



English Department Summer Reading '09 Grades 6-12 Policy and Instructions

Overview and Instructions

All secondary students in grades 6-12 are expected to participate in the Summer Reading Program. In June, English teachers will discuss summer reading lists and related instructions. Lists include a brief synopsis of each book to assist students in making appropriate and appealing choices. The lists may be found on the Hingham Public Schools website at www.hinghamschools.com and at the Hingham Public Library. Lists will also be available in the front offices of each school and at local bookstores such as Barnes and Noble, Borders, and Buttonwood. Each student is required to read a specified whole-school community reading selection and **one** other book from the appropriate grade-level list. (Separate requirements are specified for seniors enrolled in AP Literature.) Hopefully the variety of titles will encourage students to exceed these minimum requirements. Students are encouraged to take notes or keep journals on their summer reading. Teachers will discuss note-taking strategies and options with students when they assign the summer reading. Suggested strategies will also be posted on the website. Students should complete their summer reading before school starts.

Rationale

We promote summer reading so that students will explore and ultimately value reading as an enjoyable leisure-time pursuit. We believe that wide recreational reading improves reading comprehension, writing style, syntactical awareness, vocabulary, spelling, and grammatical skills. We view reading as a cornerstone for success throughout life. The ability to read well and the habit of reading widely afford myriad opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success.

Criteria and Sources for Selection

Reading lists for all grades are designed to accommodate a wide range of ability and interest levels. As adolescents gravitate toward novels that deal with important issues that are relevant to their lives, some books on the lists traverse the complex emotional terrain of family relationships, loneliness, despair, violence, sexuality, and so forth. Any given list will reflect a blend of classic and contemporary works, depiction of characters who exhibit a variety of cultural differences, minority representation in terms of both authors and characters, and a balanced list of titles in terms of gender appeal. Parents are encouraged to assist students in making choices that are appropriate for and acceptable to both the student and his/her family.

Teachers use the following sources to assist them in making summer reading selections: recommendations from teachers, students, and parents; input from other school systems; suggestions from journals and websites of professional organizations such as ALA, IRA, and NCTE; information received at professional conferences; newspaper reviews; visits to libraries; explorations at bookstores.

Evaluation

In September, students will be assessed on their summer reading. Teachers provide a variety of grade appropriate options for writing and discussion. Some writing prompts will replicate those found on MCAS or AP exams. Students who choose to take notes or keep journals on their summer reading choices will receive extra credit.

We hope that your summer reading experience is an enjoyable and rewarding one.