

June 2010

Dear Parents/Students

In an attempt to provide a relevant summer reading experience for students, the summer reading program connects the assigned texts to the English curriculum and provides an opportunity for both class discussion and a written evaluation of the works. This discussion and evaluation will be included in the first quarter English grade.

The summer reading program works as follows:

- Students in each grade level will read an assigned book or books as listed on the MDSA website: [www.mountdesales.org](http://www.mountdesales.org)
- Discussion questions can be downloaded from the MDSA website
- Students will use the discussion questions for each work to guide them in their reading
- Students do not have to write the answers to the questions, but answering the questions will help prepare them for the written evaluation/test which will be given the first or second week of the quarter
- Limited class discussion will take place on each assigned book.
- **The written evaluation/test on the book(s) will be included as part of the first quarter grade.**

In this way, students will have the opportunity to make the connection between their summer reading and other literature covered in their English classes and will also be held accountable for reading the works.

Since the summer reading selections will be used at the beginning of the first quarter, we encourage students to purchase the assigned text(s) so that they are available for the class discussion and evaluation. Barnes and Noble bookstore is provided with our reading list and makes every attempt to stock these books.

We sincerely hope that the program will provide an enjoyable reading and learning experience for your daughters.

Sincerely,

Colleen McDowell  
English Department Chair

## SUMMER READING LIST 2010

### **AP English**

*Waiting for Godot* - Samuel Becket, *The Metamorphosis* - Franz Kafka,  
*The Stranger* – Albert Camus, and *Anna Karenina* – Leo Tolstoy

### **Senior English**

Honors – *The Remains of the Day* - Kazuo Ishiguro. *Wuthering Heights* - Emily Bronte,  
*1984* – George Orwell

Level 2 – *1984* - George Orwell, *Wuthering Heights* - Emily Bronte

Level 1 – *The Lord of the Flies* – William Golding

### **Junior English**

AP Language/Honors - *My Antonia* - Willa Cather, *Death of a Salesman* – Arthur Miller,  
*The Secret Life of Bees* - Sue Monk Kidd,  
*Profiles in Courage* - John F. Kennedy

Levels 2 & 1 – *Of Mice and Men* – John Steinbeck,  
*The Secret Life of Bees* – Sue Monk Kidd

### **Sophomore English**

Honors – *Great Expectations* - Charles Dickens,  
*The Old Man and the Sea* – Earnest Hemingway

Level 2 – *Our Town* - Thornton Wilder, *The Pearl* – John Steinbeck

Level 1 – *The Pearl* – John Steinbeck

### **Freshmen English**

Honors – *Sense and Sensibility* - Jane Austen, *Rebecca* - Daphne DuMaurier

Levels 2 & 1 – *Rebecca* - Daphne DuMaurier

Freshmen English - Honors  
Summer Reading Questions

Texts: *Rebecca* - Daphne DuMaurier  
*Sense and Sensibility* - Jane Austen

Consider the following questions while you read the novels and be prepared to discuss them in class. You should be able to refer to specific examples from each novel.

*Rebecca*

1. Why does the heroine remain nameless? Is this namelessness symbolic?
2. Is *Rebecca* a ghost story?
3. What role does Mrs. Danvers play in the novel?
4. Are Maxim's actions consistent or inconsistent with his character?
5. Is justice served at the end of the novel?
6. How does the setting of Manderley contribute to the book's plot and tone?
7. How does Jack Favel impact the plot? Does he shed light on Rebecca's character?
8. How does the heroine's relationship with Maxim develop during the course of the novel?
9. Does the heroine succeed in establishing herself as the new Mrs. De Winter?
10. Gothic fiction is characterized by picturesque settings, an atmosphere of mystery and terror, and a hint of violence and the supernatural. What elements in the novel make *Rebecca* a work of gothic literature?

