in the text? How does race/ethnicity influence the story?

**Sociological Class:** Focus on examining images of class hierarchies, concepts of wealth, and the impact of economic structures in the story. Which social and wealth classes exist in the story? Are there representations of poverty and wealth gaps? How does money influence the story?

## **Social Studies Summer Assignment 2026**

*A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park

The John Carroll School

### **A JOURNEY OF SURVIVAL THE LOST BOYS OF SUDAN**

Directions: Please read the following and complete the activities that follow.

The Lost Boys of Sudan is a name given to over 20,000 boys from the Nuer and Dinka ethnic groups who were displaced during the Second Sudanese Civil War (1987-2005). Their story is one of incredible courage, survival, and hope in the face of unimaginable hardship. This journey highlights not only their struggles but also their resilience and determination to build a better life.

#### **The Journey Begins**

In the late 1980s, thousands of young boys were forced to flee their villages in southern Sudan. Many were as young as six years old. Their villages were attacked by armed forces, leading to chaos and fear. The boys had to leave everything behind—their homes, their families, and their previous lives. With little more than their clothes on their backs, they embarked on a perilous journey, walking hundreds of miles through dangerous terrain and facing numerous challenges along the way. The boys traveled in groups, relying on each other for support. They often felt a mix of fear and determination, unsure of what lay ahead. Some of them had to navigate through thick jungles, while others crossed rivers that were swollen with rain. This journey was not just about survival; it was also about the hope of finding safety and a new home.

#### **Survival Challenges**

During their journey, the boys faced many difficulties that tested their strength and resilience:

- **Limited Clean Water:** Water was scarce, and many boys had to drink from muddy puddles.
- **Lack of Food:** The boys foraged for fruits and berries, but many went hungry for days. They had to rely on teamwork to share whatever little food they could find.
- **Dangerous Wild Animals:** They encountered dangerous animals, including snakes and lions. Nighttime was especially frightening, as they had to sleep outside, vulnerable to these threats.
- **Extreme Weather:** The weather varied greatly, from scorching heat during the day to chilling temperatures at night. This made their journey even more difficult, as they struggled to stay warm and hydrated.
- **Risk of Disease:** Many boys fell ill due to the harsh conditions. They suffered from fevers, infections, and other illnesses, often without access to medical care.
- **Military Attacks:** The threat of military attacks loomed large. The boys had to remain alert and often changed their routes to avoid soldiers who might harm them.

#### **Life in Refugee Camps**

After walking for months, many of the boys reached refugee camps in Ethiopia. However, conditions in these camps were not ideal. Due to the ongoing civil war, they later had to flee these camps and walked to Kenya, where they found shelter at the Kakuma Refugee Camp. Life in the refugee camps was challenging.

## **Daily Life in the Camps:**

- **Limited Food Rations:** The food provided was often insufficient, and the boys had to share what little they received.
- **Basic Shelter Made of Plastic Tarps:** The shelters offered little protection from the elements, and many boys lived in overcrowded conditions. Minimal
- **Medical Care:** Access to medical facilities was limited, and many boys went untreated for their ailments.
- **Limited Educational Opportunities:** While some makeshift schools were set up, the education provided was basic and often disrupted.
- **Overcrowded Conditions:** With thousands of refugees, the camps were overcrowded, which led to increased tensions and competition for resources.
- **Scarce Clean Water:** Fresh water was still difficult to find, and boys had to wait in long lines to fill their containers.

Despite these challenges, many boys attended makeshift schools in the camps, believing that education was their hope for a better future. They learned basic skills and subjects and shared stories about their homes and cultures.

## **Coming to America**

In 2000-2001, approximately 3,800 Lost Boys were allowed to resettle in the United States. This was a significant turning point in their lives, but they faced new challenges:

- **Learning a New Language:** Many boys had never spoken English before and had to work hard to communicate and integrate.
- **Adapting to Modern Technology:** The technology in America was vastly different from what they were used to, and they had to familiarize themselves with new tools and devices.
- **Understanding American Culture:** Adjusting to a new culture with different customs and traditions was challenging. They had to learn how to navigate daily life, including shopping, schooling, and social interactions
- **Finding Jobs:** Many Lost Boys sought employment to support themselves and their families back home. They had to overcome barriers such as language and lack of experience.

