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8<sup>th</sup> grade, summer 2010

Dear students entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade,

We recommend you read a lot this summer, as reading for pleasure is one of the traits that unites people who succeed academically as well as serving as an inexpensive window onto multiple worlds. In addition to the books you read merely for pleasure, we have several assignments to prepare you for 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, writing, and language study at Crossroads College Prep.

- Learn Latin roots lessons 1-4<sup>1</sup>
- Read *A Lesson Before Dying*, by Ernest J. Gaines (keeping an evidence chart<sup>2</sup>)
- Read *Tallgrass*, by Sandra Dallas (keeping an evidence chart)
- Edit and revise assigned charts
- Write your *A Lesson Before Dying* analytical paragraph<sup>3</sup>
- Write your *Tallgrass* analytical paragraph
- Read at least ONE more book of your own choosing (preferably 4 or 5 more)

Happy reading and writing; I look forward to working with you in the fall!  
Sarah Pierson Wolff, 8<sup>th</sup> grade English

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<sup>1</sup> Students entering our 8<sup>th</sup> grade need to have memorized the Latin bases in Lessons 1-4 in *Everyday Words from Classic Origins*. As well as knowing the meaning of each base, memorize at least one vocabulary word for each base, and learn a sentence that uses the word correctly and shows meaning. The book is available from Lisa Straub in the front office (367-8085 X 203). Every student needs one and will use it throughout his/her tenure at Crossroads College Prep.

<sup>2</sup> Part one of your reading assignment is to keep a chart of evidence (quotations). Please use the attached document as your model. I recommend you create these charts *as you are reading*. Upon completion of each novel, return to edit the charts, cutting out weak choices, choosing the best 10 for each.

<sup>3</sup> Part two of your assignment is to write two analytical paragraphs after completing and editing the four charts. After completing Gaines's novel, ask yourself what conclusion you can draw about change in the novel. Does Jefferson, Grant, or the community grow in any significant fashion? The answer to this question will form the topic sentence for your analytical paragraph on *A Lesson Before Dying*. After completing 1C and 1D, ask yourself what conclusion you can draw about change in Dallas's novel. Does Rennie, her parents, Daisy, or the community of Ellis grow in any significant fashion? The answer to this question will form the topic sentence for your analytical paragraph on *Tallgrass*. If you do not know the formal rules of writing an analytical paragraph, use the attached pages from Crossroads College Prep's *Handbook of Research and Writing*. The paragraph must be typed and follow MLA guidelines, use quotations from the text as evidence, have correct citations, and have a Work Cited entry at the end. The paragraphs should be proofread and perfectly edited. There is an example attached.

**Summer To DO list – post this above your desk and plan ahead to do well.**

**Learn your Latin roots**

1. Memorize the meaning of all the bases in lessons 1-4
2. After you know all the meanings, learn a vocabulary word for each base.
  - a. What words use the root correctly?
    - i. Choose a word that the workbook uses OR
    - ii. Decide on a new word and look it up in the dictionary to see if it comes from the same Latin base
2. Now that you know the base's meaning and a vocabulary word, it's time to learn to use the word. Practice learning sentences that use the word and show meaning.

**Example:**

*Bene* = good: Words you could use = benefit, benefactor, beneficial

Sentences:

GOOD: Your schooling will benefit you and society, aiding both in productivity.

POOR: It is to my benefit to listen to your advice. (does not show meaning of benefit)

POOR: My class project was benefit. (misuses the word)

POOR: Your scholing will benefit you and society, aiding both. (contains misspelling)

**Read *A Lesson Before Dying*, keeping your evidence chart as you go.**

**Read *Tallgrass*, keeping your evidence chart as you go.**

**Edit and revise your charts, cutting out evidence that is not strong and choosing the best examples.**

**Write your *A Lesson Before Dying* analytical paragraph**

Your thesis (opening sentence) will answer the question: Do Jefferson, Grant, or the community grow in any significant fashion? Your evidence (at least three quotations) will prove that you are correct.

**Write your *Tallgrass* analytical paragraph**

Your thesis (opening sentence) will answer the question: Do Rennie, her parents, Daisy, or the community of Ellis grow in any significant fashion? Your evidence (at least three quotations) will prove that you are correct.

**Read at least ONE more book (or you could read 4 or 5) of your own choosing**

## MODEL for CHARTS

### **BIAS** in *A Lesson Before Dying*

Copy out moments in *A Lesson Before Dying* that are evidence of the inequality or bias of the 1940s Louisiana society depicted. Please list all evidence that you encounter. Some is quite explicit while some is subtler. Find at least 20 examples; then, return to your list after completing the novel to cut it back to the *best* 10-12 examples of bias; these should represent different types of bias or unfairness as well as different characters' feelings.

Quotation	Page	What does this quotation indicate?
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### **Growth** in *A Lesson Before Dying*

List moments in *A Lesson Before Dying* that are evidence of “growth.” This novel has important moments in which there is evidence of growth or hope for individuals or the society. The term “growth” is used here to mean non-biased responses or evidence that characters are growing into a more mature understanding of something. Please list all evidence of “growth” that you encounter; find 20, then cut back to the best 10.

