

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 I 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
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Freshman Orientation Coordinator

Advanced English 1 Summer Reading Assignment

English Teacher: Miss Shannon Olsen

Hello Advanced English Freshmen!

This summer, you will be tackling **two** texts that are dual perspectives and reflect historical events: one from South Sudan in the 1980s and one from Eastern Europe in the final months of World War II. These texts tackle important world events that showcase periods of history from perspectives different from what has always been seen.

Book 1: *Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park ****This will be the book used for Freshman Orientation**

- This novel alternates between two stories: Nya is an 11-year old girl living in Sudan in 2008. Salva is an 11-year old boy in 1985. Nya walks a total of eight hours each day to bring her family water and her story journeys through the struggles of water scarcity. When his village is attacked by rebels, Salva is separated from his family and does not find them for many years. He becomes one of the “Lost Boys” of Sudan.

Book 2: *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys

- This book follows four refugees: Joana, Florian, Emilia, and Alfred, who are desperately trying to escape Europe through the final months of World War II.
 - **Joana:** A young Lithuanian nurse trying to protect a group of refugees, carrying the secret guilt of her past.
 - **Florian:** A wounded Prussian art restorer on the run from the Nazis after stealing a priceless piece of artwork (the Amber Room).
 - **Emilia:** A Polish teenager who is separated from her family and saved by Florian after an attack by a Russian soldier.
 - **Alfred:** A cowardly German naval officer who obsessively writes letters to an imaginary friend, masking his own inadequacies with blind loyalty to Nazi ideology.
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English Summer Assignment

1. While you read *Long Walk to Water* **and** *Salt to the Sea*, **annotate BOTH texts**. Here is a simple guide to annotations called the Read - Pause - Reflect method:
 - a. **Read a section of the text.** This could be one or multiple chapters, or perhaps a few pages within a chapter.
 - b. **Pause when desired.** This could be at the end of your reading session, or at a particular spot in the text where it makes sense to pause.
 - c. **Where you paused, mark the text.** Your book should be fully annotated throughout, showing that you have not only read but interacted with the texts that you are reading. Whether you use highlighters and color code or use a pen/pencil, please make sure all of your annotations are clearly marked and easy to follow. **For guidance, please use the annotation key below:**

Annotation Categories & Suggested Key

	Important Characters & Relationships Between Them- Who are the major characters? What are the relationships between the major characters?
	Major Plot Events & Tension- what are the most important events that have happened in the story. Is there tension occurring during these events?
	Themes and Big Ideas- As you read, what are the messages that you are seeing in the story?
	Questions you Have About the Text- What question do you have about the text? Any confusion, wonderings about the future, questions for the characters themselves, etc.
	Interesting Descriptions of People and Places- How does the author describe the setting and characters? What image pops in your head when you read about that character or that place?
	Significant Quotes- Are there any quotes that pop out to you?

2. After you read *Salt to the Sea*, **complete a portfolio** of three Choice Board activities from the Board on the next page. Your portfolio should showcase your understanding of *Salt to the Sea* key characters, plot events, themes, point of view, and style choices. Use the following choice board as a menu of options for your creative products. You will create three elements: one in Tier 4, one in Tier 3, and the final in either Tiers 1 or 2.

Tier 1: Activities focus on the characters and their journeys throughout the novel. Choose an activity that will help you best showcase this character and their journey.

Tier 2: Activities focus on the plot and Point of View (POV). Choose an activity that will help you best showcase your understanding of the story and all its moving parts.

Tiers 3 and 4: Pushes you to think more critically about the story, the characters, and analyze more complex pieces of the story. Select the writing opportunity that will best help you analyze the novel on a deeper level.

****Note:** There will be no formal English assignment relating to *A Long Walk to Water* other than the annotations, however you are still expected to complete the *A Long Walk to Water* assignments for your Religion and Social Studies classes.

