

English 11 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 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 Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

The Road by Cormac McCarthy

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

Eleanor & Park by Rainbow Rowell

The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

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. As you read, trace a theme that develops over the course of the novel. The essay must be no less than **5** pages and must contain at least 6 quotes that support the theme you have chosen. A well thought out thematic statement must be included in your introduction and must show your understanding of what a theme is.
2. Choosing one of the novels from the above list, discuss a character's transformation and decide whether the change is symbolic or real. The essay must be 5 pages in length and must contain at least 6 quotes to support your claim.
3. Consider the gender of the characters in your novel. How are male and female characters portrayed? How does the work portray their roles in society? How does gender influence the choices that are available to the characters and the decisions that they make?
4. Think about the role that social class plays in the novel that you've read. What social classes are represented in the novel? To what extent is each class depicted? Are all the classes given equal representation? How do the classes shown in the novel relate to the classes that realistically existed in the time and place where the novel takes place? As you go through your novel, consider two important questions: how does the author feel about the different social classes, and how can you tell the author's opinion? Write a paper that explores the way that social class and class issues affect the characters and plot of your novel.
5. Consider the relationship between the characters and the setting for your novel. Think about the way that the characters are described, their characteristics, the conflicts that they face, the actions they take, and their emotional reactions. Compare these qualities to the setting — to the way that it is described, to the particular things that are described, and to the words that are used to describe the place(s) where the novel takes place. In your paper, explain how the setting of the novel is representative (or not) of the characters.
6. In the novel that you've read, some of the characters are given positive, sympathetic portrayals. Others have negative, perhaps even villainous portrayals. Still others may begin with negative qualities and gradually become more and more positive. Rarely does an author rely on the reader's personal sense of morality to determine which characters are positive and which are negative. Instead, there are details, actions, and characteristics that help define who is "good" and who is "bad." It's easy to know the difference in old westerns — good guys wear white hats; bad

guys wear black hats. But even then, there are other details that help you know what it going on, details that even help you construct hierarchies (e.g., slightly bad to fully evil). Think about your novel. How does the author indicate which characters are positive and which are negative? In your essay, explain how you can tell the difference.

7. Do a close examination of the setting in your novel. What are the primary locations? How are these places made realistic — how does the author use extended description, background information, and specific detail to make the setting come alive for readers? How do the main characters fit in the settings — do they seem at home? out of place? How do their reactions and interactions with the setting affect the realism of the locations? In your paper, discuss the way that the techniques that the novelist uses to make the setting vivid and real to readers, and the extent to which these techniques are effective.

8. Writers can't help but be influenced by the events and people that they see around them. The question is to what extent does that influence become part of the works that they write and how do they communicate their feelings and beliefs about the world around them. For your essay, think about how the characters, setting, and themes in your novel relate to the period in which it was written. How is the novel an analysis of the period? How is it a reflection, and how is it a criticism? And how does the writer make opinions about that world clear to the reader?

9. 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.

10. Often in literature, character relationships change and evolve. From the literary work you have chose, find one in which a character's feelings toward another character change. Write an essay in which you explain how the character's feelings changed, why the feelings changed, and how this change affects the work as a whole. Include specific examples from the work of literature you have chosen to support your points.

Common Core Standards

RI.11.10-By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend **literary nonfiction** at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

RL.11.10- By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend **literature**, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

W.11.1- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11.2- 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.