Quotation	Page	What does this quotation indicate?
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### **BIAS** in *Tallgrass*

List moments in *Tallgrass* that are evidence of the prejudice or bias of the 1940s Colorado town depicted. List all evidence that you encounter. Find at least 20 examples; then return to your list and cut it back to the *best* ten; they should represent different types of bias as well as different characters' feelings.

Quotation	Page	What does this quotation indicate?
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### **Growth** in *Tallgrass*

List moments in *Tallgrass* that are evidence of “growth.” The term “growth” is used again here to mean non-biased responses or evidence that characters are growing into a more mature understanding of something. Sometimes “growth” is simply hope. Find at least 20 examples; then return to your list and cut it back to the *best* ten; they should represent different types of growth as well as different characters' feelings.

Quotation	Page	What does this quotation indicate?
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### Body paragraphs

Body paragraphs are the heart of your paper. This is where you compile the evidence and analysis in support of your thesis. Each paragraph demonstrates one aspect of your thesis by providing at least three supporting statements. Body paragraphs include an introductory (topic) sentence, three explanatory sentences, an example or quotation to support each explanatory sentence, and a concluding sentence.

**The topic sentence** introduces the statement that you are going to support in the paragraph. It should be broad enough to cover all of the information presented in the paragraph and specific enough to give the reader a clear idea of your direction. It should not contain any plot summary from your text.

**Explanatory sentences** follow the topic sentence and explain or clarify the idea presented in the topic sentence. Each explanatory sentence should advance the argument made in the topic sentence and be followed by supportive material that gives evidence for why the statement is valid. Remember that when using a quotation as support:

**Introduce** the quotation (sets up speaker and context) and imbed the quotation in the grammar of your sentence

**Reproduce** the quotation exactly as it is stated in the text or use [ ] and ellipsis to indicate changes

**Analyze** quotation by carefully paraphrasing the quotation in your own words, and then show what inferences can be drawn from the quotation and how it supports your idea.

**Closing sentence (concluding sentence or clincher)** wraps up the ideas in the paragraph and ties back to your topic sentence; a truly effective closing sentence may transition to the next paragraph.

### Checklist for a body paragraph:

#### *Body Paragraph:*

\_\_\_\_ topic sentence: the focus of your entire paragraph, **not plot detail**

\_\_\_\_ first supporting statement

\_\_\_\_ evidence

\_\_\_\_ analysis

\_\_\_\_ second supporting statement

\_\_\_\_ evidence

\_\_\_\_ analysis

\_\_\_\_ third supporting statement

\_\_\_\_ evidence

\_\_\_\_ analysis

\_\_\_\_ concluding sentence: wraps up ideas in the paragraph and may transition to the next paragraph

### How to quote prose

Whenever one wants to include a quotation, one must follow a three-step process:

**Introduce**—prepare the reader for what you are going to quote

**Reproduce**—quote the text exactly as it was written, and incorporate it into your sentence or introduce it with a colon or sentence. If you must change a word or words to fit it in your sentence, use [ ], and use ... to show any words you have omitted. Place the author's name in parentheses and the page number.

**Explain and Analyze**—make sure the reader understands exactly what the quotation means to you and how it supports the point you are trying to make.

**Prose:** If your quotation is **four lines or fewer** in your paper, you must set up the context for the quotation and introduce it with either the words leading into it or a , or a : and then follow the quotation with quotation marks and the parenthetical citation followed by a period. If the punctuation at the end of the quotation is a comma, an exclamation point, or a question mark, it is included before the quotation marks, but if it is a period, it follows the parentheses.

### **Quotations in your quotations:**

If you are quoting characters speaking in the text, you need to indicate speeches with single quotation marks around their spoken words.

#### **For example:**

When Carlson was trying to get Candy to end his dog's suffering, Candy responds, looking "about unhappily. 'No,' he said softly. 'No, I couldn't do that. I had 'im too long.'"

(45). Candy's unswerving loyalty to his old dog shows another aspect of his personality...

The double quotation marks indicate that you are directly quoting a passage from *Of Mice and Men*, and the single quotation marks indicate the actual words Candy says.

### **Paper mechanics**

The mechanics for the preparation of a paper are quite rigid, and you will always be expected to follow them exactly. Once you have learned the guidelines, however, you will continue to prepare papers in the same way in colleges that use the MLA guidelines.

#### **Heading: (on left hand side at the top of the page)**

The heading consists of:

Student's full name

Teacher's full name

Official course title

Date (European system: Date Month Year—e.g. 5 September 2006)

**Title:** should be **centered on the line below the heading**. All words should be capitalized except prepositions, conjunctions, and articles. **The title should not be bold print, in all capitals, underlined, italicized or in an artsy font.** Do not skip an extra space between the title and the text.

**Page numbers:** The header at the **top right corner** of each page should have the student's surname followed by the page number.

#### **Margins and other formatting:**

The paper should be formatted as follows:

- ☆ The document must be double spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman font.
- ☆ Margins must be 1" on all sides (make sure to change them because the default setting is 1.25").
- ☆ The last name and page number are in a header that must be 1/2" from the top of the page.
- ☆ The first word of a new paragraph must be indented \_" from the 1" paper margin.

### **Works Cited information**

Author's last name, first name. *Title of book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication.

#### **For example:**

Lewis, Bernard. *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2000 Years*. New York: Scribner, 1995.