Freshmen English - Honors  
Summer Reading Questions

Texts: *Rebecca* and *Sense and Sensibility*

*Sense and Sensibility*

1. The title *Sense and Sensibility* lists two traits which can be applied, to one extent or another, to many of the characters in the book. Which two characters, in particular, define these traits? Does Austen seem to prefer one trait over the other?
2. Compare and contrast Willoughby and Colonel Brandon. What do they have in common? In what important ways are they different? Which is best suited to Marianne?
3. The relationship that begins to develop between Elinor and Edward at Norwood is, for the most part, conducted outside of the reading, while the reader is given a lot more information about the courtship of Marianne and Willoughby. Do you think this is deliberate? Why or why not?
4. Do you agree with Edward's decision to honor his engagement to Lucy Steele, which necessarily means forgetting the love he found with Elinor? Why or why not? Do you think Jane Austen agrees with it?
5. Do you think that Marianne's decision to marry Colonel Brandon is a believable ending? Why or why not?
6. Why do you think Colonel Brandon did not fall in love with Elinor?
7. Consider the character of Mrs. Jennings. In the beginning of the story, both Elinor and Marianne think she is a bit ridiculous, but by the end both girls confide in and respect her. What does this suggest about her character? About the sisters?
8. Willoughby's final confession to Elinor allows us in some part to forgive and pity him. Why would Austen include this scene in her book?
9. *Sense and Sensibility* contains, by its end, at least two marriages that Jane Austen considers successful, and at least two (potential) marriages that she does not. Does a comparison of these reveal any of Austen's attitudes towards marriage?

Freshmen English - Levels 1 & 2  
Summer Reading Questions

Text: *Rebecca*

Author: Daphne DuMaurier

Consider the following questions while you read the novel and be prepared to discuss them in class. You should be able to refer to specific examples from the work to support your ideas.

*Rebecca*

1. Why does the heroine remain nameless? Is this namelessness symbolic?
2. Is *Rebecca* a ghost story?
3. What role does Mrs. Danvers play in the novel?
4. Are Maxim's actions consistent or inconsistent with his character?
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Sophomore Honors  
Summer Reading Questions

Texts: *Great Expectations* - Charles Dickens  
*The Old Man and the Sea* – Earnest Hemingway

Consider the following questions while you read the novels and be prepared to discuss them in class. You should be able to refer to specific examples from each novel. You will also be required to either take a quiz and/or write an essay on the two novels.

*Great Expectations* – Charles Dickens

1. The Story opens with an unusual encounter between Pip and two escaped convicts. What kind of relationship do the two convicts seem to have?
2. What evidence suggests that Pip's benefactor is Miss Havisham?
3. Miss Havisham seems to encourage Estella's haughty attitude toward Pip; she murmurs to Estella, "Break their hearts...and have no mercy." What do you think she means?
4. In a way, Satis House is a symbol of Miss Havisham. How has she made it reflect her own state of mind?
5. In Dickens' novels, it is not unusual for unexpected relationships between characters to be revealed at the end. How does *Great Expectations* follow this pattern?
6. Wemmick's tiny home in Walworth is a castle defended against the city. How does the home life of John Wemmick resemble that of today's suburbanite?
7. Throughout the novel Dickens deals with the contrast between appearance and reality, illusion and substance. Mr. Jaggers tells Pip: "Taken nothing on its looks; take everything on evidence." Where in the novel has Pip been influenced by "looks" rather than evidence?
8. The climax of a novel is usually the most exciting part of the plot. Which incident would you identify as the climax? How does Dickens build suspense as he leads up to the climax?
9. Which of Dickens' two endings do you prefer? Why? Which do you think is most faithful to the nature of the characters involved?
10. While ill with fever, Pip realizes that "his great expectations had all dissolved, like our own marsh mists before the sun." How does this statement sum up all that Pip has learned? In your own words, state what you think is the overall theme of *Great Expectations*.

