

ENGLISH
SUMMER
READING
PACKET

~2009~

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Hello!

While we're sure these are the last words you want to hear right now, the summer is a great time to leisurely prepare for the coming school year. Whether you believe it or not, the Summer Reading Program is not designed to keep you from enjoying your time away from school. Instead, we want you to know that reading CAN be pleasurable and provide opportunities for you to express yourself effectively and creatively. As Angela Carter, an English novelist and journalist, once said...

"Reading a book is like re-writing it for yourself. You bring to a novel, anything you read, all your experience of the world. You bring your history and you read it in your own terms."

Through becoming more interested in the printed word, we'd like you to become more interested in your own writing. You've already proven that you can write meaningfully about what you read, so now we'd like to see how you reflect upon YOURSELF in regards to what you've read...

The projects presented in this packet are meant to offer a fun and thoughtful way for you to consider your summer reading book. Please allow yourself time to do your project in a relaxed and productive way. Don't wait until the weekend before school to read your book. That's a perfect recipe for creating an unpleasant and unrewarding experience. Instead, be sure to schedule both time to read AND time to put your book aside.

Enjoy your summer and enjoy your book!

Sincerely,

The Multi-Headed English Dept Monster

The Summer Reading Program Directions

Eventually you will pick a project from the following list to complete as you read your book. First things first though, you will have to schedule out your summer and set a realistic reading schedule for yourself. This can be achieved by taking a quick look at the following dates.

June 19th / Sept. 9th

These are the days that your junior year ends and your senior year begins (respectively). In between lies summer and your reading. Summer vacation is roughly ten weeks, give or take a few days, so you'll want to set aside a maximum of seven weeks to read your book. To get a rough idea of how much you need to read a week to meet that goal, divide the number of pages in your book by 7 and write it in the space below.

I plan to read _____ a week.

Voila! You've just set a reasonable goal for reading your book by the end of the summer while still leaving time for fun/summer jobs. Try to read a little bit every day, but don't stress out if you miss a day...just try to keep with your weekly reading goal.

Your next task is to choose ONE project from the list on the next page. We've tried to include a variety of tasks, so take time to think about what kind of student you are and which project would be your best fit. Keep in mind the goal here is to get you thinking about your book AND yourself as a writer.

Once school begins on September 9th, your English teacher will collect your project. Don't forget it on the first day! This will be a great way for them to get to know you and your writing style. Yes, this is for a grade, so take care and do yourself justice. For most this will be first impression time.

PROJECT 1: Letter Writing

After each third of the book you will write a letter to someone (your parents, favorite English teacher, the Vice President, Hungarian table tennis champ Tibor Klampar...anyone, really) and give them your reaction to what you've read. General guidelines for your letter-writing are attached.

PROJECT 2: Lesson Plans

Using the attached lesson plan templates, design three enrichment lessons to help your classmates understand certain aspects of your book. What additional information would they need to get the most out of what you chose to read?

PROJECT 3: Prologue/Epilogue Writing

Did your book leave you wanting more? Were you left with questions about what happened before the events of your novel? If creative writing appeals to you, follow the attached guidelines and write a prologue or epilogue to your book.

PROJECT 4: Annotated Soundtrack

What would be the perfect soundtrack by which to read your book? Which artists best accompany the plot of your summer reading? Make a mix of 12 songs that could act as a "soundtrack" to your book. Guidelines are attached and follow.

PROJECT 5: Personal Profile Letter

If none of the above projects appeal to you, consider writing a personal profile letter on yourself and your reaction to your book, using the attached guidelines. What information should your senior English teacher have about you? What can you tell them about your strengths and weaknesses as an English students? Use this as an opportunity to get the most out of your senior English class.

PROJECT 1: LETTER WRITING

Divide your book into three sections of approximately equal length. Make a note of these pages/chapters to keep track of your progress through the book. At the end of each section you will be writing a letter to someone of your choosing describing your reaction to the section you've just completed (in the rare chance you do wind up sending the letters make sure to make a copy to hand in at the beginning of the school year).

You have a lot of freedom here to discuss the book on your own terms, if you find that you are having difficulty coming up with things to talk about though, consider answering some questions from the following list:

- What surprised you in this section?**
- What was too obviously foreshadowed?**
- How are the characters developing? Are you satisfied with the direction in which the author is taking them?**
- What passage or quote from this section particularly spoke to you?**
- With what were you most satisfied in this chapter?**
- With what were you most disappointed?**
- What addition (s) could have improved this section?**
- Would any subtractions have made this passage flow more smoothly/make more sense?**

Remember these letters are an opportunity for you to show yourself to be a thoughtful reader. Take the opportunity they give you to discuss your findings and opinions. These letters should be more than lists-they should be a critical look at your book. A complete response will be characterized by a reflective interpretation and sincere questioning. Aim to write a page or more for each letter.

PROJECT 2: LESSON PLANS

On the following page you will see the standard format for planning a one-class-period high school lesson. Below you will find explanations of the various sections that appear on a lesson plan. Your goal is to design three lessons that could conceivably be taught to aid in understanding of your book. What outside knowledge would be necessary to completely understand/appreciate your book? Is it historical information, an explanation of an activity described in the book, a geographic lesson, or something else of which we haven't even thought?

