

**Honors and College Preparatory
Modern Literature
2011 Summer Reading Assignments**

Choose two of the following books and read them:

Life of Pi—Yan Martel
Attonement—Ian McEwan
White Noise---Don DeLillo
Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close—Jonathan Safran Foer
Catch 22—Joseph Heller
Angela's Ashes—Frank McCourt
The Grapes of Wrath—John Steinbeck
The Handmaid's Tale—Margaret Atwood
Rabbit, Run—John Updike
The Namesake—Jhumpa Lahiri
Black Boy—Richard Wright
Disgrace—J.M. Coetzee
The Things They Carried—Tim O'Brien
The God of Small Things—Arundhati Roy
The Kite Runner—Khaled Hosseini
Everything is Illuminated—Jonathan Safran Foer
Atlas Shrugged—Ayn Rand
Waiting—Ha Jin
A Confederacy of Dunces—John Kennedy Toole

Non-fiction:

Nickel and Dimed—Barbara Ehrenreich
Fast Food Nation—Eric Schlosser
Love in the Driest Season—Neely Tucker
A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again—David Foster Wallace
Reading Lolita in Tehran—Azar Nafisi
Into the Wild—Jon Krakauer
The Tipping Point—Malcolm Gladwell

Then, complete the assignments on the following pages (do two different assignments, not the same one, for each book):

Make sure each assignment has a complete cover page, with your name, class, assignment option and title. This information is to appear only on the cover page.

Please use 12pt. Times New Roman font and 1" margins for written work.

I suggest you put your full effort into these assignments, as they will have a significant impact on your first semester grade (the last one most colleges see!).

All assignments are due on the first day of class!!! No late work will be accepted.

Option 1: Director's Notebook (100 points)

Pretend you are a big-budget Hollywood producer and you are about to begin production on a spectacular new film version of one of your summer reading books. With this concept in mind, complete the following four assignments:

Movie Potential: in 1-1½ pages, explain why you think your book could be turned into a quality movie. Which characters, scenes, and actions would work well on film, and why? Discuss how you visualize the production in your head. Where would you film some or most of the scenes? Which scenes would have to be cut? Why do you think audiences would enjoy watching a cinematic interpretation of your book?

Casting preference: explain which real life actors and actresses you would like to cast in the roles of four important characters from your book. Explain in detail why each thespian is appropriate for the part. Write about one paragraph (minimum 4 sentences) per part, and be sure to demonstrate the **depth** of your understanding of these characters through the reasons you offer as to why you chose that particular person to play the role. I encourage you to include a photograph of each actor to help you illustrate your points.

Set Design: draw a detailed set design (in color) for one of the pivotal moments in the movie. Include several details from the book along with some of your own, original additions. Then explain the attributes of your design in at least three paragraphs, explaining how your chosen details contribute to other elements of the story? Be sure to include multiple details from the book in your design. Suggestion: point out these textual details and their importance in your written description as well as in your drawing.

Expected Difficulties: in 1½-2 pages, explain the difficulties you (as director) will face in translating this book into a successful Hollywood movie. What do you plan on changing to make the story more audience-friendly? What aspects of the book would be attributes in a cinematic production, and what could be possible drawbacks in a movie version? How would you alter the style and structure of the narrative to increase the effectiveness of the storytelling for a 21st Century audience? Which scenes will you have to omit/edit out, and which scenes will you emphasize?

Subtitle each of the above categories. Make sure that each step of this assignment reflects your full effort and YOUR OWN IDEAS and WORK.

Option 2: Reaction Paper (100 points)

A 'reaction paper' is a chance for you to explore and express your feelings toward the work you read and your experience of reading it. It is to be your personal response to the work, explaining what you got out of it and what you think about it. However, you don't want it to be too general, so I've provided some guidelines below to aid you in staying focused on one or two main points. This paper is relatively short, so there's no room for wandering off topic.

Your reaction paper should be very thoughtful (and thought-provoking, to your reader), intellectual and reflective. It should also, of course, be highly articulate and extraordinarily well written with a strong voice and in your own developed style. Make sure that your paper is impeccably focused and organized. Your paper **SHOULD NOT summarize or ambivalently discuss facts or elements of the book. It should NOT be a straightforward, passionless**

analysis. It SHOULD BE your own personal, honest reaction to the piece, written in your own voice and style. As always, you must take a stand, but this stand should be of a personal nature.

Here are some suggestions to get you started; however, you are free to take your own approach or write on another idea. Use one, some, or all of the following questions to stimulate your thinking and reflection on the work and use them as a basis for your reaction:

- What was most poignant, interesting or profound aspect of the story? Why?
- What is note-worthy or unique about the author's style or presentation?
- What do you think the author's intention was in writing this book? Did he accomplish it? How do you know?
- Did this book change your opinion or perspective on anything? Did it solidify it?
- Was there something in the book that spoke to you on a personal level? Were you able to relate to it? Not relate?
- What were your expectations of reading this book? Were they met, exceeded or disappointed? How? Why?
- What was the most compelling passage in the book? What makes it so?

However you choose to approach this assignment, make sure that you **support your views with specific *reference(s)* (*direct quotes not necessary) to the book. This is not a paper about your personal reaction to life in general, or a particular concept in general, but to something specifically dealt with in the book.

REQUIREMENTS AND REMINDERS:

Length: **minimum** of 600 words, **maximum** of 800 words. Write the exact word count at the bottom of the last page.

Give your paper a catchy title, which serves to state what exactly your paper is about, and an interest-grabbing first paragraph.

Remember: Although this assignment is of a more personal, less formal style, organization, focus, clarity and coherence are always paramount to an excellent paper.

ALL WORK IS DUE ON THE VERY FIRST DAY OF CLASS—NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED—NO EXCEPTIONS.

I strongly encourage all of you to take these assignments seriously; read the books completely, and **DO YOUR OWN, ORIGINAL WORK.** Summer reading is an easy way to start your senior year off with an A average. Not taking it seriously is a guaranteed way to start the year off in a deep hole with an F.