Dear 8th Grade Class,

 My name is Ms. Atwal and I will be your English teacher this year at Friends Academy. I hope that you are enjoying your summer so far and are using this time to relax, spend time with your friends and family, and even to read a good book!

As incoming 8th graders, you have been assigned to read three books by the beginning of the school year. The Challenge One book, *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind,* by Suzanne Staples, is required for all students to read. You must select the remaining two books from the Challenge Two reading list. Below, you will also find an active-reading checklist that outlines the expectations for each book. While you are not responsible for any formal writing assignments over the summer, you will be required to demonstrate your comprehension of each novel through a variety of ways once the school year begins.

**CHALLENGE ONE:**

Every student is required to read ***Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind,* by Suzanne Staples.** It may be helpful to read this story closer to the start of the school year, as you will be completing an in-class writing assignment during the first week of class.

On separate paper, please answer the following questions:

* How is the attitude towards having a son different than the attitude of having a daughter in Pakistan? *List* ***3*** *examples from the text.*
* What examples of customs/traditions in Pakistani culture did you notice throughout the story? *List* ***10*** *examples from the text.*
* How is Shabanu treated differently because of her gender? *List* ***5*** *examples from the text*
* In the beginning of the story, what freedoms does Shabanu have that many other girls in Pakistan (including her sister Phulan) do not*? List* ***5*** *examples from the text.*
* Why is Shabanu called the “daughter of the wind”? *Write* ***5*** *sentences and include quotes from the text to support your answer.*

**\*Please make sure to write a specific quote from the text and the page number(s) next to each example to support your answers.** Your responses can be written while you are reading or after you have finished reading. It is important to be thorough in your answers, as I will be collecting them. During the first week of school, you will have an in-class writing assignment based on this book; this will help me to learn more about each of you as writers.
\*\***Please bring all your responses and a copy of this book with you on the second day of class.**

**CHALLENGE TWO:**

You are also required to choose **two** books from the “Challenge Two” reading list. This list consists of popular young-adult books across numerous genres and my hope is that several of them will pique your interest. As you are reading *each* book, use post-it notes or separate paper to:

* Write any questions that you had while reading.
* Write any predictions that you made.
* Write any personal connections you had to the story.
* Identify the setting (where and when the story takes place)
* List the characteristics of each major character.
* Identify the major events that occur.
* Identify the conflict(s) that occur and the type(s) of conflict(s): *man vs. man, man vs. self, man vs. nature, man vs. society, etc.*
* Identify the theme(s) or author’s message(s) in the story.
* Write any major changes that you noticed in the main character(s) throughout the story, if any.
* Identify your favorite part(s) in the story and briefly explain why.

**\*If you are using separate paper, please write all the page numbers for your notes, so that you can easily refer back to the text.** It is important to be detailed in your notes, as they will serve as helpful reminders for the in-class activities that you will complete for each Challenge Two book.
\*\***Please bring a copy of both Challenge Two books and all of your notes to class on the second day of school.**

 Please feel free to email me if you have any questions. I am looking forward to meeting you in September! Enjoy your summer and have fun reading!

Sincerely,

Ms. Atwal, English 8