Put yourself in your teacher's shoes and plan a lesson that is informative, but also has enough varied tasks to be interesting. Remember that this lesson would, hypothetically, be taught along with the reading of your book, so try to avoid too much in class reading. Instead, look for activities that would help your classmates understand the information you are trying to get across in your three separate classes. Successful lesson plans will have each section of the template completed with tasks that result in a greater understanding of your book.

Some terms...

OBJECTIVES: These are the goals of your lesson. If executed well, what will students be able to do after experiencing your lesson? (Objectives usually use the acronym SWBAT instead of "students will be able to") Include two goals for each lesson.

MATERIALS: What will you and the students need to complete this lesson?

VOCABULARY: What new words with which students will need to familiarize themselves over the course of this lesson.

PROCEDURE: This is your "plan of attack." Map out the entire period, including estimates of the time each task should take. Remember that a standard class period is 55 minutes long, so keep track of time.

ASSESSMENT: How will you measure whether or not students have achieved your objectives? Don't limit yourself to tests and quizzes. Sometimes the best assessments of student knowledge are the most creative.

LESSON TEMPLATE:

OBJECTIVES:

SWBAT...

SWBAT...

MATERIALS:

VOCABULARY:

PROCEDURE:

ASSESSMENT:

PROJECT 3: PROLOGUE/EPILOGUE WRITING

Authors have made whole careers from continuing the work of other authors before them. While we're not asking you to do that, we do ask that you consider writing a prologue or epilogue to your summer reading book. Take a look at the following...

-A prologue is a short section/chapter that comes before Chapter 1 or the "beginning" of a book. It gives insight into characters and events that are more fully developed over the course of the book. If writing a prologue, ask yourself what information about the characters or events in the book would best foreshadow the events to follow. Is there information that you wished you'd had (that wouldn't ruin the ending, of course) after you'd read your book?

-An epilogue is a short section/chapter that follows the text of the story. It reveals what happens after the events the author described. If writing an epilogue ask yourself what results or consequences the actions of the character in your book may have had. How widespread would the reactions be? Would only single characters' lives be changed or whole groups? Are there any questions that the author left that you wish they'd answered?

When writing your prologue or epilogue, be creative and allow yourself the freedom of exploring stories that don't immediately connect to right before or after your book. That being said, a well-written prologue or epilogue will be logically tied to your book. Aim to write between 3-5 pages and let yourself pick up where your author left off...

PROJECT 4: ANNOTATED SOUNDTRACK

Your goal with this project is to create a soundtrack to your book—at least 12 songs that cover the span of your book, from its first pages to the concluding chapter. Consider your book and the various places it goes. What emotional highs and lows do the characters experience? Are there certain characters that need certain theme songs? What songs reflect the pace of your book?

The songs you pick for your annotated soundtrack need not necessarily be from the time period in which your book was written or takes place (then again, all the better if you can come up with a chronologically appropriate mix). As for song appropriateness, if you would be uncomfortable talking to any one of English department's teacher's grandmothers about the lyrics or subject matter of your song, it would be best not to include it. We are trusting you to make suitable choices for your project...

Once you've picked the 12 (or more) songs and the order in which they will appear in your soundtrack, we'd like you to annotate your mix. That means writing a paragraph for each song on the soundtrack. In these paragraphs you should explain why you chose that particular song and its relation to the book. Is it there to accompany a moment, character, or overall feeling? Be specific and let us know what about that song makes it a good choice. Have fun with this project and introduce us to some new music!

PROJECT 5: PERSONAL PROFILE LETTER

Your final project option most directly addresses you as a learner. With this personal profile letter we hope that your new English teacher will get a jump start at knowing you.

The following questions are designed to get you to think about yourself as an incoming senior English student. Don't feel like you have to write this letter all in one sitting. Consider this letter like you would a piece of formal writing. Give yourself time to think about what you've written and revise it. Take time with these questions and your summer reading. Your answers to these questions will let your teacher best address your learning style. The more you think about these questions the more they, and you in the process of writing this letter, will learn about you/yourself.

A well written letter will contain answers to the following questions:

- What was your reaction to the summer reading? Did you enjoy the book?
- What part of the book affected you the most? The least? Why?
- Would you recommend this book to other students your age? Why/why not?
- Why did you choose this project over the other four?
- Upon our return to school, what would be the best use of the summer reading?
- What would be good ways to make literature "come alive" for you? What books have you read that have entertained you/piqued your interests?
- What do you, personally, want to do with literature?
- What do you want literature to do for you, personally?
- What do you want to get done in class this year?
- How will you measure your success, aside from grades?
- What is a personal goal for you in senior English?
- What is a goal for your writing in senior English?

Remember, though these questions are presented in a list, they should not be answered in one. Please don't limit yourself to one-sentence answers either. This letter is designed to be a piece of writing appropriate for a senior. Please write it as such. Take the opportunity to impress your new teacher!