Sophomore Honors  
*The Old Man and the Sea* – Earnest Hemingway

Discussion Questions:

1. Even though the characters are named, Santiago is more often referred to as simply the “old man” and Manolin is simply “the boy”.

What effect does this have on the novella?

2. The sea is the only female character in the novella.

What is the relationship between the old man and the sea?  
Is the sea a mother or romantic partner for the old man?

3. Find allusions to Christ. Why does Hemingway depict Santiago as a Christ figure?

4. Why does the old man choose to fish for marlin as opposed to squid, bait fish, tuna or shrimp?

5. What is the old man’s relationship to other animals that rely on the sea for their survival?

6. Why is the old man a baseball fan? Why does he admire Joe DiMaggio?

7. How does the old man’s choice to be isolated with the big fish effect the story and its theme?

8. Why does the old man dream about lions?

9. *The Old Man and the Sea* is a story of a battle. Who wins? Why?

## Sophomore Level 2

*Texts:* *Our Town* - Thornton Wilder  
*The Pearl* - John Steinbeck

*Our Town*, an allegorical drama of all life, was first produced on Broadway in 1938. In a foreword to the play, Donald Margulies points out that: “ The perfection of the play starts with its title. Grover’s Corners belongs to all of us; it is indeed *our* town, a microcosm of the human family...” (xvii).

Consider each of the following questions and be ready to discuss them in class.

1. The Stage Manager is clearly an unusual character. Find examples in the play where he
  - a. gives the audience information about current happenings in the town.
  - b. gives the audience information about future occurrences.
  - c. injects his own attitude or philosophy.
  - d. as himself, interacts with other characters.
  - e. in the role of someone else, interacts with other characters.
2. There is not much action in *Our Town*. Instead, the audience is caught up in the very ordinary wishes and fears and worries that the characters reveal. What are three of these?
3. There are numerous instances in which the audience is led to view the particular goings-on in Grover’s Corners in the much broader context of universal or cosmic events. Find five such instances.
4. What lesson does Emily learn when she returns for her twelfth birthday?
5. The introduction noted the unusual staging of this play. List four specific examples of unusual staging.
6. *Our Town* is rich in its use of colloquial speech. Find five examples of informal English in the play, looking for informal vocabulary and pronunciation as well as grammar.

Sophomore English – Level 2 and Level 1  
Summer Reading Questions

Text: *The Pearl*

Author: John Steinbeck

Consider the following questions while you read the novel and be prepared to discuss them in class. You should be able to refer to specific examples from the novel. Remember to highlight and annotate the novel. In September you will take a quiz and /or write an essay on *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck.

1. Steinbeck introduces the major characters and their setting in the first chapter. What details suggest that Kino and Juana are good people who live in harmony with their world?
2. What larger social conflict has existed for centuries between the doctor's people and Kino's?
3. The poison of the scorpion infected Coyotito in the first chapter, but another kind of poison now infects the town. Steinbeck describes this evil with a metaphor: "the town swelled and puffed with the pressure of it." How would you describe what is actually happening in the town?
4. What details reveal how the pearl buyers have deceived the pearl divers for centuries?
5. At the opening of the novel, Kino and Juana were "one thing and one purpose." But the pearl has changed all this. What event dramatizes how greatly they have been divided?
6. Kino at first saw the pearl as a means of gaining a kind of freedom. How do both Kino and Juana change during the course of the novel?
7. Find passages that reveal what the pearl symbolizes to various people at various times in the story.
8. Ironic situations turn out to be just the opposite of what we expect. Kino hopes the pearl will enable Coyotito to have an education. Considering what happens later, what is ironic about the parents' hopes?
9. Throughout the novel, Steinbeck develops the theme that the rich and powerful can dominate the poor and uneducated. What incidents dramatize this theme?
10. The corrupting nature of greed is another theme in *The Pearl*. How has greed affected certain characters?