TIER ONE		
CHARACTER ANALYSIS Choose a character from the text and analyze their personality, motivations, and actions. Write 2 paragraphs of 6-8 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.	MAKE A BOARD GAME 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 6-8 sentences that explain how the design and rules were influenced by the story's conflicts and themes.	WRITE A DIARY ENTRY Imagine you are Florian, Joana, Emilia or Alfred and write a diary entry of 10-16 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 characters' journey.
TIER TWO		
CREATE A SOUNDTRACK 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 6-8+ sentences. Consider how the music enhances the reader's understanding of the story and the characters.	WRITE A SERIES OF POEMS Create a series of 4 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 6-8 sentences each that explains how the poetic choices made illustrate your understanding of the story.	REWRITE A SECTION 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 6-8+ sentence reflection on the process and how it changed your understanding of the story.
TIER THREE		
LITERARY ANALYSIS Select a theme from the text and write 2 paragraphs of 6-8 sentences each about how it is shaped by literary devices or figurative language 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.	DIALECTICAL JOURNAL A dialectical journal is a collection of key quotes from your reading of a text that pairs each quote with a specific response. Complete 5 journal entries based on analysis of a literary device- simile/metaphor, symbolism, characterization, foreshadowing, and/or personification. For each entry, you will identify the literary device in a quote, explain how the device is present in the quote, analyze how the device adds, enhances, changes, and/or deepens meaning in the quote.	COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS Choose another book that you have read previously and write 2 paragraphs of 6-8 sentences each about the similarities in these two stories. You may choose to compare the two protagonists (main characters), the common theme, or the common conflicts of the stories.

TIER FOUR

LITERARY CRITICISM

Choose one of the following critical approaches: historical or sociological. Analyze the text from this lens. **Advanced English 1 students will write 3 paragraphs of 6-8 sentences each.** Make sure to include quotes and specific examples from the text to support your analysis.

Historical: This approach focuses on connection of work to the historical period in which it was written.

- **Prompt:** How does the story reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the time in which it was set? (Consider beliefs and attitudes related to race, religion, politics, gender, society, etc.)

Sociological: This approach focuses on man's relationship to others in society, politics, religion, etc.

- **Prompt:** How do economic conditions determine the direction of the characters' lives?

3. Now that you have finished, you are going to create a reading guide to display your deeper understanding of the novel and its structure. This can be done either digitally or in a physical notebook. For **each character POV**, complete three of the tasks below. **Support each task with quotes from the text (including page numbers).**

<u>Remember</u>	<u>Understand</u>	<u>Analyze</u>
Describe the character's on-going conflict throughout the story. Where did they begin? How have they struggled? What happened by the end of the novel?	Summarize the character's story through their POV in a well developed paragraph.	Analyze one symbol from the character's POV and its significance to the novel.
Identify and define five key words from the character's POV chapters that help you as the reader understand more about their story.	Write a personal response to two meaningful quotes from the character's POV.	Compare the reactions and emotions between two characters in one of the POVs.
Illustrate the setting for the character at the beginning of the novel.	Explain how this character's actions in their POV impacted the overall plot.	Ask two critical questions about this character's POV.

For each character, choose one task from three different columns. You need to have completed each activity at least once (with some repeats). Write which items you've completed each day in the chart below. Use the table below as an example to create your reading guide key. You **MUST** include a key with your reading guide.

<u>Character Name</u>	<u>Task #1</u>	<u>Task #2</u>	<u>Task #3</u>
<i>Example</i>	<i>Remember: Illustrate</i>	<i>Understand: Write</i>	<i>Analyze: Ask</i>
Joana			
Emilia			
Florian			
Alfred			

Have fun with these texts and activities! I am so looking forward to meeting you and working with these texts a little bit more when we start in the Fall. See you at Orientation!

Miss Olsen

Tier 3 Dialectical Journal Template

Quote	Page #	Analysis (2-3 sentences each)

<i>(Optional Extra Entry)</i>		

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.

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



Where is Sudan? Color Red.

Where is South 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: _____