

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

English IV: College and Career Readiness

Ms. Feyedelem and Miss. Piazza
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Analysis Questions (50 points each):

Pick two titles from the following pages. For each of the two titles you select, you need to choose one question to answer in a minimum of 250 words (approximately one page, typed, double-spaced). Therefore, you will be turning in two questions/pages total (one question per book). Your answers should reflect a depth of understanding of the text and its themes. Additionally, each response should be written in MLA format and include a *minimum* of three quotes that support your opinions and ideas.

1. Choose one character from the novel to analyze in depth. What are the attributes, motivations, and conflicts for this character? Do you classify this character as a hero, villain, or something else? Why?
2. What is the significance of the title of this work? What moment, character, or passage best exemplifies the title?
3. What do you feel is the most important word, phrase, or paragraph? Explain why it is important to the central themes of the novel.
*Note: For this question, you may choose up to 3 words, phrases or paragraphs to discuss in your response.
4. What is the overall theme (moral, message, or life lesson) of the book? Which moment or character best exemplifies this to you?
5. What does this novel say about the time period/historical context of the novel? If the novel is written in a different time than when it is set, also examine what the novel says about the time period in which it was written.
6. Copy one or two poignant passages (approximately one page in length) from the selection you read, including page numbers. Explain the quotation in depth and analyze what ideas the author wanted you to think about while reading this text.

Help with MLA Formatting:

- The Purdue Online Writing Lab at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

Grading:

The two analysis questions are due by the second Friday back from summer vacation!
If you have any questions about the assignments, feel free to contact your teacher over the summer at the email address listed above.

Pick two titles from the list to read and complete your analysis questions.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Wintergirls*.* Viking, 2009. Anderson takes us into the mind of an anorexic teenager. This is a haunting story about Lia's desire to be the thinnest girl in school, her struggle with anorexia, and her path to recovery.

Beah, Ishmael. *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. Twelve-year-old Ishmael first flees from attacking rebels with his friends, but later he is transformed into a cold-blooded soldier. This is a heart-breaking personal memoir of a boy growing up in Sierra Leone in the 1990s. Alex Award 2008

Bradbury, Jennifer. *Shift*. Atheneum, 2008. When best friends Chris and Win go on a cross country bicycle trek the summer after graduating and only one returns, the FBI wants to know what happened.

Brown, Dan. *The Lost Symbol*. After scores of Da Vinci Code knockoffs, spinoffs, copies and caricatures, Brown has had the stroke of brilliance to set his breakneck new thriller not in some far-off exotic locale, but right here in our own backyard. Everyone off the bus, and welcome to a Washington, D.C., they never told you about on your school trip when you were a kid, a place steeped in Masonic history that, once revealed, points to a dark, ancient conspiracy that threatens not only America but the world itself.

Chbosky, Stephen. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. * MTV Books/Pocket Books, 1999. In this controversial, coming-of-age novel, Charlie's collection of letters to an unspecified recipient details the humorous trials and tribulations of trying to discover who he is and who he might become.

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games Trilogy*.* (3 books) As punishment for a rebellion generations previous against the Capitol wherein twelve of the districts were defeated and the thirteenth destroyed, every year one boy and one girl from each of the remaining twelve districts, between the ages of twelve and eighteen, are selected by lottery and forced to participate in the "Hunger Games". The Games are a televised event where the participants, called "tributes", must fight to the death in a dangerous outdoor arena until only one remains. The winning tribute and his/her corresponding district is then rewarded handsomely with food and plenty. The purpose of the Hunger Games is to provide entertainment for the Capitol and to serve as a warning to the Districts to remind them of the Capitol's power and lack of remorse.

Crutcher, Chris. *Deadline*. * Ben Wolf has big things planned for his senior year. *Had* big things planned. Now what he has is some very bad news and only one year left to make his mark on the world. How can a pint-sized, smart-mouthed seventeen-year-old do *anything* significant in the nowhere-ville of Trout, Idaho?

Foer, Jonathan Safran. *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*. * Houghton Mifflin, 2005. Oskar Schell is an inventor, Francophile, tambourine player, Shakespearean actor, jeweler, pacifist. He is nine-years-old; and he is on an urgent, secret search through the five boroughs of New York to find the lock that fits a mysterious key belonging to his father, who died in the attacks on the World Trade Center.

Grahame-Smith, Seth. *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*.* Grand Central, 2010. Many people know about Abe Lincoln's political successes, but few know that after his mother was killed by a vampire Old Abe became a ruthless vampire hunter. This "biography," packed full of historical facts, will not disappoint readers who like a good horror story.