Junior Honors English/AP Language  
Summer Reading

Texts:

*Death of a Salesman* – Arthur Miller

*My Antonia* – Willa Cather

*The Secret Life of Bees* – Sue Monk Kidd

*Profiles in Courage* - John F. Kennedy

Discussion Questions:

In Junior Honors English we will address **The American Dream** as a significant theme which runs through American literature from the Puritans to the Post Modern Era. As you read each of the texts you should determine how each of the main characters defines and pursues his/her American Dream.

Consider each of the following questions and be ready to discuss them in class. Use these questions as a basis to discuss how each main character, Willy Loman, Antonia, Jim Burden, and Lily pursues his/her American Dream.

*Death of a Salesman* – Arthur Miller

1. In what ways does Willy not fit into the definition of an average working man building a secure home for his family? In what ways does he represent Everyman?
2. Does Linda help or hinder Willy in overlooking his small sales and his dishonest attempts to make them seem bigger? How else does she influence Willy?
3. Compare the way Biff treats his father with the way Happy does. Why is it hard for Biff to tell Willy the truth? Why doesn't Happy want him to?
4. How is Willy's killing himself for the insurance money symptomatic of the way he has lived?
5. What are the false values which the play reveals? What are the true values which the play upholds?

*My Antonia* – Willa Cather

1. How do we know that Antonia is high-spirited and proud? How do we see Antonia's maternal nature? Be prepared to give specific examples.
2. How is Antonia different from and similar to her parents?
3. How does Jim function in the story? What is his role? How does Jim change throughout the novel?
4. How does Antonia change throughout the story?
5. What role does "the past" play in the novel?

Junior Honors English/AP Language  
Summer Reading

*The Secret Life of Bees* - Sue Monk Kidd

1. How would you describe Lily's feelings about her mother? Did they change throughout the novel? Lily struggles with guilt and forgiveness. Was it harder for Lily to forgive her mother or herself? Explain.
2. What compelled Rosaleen to spit on the white men's shoes? Did she understand the ramifications of spitting on their shoes? Should she have apologized? What aspects of Rosaleen's personality are appealing?
3. What does each of the Boatwright sisters, May, June and August, represent? For example, how would the story be different if there had just been June and August in the pink house and no May involved? How did time spent in the company of the Calendar Sisters and the Daughters of Mary transform Lily?
4. The social situation outside the sanctuary of the pink house is harsh. How do the two worlds conflict? Other white people in the outside community judge Lily's presence in this little black enclave. What do you think of their reactions? Do you think their little community could have survived in that era in the American South, or is it too idealistic a picture?
5. What do the bees mean to the story? What is "the secret life of bees?" Who is the queen bee? How does the bee calendar, along with the changing seasons, influence the characters and their lives?

*Profiles in Courage* - John F. Kennedy

1. After reading Chapter 1 of *Profiles in Courage*, define political courage.
2. Select two of the eight individuals Kennedy profiled and answer the following questions for each person selected:
  1. How were this individual's actions/decisions courageous?
  2. What obstacles, dangers, or pressures did this individual encounter?
  3. Do you believe this individual's course of action best served the larger public interest? Why or why not?
  4. In your opinion, does this individual exemplify political courage? Explain.

Junior English – Levels 1 & 2  
Summer Reading

Texts: *The Secret Life of Bees* - Sue Monk Kidd  
*Of Mice and Men* – John Steinbeck

*The Secret Life of Bees*

1. How would you describe Lily's feelings about her mother? Did they change throughout the novel?
2. Lily struggles with guilt and forgiveness. Was it harder for Lily to forgive her mother or herself? Explain.
3. What compelled Rosaleen to spit on the white men's shoes? Did she understand the ramifications of spitting on their shoes? Should she have apologized?
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5. What does each of the Boatwright sisters, May, June and August, represent? For example, how would the story be different if there had just been June and August in the pink house and no May involved?
6. How did time spent in the company of the Calendar Sisters and the Daughters of Mary transform Lily?
7. The social situation outside the sanctuary of the pink house is harsh. How do the two worlds conflict?
8. Other white people in the outside community judge Lily's presence in this little black enclave. What do you think of their reactions?
9. Do you think their little community could have survived in that era in the American South, or is it too idealistic a picture?
10. What do the bees mean to the story? What is "the secret life of bees?" Who is the queen bee? How does the bee calendar, along with the changing seasons, influence the characters and their lives?

