

English 9 Summer Reading Assignment

In the English Department's attempt to provide rich and varied reading experiences for our students, we have selected titles for the summer reading lists written mostly by contemporary authors. Some selections are focused toward mature readers. We encourage parents to assist their children in selecting interesting, appropriate titles for their summer reading. *Barnes & Noble's* website provides information including Lexile level, book reviews, and age levels for specific titles. If no age level is specified in the "Product Details" section on the *Barnes & Noble* site, the book may be focused toward mature readers for various reasons including mature themes or mature content. *Barnes & Noble* is suggested as a resource only, not an endorsement of any specific bookseller.

Topics and Titles:

Below are the novels I have chosen for your summer reading assignment. Choose **TWO** titles from the list below. You will be responsible for reading **TWO** of the novels listed over the course of the summer and the completed essays will be due when we start school in August. The actual date due will be when the second day of school falls. If you wish to read a book outside of this list it must be grade level appropriate and it must be approved by me. You may find these titles at most *Barnes & Noble Booksellers* or you can check one out from your local library. Our list of books has been submitted to the Salem, NH store. If you need to email me you can my email address is: l.peterson@gsaanh.com.

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
The Hunger Games (First book in the trilogy only.) by Suzanne Collins
The Maze Runner (First book in the series only.) by James Dasnher
The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd
Monster by Walter Dean Myers
Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs
Harry Potter & the Goblet of Fire by J.K. Rowling
Harry Potter & the Half-blood Prince by J.K. Rowling
Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows by J.K. Rowling
The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas
The Rules of Survival by Nancy Werlin

Writing Assignment Guidelines:

After reading, choose **TWO** topics from the list below and write **TWO** well-constructed essays. Include the topic you are addressing in your essay at the top of your essay. Each essay must be **3 to 5 pages** in length. If you struggle to find a prompt that fits your book, email me and I will help you. I am open to altering any essay to fit your needs as well as the piece of literature chosen. All essays **REQUIRE** an **MLA** works cited page and in-text/parenthetical reference.

Note: All work must be handed in as a shared *googledoc*. If you do not have access to our Google system yet, you may attach a word document to an email.

Note: You have the option of submitting a draft prior to the due date for editing suggestions.

Note: Many of the novels on the list of titles have been made into films, films that I have seen. Please do not substitute your reading by viewing the film, honestly I will be able to tell if you have watched the film over the novel and you will not receive credit for the essay. If you wish to write a comparison piece you may email me and we can discuss that type of essay instead of one of the choices below.

Writing Assignment Topics:

- 1.) In some works of literature, childhood and adolescence are portrayed as times graced by innocence and a sense of wonder; in other works, they are depicted as times of tribulation and terror. Focusing on a novel from the list, explain how its representation of childhood or adolescence shapes the meaning of the work as a whole.
- 2.) In a literary work, a minor character, often known as a foil, possesses traits that emphasize, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of the main character. For example, the ideas or behavior of a minor character might be used to highlight the weaknesses or strengths of the main character. Choose a novel from the list in which a minor character serves as a foil for the main character. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the relation between the minor character and the major character illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole.
- 3.) In many works of literature, past events can affect, positively or negatively, the present activities, attitudes, or values of a character. Choose a novel from the list in which a character must contend with some aspect of the past, either personal or societal. Then write an essay in which you show how the character's relationship to the past contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.
- 4.) The most important themes in literature are sometimes developed in scenes in which a death or deaths take place. Choose a novel from the list and write a well-organized essay in which you show how a specific death scene helps to illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole.
- 5.) What makes a classic? Why is the book you've chosen to read considered a classic? Do you agree with its designation? If you agree or disagree why has this particular novel been chosen as an exemplar to be used in high school classes? Write a thoughtful, critical essay in which you examine the use of classic novels in the classroom. Take a stance and make claims to support your claim.
- 6.) Works of literature often depict acts of betrayal. Friends and even family may betray a protagonist; main characters may likewise be guilty of treachery or may betray their own values. Select a novel from the list that includes such acts of betrayal. Then, in a well-written essay,

analyze the nature of the betrayal and show how it contributes to the meaning of a work as a whole.

7.) Novels and plays often include scenes of weddings, funerals, parties, and other social occasions. Such scenes may reveal the values of the characters and the society in which they live. Select a novel from the list that includes such a scene and, in a focused essay, discuss the contribution the scene makes to the meaning of the work as whole.

8.) A recurring theme in literature is "the classic war between passion and responsibility." For instance, a personal cause, a love, a desire for revenge, a determination to redress a wrong, or some other emotion or drive may conflict with moral duty. Choose a novel from the list in which a character confronts the demands of a private passion that conflicts with his or her responsibilities. In a well-written essay show clearly the nature of the conflict, its effects upon the character, and its significance to the work.

9.) In a novel or a play, a confidant (male) or confidante (female) is a character, often a friend or a relative of the hero or heroine, whose role is to be present when the hero or heroine needs a sympathetic listener to confide in. Frequently the result is, as Henry James remarked, that the confidant or confidante can be as much the "reader's friend as the protagonist's." However, the author sometimes uses this character for other purposes as well. Choose a confidant or confidante from a novel from the list and write an essay in which you discuss the various ways this character functions in the work.

10.) Choose a novel or play that depicts a conflict between a parent (or a parental figure) and a son or daughter. Write an essay in which you analyze the sources of the conflict and explain how the conflict contributes to the meaning of the work.

Common Core Standards Addressed-

RI.9

By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend **literary nonfiction** in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

RL.9

By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend **literature**, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

W.9.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.9.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.