Gruen, Sara. *Water for Elephants: A Novel*. * Algonquin, 2006. Jacob Jankowski, a penniless orphan forced to drop out of veterinary school during the Great Depression, joins a traveling circus. He forges a bond with Rosie the elephant and Marlena, the beautiful star of an equestrian act, whose husband is a handsome circus boss with a violent temper. Alex Award 2007

Hawking, Stephen. *A Briefer History of Time*. "Hawking's A Brief History of Time, published in 1988, was a surprise best-seller but a tough read for most people who tackled it. Hawking received many requests for a version that would make his discussion of deep questions about the universe more accessible. This book does that. Hawking and Mlodinow, a physicist turned science writer, proceed by small and careful steps from the early history of astronomy to today's efforts to construct a grand unified theory of the universe."

Hersey, John. *Hiroshima*. Six Hiroshima survivors reflect on the aftermath of the first atomic bomb.

Hopkins, Ellen. *Identical*. * McElderry Books, 2008. Identical twins Kaeleigh and Raeanne keep dark secrets. Their politician mother is emotionally remote, and their district court judge father is abusive. This novel in verse alternates first person descriptions of abuse, alcoholism, bulimia, drugs and mental illness. Be ready for a revelation at the end of this disturbing and insightful book.

Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. *Riverhead Books, 2007. Mariam and Laila, both married to Rasheed, form an uneasy alliance so that they and their children survive despite horrific circumstances. The story depicts Afghanistan from a woman's point of view during three decades of anti-Soviet jihad, civil war, and Taliban tyranny.

Keller, Helen. *The Story of My Life*. The story of Helen Keller, who was both blind and deaf, and her relationship with her devoted teacher, Anne Sullivan.

Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. * Malcolm X's searing memoir belongs on the small shelf of great autobiographies. The reasons are many: the blistering honesty with which he recounts his transformation from a bitter, self-destructive petty criminal into an articulate political activist, the continued relevance of his militant analysis of white racism, and his emphasis on self-respect and self-help for African Americans.

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. * Alfred A. Knopf, 2006. In a post-apocalyptic landscape, a man and a boy struggle toward the unknown. This dark and doomed quest offers a spiritual sense of soul and humanity. Pulitzer Prize, Fiction 2007

Niffenegger, Audrey. *Her Fearful Symmetry*. Scribner, 2009. Twenty-year-old twins Valentina and Julia Poole inherit their Aunt Elspeth Noblin's London apartment and travel from Chicago to England where they become caught up in the lives of their neighbors as well as the ghosts of the vast Highgate Cemetery next to the building.

Picoult, Jodi. *Nineteen Minutes*. * Atria Books, 2007. The residents of a small, ordinary New Hampshire town seek justice in the aftermath of a shocking school shooting carried out by a teenage boy who had been bullied since kindergarten.

Remarque, Erich. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. A young German soldier in World War I experiences pounding shellfire, hunger, sickness, and death.

Riggs, Ransom. *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*. When Jacob was little, his grandfather would tell him stories of the fantastical children's home where he grew up and the seemingly magical kids who lived there with him. When his grandfather is killed, Jacob sets out to find the home where these children lived, unearthing a magical secret and uncovering his true heritage.

Rosnay, Tatiana de. *Sarah's Key*. St. Martin's Press, 2007. Location: Paris. Time: July 16, 1942. Sarah, a ten-year-old girl, is brutally arrested along with her family by the French police in the Vel' d'Hiv' roundup, but not before she locks her younger brother in a cupboard in the family's apartment. Sixty years later, on the anniversary of the roundup, Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article about this dark episode and embarks on an investigation that leads her to long-hidden family secrets and Sarah's ordeal.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*. * Tayo, a young Native American, has been a prisoner of the Japanese during World War II, and the horrors of captivity have almost eroded his will to survive. His return to the Laguna Pueblo reservation only increases his feeling of estrangement and alienation. While other returning soldiers find easy refuge in alcohol and senseless violence, Tayo searches for another kind of comfort and resolution.

Stein, Garth. *The Art of Racing in the Rain: A Novel*. HarperCollins, 2008. Enzo is an old soul who just happens to be a dog. He is devoted to Denny who is a race car driver. The reader will be captivated as Enzo tells his master's story and prepares for his next life...as a human.

Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help*. Amy Einhorn Books, 2009. College graduate Skeeter Phelan, a white twenty-four-year-old social misfit and an aspiring writer, decides to secretly compile the untold stories of black domestic workers in her hometown of Jackson, Mississippi. Her fellow conspirators, two black women, Aibileen and Minny, risk their lives and livelihoods in the racially charged South of the 1960s to help collect the interviews she seeks.

Zusak, Markus. *The Book Thief*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2006. Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel, a young German girl, whose book stealing and storytelling talents help sustain her family, the Jewish man they are hiding, and her neighbors. National Jewish Book Award 2006

*** Some texts may include adult situations. Pick a text that you are comfortable reading. Please use Amazon.com to review the titles that interest you, speak with a librarian, or discuss titles with me this spring to make the best choice. Happy reading!**