## **Impact and Legacy**

Today, many of the Lost Boys have achieved remarkable success. They have:

- **Graduated from College:** Some pursued higher education and obtained degrees in various fields.
- **Started Successful Careers:** Many have found rewarding jobs and contribute positively to their communities.
- **Created Organizations to Help Others:** Some Lost Boys have established non-profit organizations to aid refugees and support education in Sudan.
- **Maintained Connections with Their Culture:** Despite living far from home, they celebrate their heritage and share it with others.
- **Helped Their Communities Back in Sudan:** Many send money back to support their families and improve conditions in their home villages.

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

**Directions:** After reading the book, A Long Walk to Water, please complete the chart below with Textual Evidence from the reading. This will be turned in to your Social Studies Teacher when school begins at The John Carroll School.

<b>Social Studies Topics = Lenses through which we learn</b>	Please record 3 Pieces of Textual Evidence with page numbers that relate to the
<b>Political</b> Govt. Policies, Laws, Wars/Conflict, Policies, Govt. Leaders, Organizations, Alliances/Strategies	
<b>Economic</b> Jobs, Economic Policies, Economics, Agriculture, Industry, Urbanization, Markets, Labor/Workers	
<b>Geographic</b> The Earth, Resources, Climate, Physical Features, Where places are located, How people interact with their environment & each other	
<b>Social</b> Family/Children, Women/Gender Roles, Ethnic Groups, Religion/Beliefs, Health Care, Science & Technology, Migration, Social Classes	



Where is Sudan? Color Red.

Where is North Sudan? Color Green.

Where is Ethiopia? Color Orange.

Where is Kenya Color Yellow.

**Religion Summer Assignment 2026**  
*A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park  
The John Carroll School

**NOTE ABOUT AI:**

**Dear Students: The assignment below is to be completed on your own with no assistance from Artificial Intelligence of any kind (including Grammarly). The majority of the activities are exercises in self-reflection; there are no wrong answers. We want to hear your voice and thoughts! Please complete this on your own and in your own words.**

**Directions:** after reading *A Long Walk to Water*, please complete the following activities below that ask you to reflect back on the story through the lens of *spiritual thirst* and its connection to the Christian, Catholic faith. Number your responses according to the numbers of the questions. **You will submit this assignment for grading during your first Religion class at John Carroll.**

1. **Write a paragraph (at least 3-5 sentences)** describing a time when you were very thirsty like Salva was in the Akobo Desert or like Nya was during all those long days when she went for water.

*(Moving from physical thirst to spiritual thirst.)*

2. What is the one thing you thirst for the most, that is, you want most out of life? **Write a few sentences describing this.**
  - a. If you put money, popularity, athletics, good grades, dream job, a family, etc., then consider that these are not what you ultimately want; rather, they are pathways to something, and that “something” is what you want. What is it? Add to your response.

*(Continuing with the theme of spiritual thirst.)*

3. Watch [“I Thirst for You”](#), a meditation by Mother Teresa. Saint Mother Teresa wrote this meditation as if Jesus Christ was speaking to us. **After watching the meditation, write a paragraph (at least 3-5 sentences) describing what struck you or grabbed your attention and why.**

Here is a link with some biographical information about Mother Teresa: ([Biographical note](#): Mother Teresa was born in 1910 and died in 1997. In 1950, she founded the Missionaries of Charity, a Roman Catholic religious congregation of nuns. On September 4, 2016, she was declared a saint by Pope Francis.)

*(Continuing with the theme of spiritual thirst.)*

4. After completing no. 3, answer the questions below from the transcript of the video (transcript is available on the YouTube link: [Video with Transcript](#)).

- a. What does Jesus mean when he says that he “thirsts” for us?
- b. What is the one thing Jesus wants from us?
- c. In what four ways does Jesus describe sin?
- d. According to Jesus, what will ultimately quench our thirst for happiness?
- e. What do you think about this?

*(Conclusion)*

5. Read the promise Jesus makes to us in the Gospel of John in the New Testament part of the Bible and answer the questions below.

*“On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them (John 7:37-38).’”*

- a. In which line of the passage does Jesus say he is like a well?
- b. In which line of the passage does Jesus say something like a well can be in us?
- c. What do these “rivers of living water” quench within us?
- d. What do you think it means to believe in Jesus?

**Honor Code:** I solemnly pledge that the work I am submitting was completed on my own. And, in accordance with the instructions, I did not use Artificial Intelligence in completing this assignment.

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian Affirmation:** I have reviewed my student’s responses to this assignment and affirm that it appears to be their independent work without AI assistance.

Parent or Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_