Junior English – Levels 1 & 2  
Summer Reading Questions

Text: *Of Mice and Men*

1. The title *Of Mice and Men* is an allusion to a poem by Robert Burns. Do a little research to find and read the poem. What happens to the mice in the poem? How is this a foreshadowing of what will happen in the novel?
2. Compare and contrast the characterizations of George and Lennie. What feelings do you have about each one?
3. To what extent is the societal make-up of the ranch representative of overall American society?
4. Hands are significant in the story. Which characters' hands does Steinbeck draw the reader's attention to? What symbolic purposes does he have with each of these characters?
5. Look for instances of animal imagery in the story. What purposes do you think Steinbeck has for describing his characters in terms of animal traits?
6. George and Lennie's dream – the American Dream – to have a farm of their own and to "live off the fatta the lan' (as Lennie likes to say) is central to the story. How does their dream affect the other characters? Why doesn't their dream come to fruition?
7. What pattern can be seen in the way that Steinbeck begins each chapter? What purpose does Steinbeck have in doing this?
8. What roles do these minor characters play: Carlson, Whit, Slim, Curley's wife?
9. Be able to discuss how loneliness is a theme of the story.
10. What is the climax/turning point of the plot? How do you feel about the way things turn out? Why?

Senior English – Honors  
Summer Reading

Texts: *The Remains of the Day* - Kazuo Ishiguro.  
*1984* – George Orwell  
*Wuthering Heights* - Emily Bronte

*The Remains of the Day*  
Author: Kazuo Ishiguro

Consider the following questions while you read the novel and be prepared to discuss them in class.

1. What do Stevens' attempts at bantering tell you about him?
2. Why is it significant that Mr. Farraday is an American?
3. How does Stevens interpret the "tiger story" and how is his interpretation reflected in his behavior?
4. What do we learn about Stevens through his father's death?
5. What evidence do we have of Miss Kenton's true feelings for the narrator?
6. What evidence do we have that Lord Darlington is not a man to be respected?
7. Why doesn't Stevens tell the villagers at the Taylors' that he is not really a gentleman? Why is this lie significant?
8. Does Stevens learn anything or change at the end of the story? How do you know?
9. What is Stevens' definition of dignity? Does it change over the course of the story? How? (or why not?) Does Stevens have "dignity" according to his own definition? Why or why not?

Senior English – Honors and Level 2  
Summer Reading

Text: *1984*

Author: George Orwell

1. What are the three slogans of the Inner Party?
2. Explain the Party slogan, “Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past.”
3. Parsons brags about his children for doing what?
4. What is the purpose of marriage in the state?
5. How does Winston view the proles?
6. What finally convinces Winston that O’Brien is a member of the Brotherhood?
7. What does Winston remember about his family and his relationship with his mother?
8. How does O’Brien test Julia and Winston?
9. What is the purpose of war in the world of *1984*?
10. What is doublethink and what is its purpose to the ruling class?
11. What is O’Brien attempting to teach Winston?
12. What final question does Winston ask O’Brien?
13. How does Winston show that he is not entirely true to Big Brother?
14. How is it evident that Winston really is a different person?
15. Could America ever become a society as depicted in *1984*?

Senior English – Honors, Level 2  
Summer Reading

Text: *Wuthering Heights*  
Author: Emily Bronte

Consider the following questions while you read the novel and be prepared to discuss them in class.

