

Central Catholic High School Summer Reading Program- 2009 STUDENT/PARENT COPY

Dear Central Parents:

As part of our department's efforts to keep Central a top-notch, college preparatory school, we are requesting your support this summer. Please read the requirements below and **sign the TEACHER copy and return** it to your son's current English teacher by **Friday, May 8, 2009**.

Thank you.
Central Catholic English Department

SPECIFICATIONS

Upon returning to school in August, students should have:

1. **Read the two prescribed books** for their respective division and class.
2. **Studied the works** by identifying characters' names, quotes, details, actions, or images relevant to prompt questions. These elements should be underlined in the books or marked with slips of paper.

Upon returning to school in August, their teacher will ask them to-

1. **Take objective or short answer tests** to evaluate their reading of the works.
2. **Write an essay** of at least 500 words on **ONE** of the four prescribed prompts. In addition, the essay should be a well-organized, multi-paragraph composition. It should NOT merely summarize the plot, but accurately paraphrase relevant scenes and selectively quote to support theme.

REGULAR ENGLISH

Program I: For next year's freshmen taking **English 117**, students read-

The Hound of the Baskervilles- Sir Conan Doyle

Prompt #1: Mystery novels intrigue readers by presenting clues, sometimes misleading, which invite readers to solve the puzzle- the mystery. Identify five clues in the story which invite such speculation. Explain how each clue enhances reader appreciation of the work.

Prompt #2: Authors use setting- time and place- to communicate themes. Describe the settings of this novel and explain how each helps the reader appreciate some aspect of the work.

When the Legends Die- Hal Borland

Prompt #3: Compare and contrast the Indian's world to the white man's. What differences between these worlds makes Thomas Black Bull feel the greatest tension or anxiety?

Prompt #4: Unless we come to terms with our past, we can not live for the future. Agree or disagree with this statement, based on the novel.

Program II: For next year's sophomores taking **English 127**, students read-

The Pearl – John Steinbeck

Prompt #1: A major theme of the novel is the destructive force of greed. In a well-organized multi-paragraph essay, discuss how Steinbeck presents this concept in the novel. Consider the setting, the imagery, and the shift in characterization in your analysis. Do NOT merely present a plot summary of the novel.

Prompt #2: Another important theme in the novel is that the human spirit can overcome tragedy through faith and love. In a well-organized multi-paragraph essay, defend or challenge this idea using concrete examples from your own experience or from the experiences of others to support your position. Do NOT merely summarize the plot.

Animal Farm- George Orwell

Prompt #3: One major theme of the novel is that "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" (Lord Acton). In a well-organized, multi-paragraph composition, explain how Napoleon seizes power and becomes an overpowering force of corruption on the farm Do NOT merely summarize the plot of the novel.

Prompt #4: In the closing scene in the novel, the animals notice that it is impossible to distinguish the pigs from the humans. In a well-organized multi-paragraph essay, discuss what Orwell is implying in this scene. Do NOT merely summarize the plot.

Program III: For next year's juniors taking **English 133**, students read-

On Writing- Stephen King

Prompt #1: Trace the important moments in King's life- childhood and adult- that shaped him as a writer.

Prompt #2: Be able to list the tools King describes as essential in the craft of writing. How does he suggest that one may sharpen and multiply those tools in order to become a more effective writer?

Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez- Richard Rodriguez

Prompt #3: Explain what Rodriguez means by private language and public language. How does this difference affect him in his education?

Prompt #4: Rodriguez describes his story as an American story. In what ways do you find this statement to be true? Do you believe that Rodriguez sacrificed important elements of his heritage to truly become American, or do you believe he was able to reconcile two cultures?

Program IV: For next year's seniors taking **English 143**, students read-

Brave New World- Aldous Huxley

Prompt #1: Compare the influence of television and popular culture in your life to social conditioning in novel. i.e. the use of soma, genetic conditioning, brainwashing, sleep-teaching etc. In short, what is the relevance of the novel to our world?

Prompt #2: Brave New World is a novel of extremes. He depicts the primitive world of the Savage and the sterile world of Brave New World in equally negative ways. Identify three scenes from each world and explain how they make the reader aware of important values or lack of values in our world.

For Whom the Bell Tolls- Ernest Hemingway

Prompt #3: This novel is set during the Spanish Civil War, a conflict in which Hemingway served as an ambulance driver. Which character best illustrates the psychological effects of war? How so?

