

What Is the Value of Summer Reading?

University School students stand among thousands of high achieving students from other educational institutions across the nation engaging in summer reading. The Upper School English Department has joined the administration in examining this time honored practice designed to facilitate academic and social growth and has developed a summer reading program that best reflects the needs of our U School students.

We ask that students complete the assigned summer reading before school starts so they will have a valuable and successful opportunity to engage in teacher directed instruction as well as demonstrate understanding of the literature through assessments. The following list provides reasons why the summer reading assignments are so valuable:

- Literature specifically selected for the appropriate age and ability level sharpens analytical skills.
- Reading on a regular basis provides mental stimulation through imagery and recall.
- Reading expands the reader's vocabulary bank and results in increased vocalization of complex sentences and use of a wider variety of words.
- An expanded repertoire of literary experiences will prepare students to write with more depth and complexity in the classroom, on standardized tests, and on the college application essay.
- Long-term independent reading assignments, when combined with guided study packets provide an opportunity for students to continue to exercise their thinking skills at the prescribed level of difficulty (Regular, Honors, AP) of the next year's course work.

The summer reading assignments for each grade and ability level have been designed to enable students to complete the reading and assignment in approximately twenty hours. For students who establish a weekly reading routine, this will equate to two hours a week. Additionally, English teachers will be assisting seniors with their college entrance essays. Seniors will be asked to bring in a double-spaced typed draft of their essay on the first day of school in order to facilitate the early application process.

Students who are taking AP (Advanced Placement) courses should expect to devote approximately ten hours of preparation before school starts for each AP course. Preparatory assignments can be found by accessing the specific instructor's Homework Hero at the University School website.

Assignments for Summer Reading: Senior English Honors

Beowulf, trans. Heaney WW Norton 039332097-9

You are to keep a reading journal. Date each entry. Although you will not have the same number of words for each entry, you must show evidence of thoughtful interpretation.

Please see attached rubric for the reading journal.

Grendel, Gardner, Random House 0679723110

Write a synopsis for each chapter.

.

The Bible, King James Version

Knowledge of these stories is essential to the understanding of allusions in western literature. Students should keep notes **for their personal use** as we read various texts throughout the year.

Genesis, 1,2 3,4,19 (story of Lot);22 (Sacrifice of Isaac)

Samuel, Book 1: 16, 17,18 (David)

Samuel, Book II: 11, 12,14, 15,18 (David)

St Matthew , 2 , (Three Wise Men)

St Luke: 1:25, 26 (The Annunciation)

4:1-13 (The Temptation)

23: 32-56 (Crucifixion)

Revelations: 6 ,8 (Opening of the Seals)

GUIDELINES FOR READING JOURNAL

Your journal must be in a separate, loose-leaf binder. Each entry must be dated. It would be helpful to add page numbers for your thoughts. Page numbers must be cited for all quotes. You must use black ink for handwritten journals. Computer-generated journals must be 12 point, Times New Roman. You will be keeping this reading journal throughout the year.

The process you use should be one that you find best for you. Some students like to keep a running account; others like to read a chunk and then record their thoughts.

A

- Detailed meaningful passages, plot, and quote selections
- Thoughtful interpretation and commentary about the text
- Comments about literary elements: diction, syntax, imagery
- Insightful personal connections and thought-provoking questions
- Complete and thorough coverage of text
- Neat appearance, organized structure

B

- Less detailed, but appropriate passages, plot and quote selections
- Some intelligent commentary, some thematic connections
- Some literary elements, but less commentary on the contributions to the text
- Adequate coverage of the reading assignment
- Neat, readable appearance, organized structure

C

- Few details from the text
- Vague, unsupported commentary
- Plot summary/paraphrase
- Limited personal connection
- Few or obvious questions
- Lack of thorough coverage of the text
- Relatively neat appearance- difficult to read
- Haphazard organization

D/F

- Few details from the text
- Lack of evidence of thorough, insightful reading of the text
- Few literary elements- no discussion on meaning
- Limited personal connection
- Reliance on generalization