1. Describe the two dreams Mr. Lockwood has while staying at Wuthering Heights. How do you interpret each of the dreams?
2. Contrast Heathcliff and Edgar Linton.
3. What is your interpretation of Catherine's dream about heaven (chapter 9)?
4. What is *your* best answer to each of the two questions Isabella poses to Nelly in the beginning of her letter?
5. On what basis do Catherine and Heathcliff each blame one another for Catherine's impending death (chapter 15)?
6. How does the love triangle of the second generation echo the love triangle of the first generation?
7. Why is Linton so fearful and anxious in Chapter 26?
8. In Chapter 27 Heathcliff says, "It's odd what a savage feeling I have to anything that seems afraid of me!" Is there any truth in this self-assessment? Give examples.
9. In what ways might Nelly be responsible for many of the tragic events of the story?
10. Do you think Catherine (the elder) has really been haunting Heathcliff since her death or is her ghost just in his mind? Explain your answer.

Senior English (Level 1)  
Summer Reading:

Text: *The Lord of the Flies*  
Author: William Golding

1. Why are the boys on the island by themselves? How did they get there? Do all of them think that the island will be a paradise for them?
2. Describe the ways in which the conch and Piggy's glasses are used. What symbolic meanings can be seen in them?
3. Why does the mountaintop fight and fire scene mark a crisis in the story?
4. Point out the ironic nature of the answer to Ralph's pleading for a sign from the adult world in Chapter 6.
5. Discuss Simon's characterization and his role in the story.
6. The pig's head on a stick says that there will be "fun" on the island. Describe the kind of fun being talked about.
7. Discuss the differences between Jack and Ralph in characterization and leadership styles.
8. Why does Chapter 11 mark a symbolic end of civilization on the island?
9. Compare and contrast the book's first and last views of Ralph. Point out the irony.
10. Discuss the nature of "the beast" in the story. Consider all of the ways in which the beast is thought about, imagined and feared throughout the story. What do you think the story is saying about "the beast" in human experience?

## AP English - Summer Reading

Texts: *Waiting for Godot* - Samuel Beckett  
*The Metamorphosis* – Franz Kafka  
*The Stranger* – Albert Camus  
*Anna Karenina* - Leo Tolstoy

*Waiting for Godot*, *The Metamorphosis*, and *The Stranger* are three works written from an Existentialist point of view. Crucial to our discussion of these works is your understanding of the Existentialist philosophy and its social and political context.

Before reading the three works, you should research Existentialism, write a broad definition of the philosophy, and identify the general time period in which it was popular and the social and political context from which it emerged.

You should also research each of the three authors to understand his motivation for embracing an Existentialist point of view.

We will begin the first semester with a reading quiz that addresses the Existentialist philosophy and each of the three works. The reading quiz will be followed by extensive class discussion of the works, and finally you will write an essay that addresses the three works within the social and political context from which they were written.

### *Anna Karenina* - Leo Tolstoy

*Anna Karenina* is a large novel which addresses the social issues of 19<sup>th</sup> century Czarist Russia from two points of view: Anna Karenina and Constantine Levin. Tolstoy juxtaposes the stories of these two characters to ultimately provide a message on how one should live a worthwhile life.

In preparation for our discussion you should:

- Take careful notes on the plot development, focusing on Tolstoy's sense of religion/spirituality and society versus nature
- Make a character list with descriptions of each of the main characters (you may use Spark Notes or Cliff Notes for this and as long as you have them available to you they do not have to be written)
- Research Tolstoy to determine the autobiographical elements of the story (an introduction to the novel should effectively cover this)
- Write a summary of Levin's story and a summary of Anna's story highlighting their struggles in their respective stories (each summary should be one page double spaced using quotes from the work)
- Write a brief statement of Tolstoy's view of women in 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia. Include Anna, Dolly, and Kitty in your discussion. (one page double spaced using quotes from the work)
- Write a statement of Tolstoy's message in the story regarding how one should live a worthwhile life. (one page double spaced using quotes from the work)

**The written analyses will be due the first day of class.**