Prompt #4: Although Hemingway has been characterized as an author who likes violence, a more accurate depiction is an author who creates dramatic tension before acts of violence by use of setting, dialogue or details. Identify at least one scene in the novel which creates this kind of tension and be prepared to analyze its composition.

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HONORS/AP ENGLISH

Program I: For next year's freshmen taking **English 117 H**, students read-

The Count of Monte Cristo- Alexander Dumas

Prompt #1: This story focuses on the themes of revenge and justice. How does Dumas make these themes come alive for readers?

Prompt #2: Which minor character plays the most important role in the novel? How so? Why?

Fahrenheit 451- Ray Bradbury

Prompt #3: This novel depicts a society where books have been made illegal. How does Bradbury depict through various scenes and characters the negative consequences of this decision?

Prompt #4: Which character in the novel evokes the most reader empathy? Compare and contrast characters. Explain why one character, in particular, seems to deserve the most reader empathy.

Program II: For next year's sophomores taking **English 127 H**, students read-

Death of a Salesman- Arthur Miller

Prompt #1: An important theme of this classic work is the quest for the "American Dream." Willy Loman might be called a tragic figure for his failure to achieve such a dream. Discuss specific examples of how Willy pursues this dream and why he fails.

Prompt #2: Compare and contrast the father- son relationship of Willy and Biff/Happy with those of Charley and Bernard.

Cry the Beloved Country- Allan Paton

Prompt #3: One of the major themes of this novel is that some social problems can breed tragedy for both the individual and the larger group in which he belongs. Cite a modern social problem that could lead to similarly destructive consequences. Discuss specific examples of how such tragic effects might occur.

Prompt #4: While the novel reveals in vivid imagery life in South Africa, discuss how Paton's story presents universal themes that can apply to any society.

A Separate Peace- John Knowles

Prompt # 5: The title of the novel provides its central theme. Discuss how Gene manages to attain the inner peace he seeks while the rest of the world is embroiled in war. Cite specific examples from the novel to show Gene's development into a mature young man.

Prompt # 6: Trace the relationship of Gene and Phineas from their initial meeting to the novel's conclusion. Give examples of incidents that Gene remembers as "shining moments" in their relationship and discuss how these incidents bring about change in their characters.

Program III: For next year's juniors taking **English 133 AP Language**, students read-

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Huckleberry Finn- Mark Twain

Prompt #5: Huck Finn places his friendship with Jim above conventional morality. Find moments in the book where Huck changes his opinion or understanding of Jim and of his relationship with him. Analyze how Mark Twain uses these moments to chronicle Huck's moral development at the same time he criticizes racism.

Prompt #6: This novel is famous for being written in American English, or in dialect. In fact, Huck narrates the book in one dialect, but there are many different dialects throughout the book. Identify them, and then look for ways in which different episodes underscore the importance of language itself.

Program IV: For next year's seniors taking **English 143 AP Literature**, students read-

A Streetcar Named Desire- Tennessee Williams

Prompt #1: In this play Blanche represents a deluded Southern belle who can not accept the downfall of her privileged way of life after the Civil War. What are the most visible and dramatic symptoms of her illness?

Prompt #2: This play does not shy away from treatment of the brutishness of life, as illustrated by Stanley's sadistic behavior. Analyze his character identifying his most predatory behaviors to illustrate his destructive, yet strangely charismatic character. How, in fact, is the play an indictment of the victimization of women in our culture?.

One Hundred Years of Solitude- Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Prompt #3: This novel concerns itself with memory and myth and human perception of time. How does Marquez break with a traditional linear narrative to tell his story?

Prompt #4: Parts of this novel have been characterized as Magic Realism. Identify at least four examples of this style and explain how this contributes to the tone and theme of the work.

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To verify that you have received this information, please do one of the following: 1.) Mail back to Central Catholic High School a signed copy of this form. Attention English Department Chairman. 2.) Fax a signed copy of this form back to Central Catholic Attention English Department Chairman. 3.) On Central Catholic's website, under Summer Reading, check the verification box. Deadline Friday, June 5, 2009.

We are aware of the summer reading program and realize that the specified readings should be completed before school begins in August.

Student's Signature: _____

Student's Name (Printed Below)

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