
Summer Reading 2008

If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.

Maya Angelou

Dear students entering 9th grade:

I look forward to teaching you World Literature next fall. I believe wholeheartedly that literature is both *informational* and *transformational*. Reading makes you smarter not just by giving you information, but also because it changes the way you think. This class will change your mind—literally.

That change starts now. In addition to the reading you do on your own this summer, I have chosen books that will jumpstart our conversation in August. The two books you read will begin our discussion about the hero's journey, our jump-off point. In addition to completing the assignment outlined below, please take notes during your reading so you can recall the details and themes of the texts. We will spend the first few weeks of school working on these texts, so read them thoughtfully and thoroughly.

All ninth grade students read *The Hobbit*, by J.R.R. Tolkien.

In addition, choose one of the following:

- *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card is an action-packed science fiction novel.
- *The Secret Life of Bees* by Susan Monk Kidd relates a girl's journey to find herself and her mother.
- *The Natural* by Bernard Malamud is the mythic story of a gifted baseball player.
- *Wicked* by Jeffrey Maguire offers a different view of *The Wizard of Oz* by focusing on the Wicked Witch.

Choose a book that you have not already read, and make sure you use *only the text* as the basis of your analysis. Do not start our year together by trying to take the easy way out through collaborating with others or using other resources. Please contact me at 314.608.8054 or josh@crossroadscollegeprep.org with any questions.

Have a great summer and enjoy your reading!

Complete the following charts fully and legibly. You may type or print.

Book Title:

Author:

Who do you see as the hero of this book?

Describe this character, both physically and how he or she behaves. (Use quotations with page numbers.)

What does this character do that makes him or her heroic? (Provide at least three specific examples with quotations and page numbers.)

For what is the hero looking? What is the purpose/goal of the quest?

Describe the event that serves as the impetus for the hero's quest. (If you don't know a word, look it up.)

Describe the hero's hesitation/fears at the beginning of the quest. Why does he / she determine to proceed?

Describe the first obstacle that the hero must overcome. How does the hero respond to it?

Identify and describe three challenges that the hero meets and overcomes. How does the hero respond to each?

In what ways does the hero change as a result of these repeated obstacles?

Explain how the hero finally attains his/her goal.

What was your impression of the book? Would you recommend it to others? Explain.