

11th Grade English Summer Reading Requirements Chantilly High School 2007-2008

English II Regular ONE BOOK REQUIRED

Rationale: Summer reading is required of all rising eleventh grade students. Going back to school in September is much easier for those who have maintained the habit of responsive reading during the summer. Furthermore summer reading can provide a pleasurable broadening of young people's horizons. Students who read as a source of both intellectual stimulation and overall relaxation are likely to become lifelong readers. With summer reading, students are exposed to literature that serves both the intellectual and recreational purposes. Finally those who read throughout the summer months and on other school vacations usually become more articulate speakers and more graceful writers which is in line with the goals of the Chantilly High School English department.

Assessment: A common assessment will consist of a ten question short essay test specific to each text which will be administered the second week of school. The test will be worth the same amount of points in all English II regular classes.

Summaries: (Choose one from the following four options)

The Bonesetter's Daughter by Amy Tan

The Bonesetter's Daughter conjures up a powerful and tragic story of murder, betrayal, and survival, in which dragon bones, vengeful ghosts, and family curses are among the forces her characters must contend with daily. The novel weaves together two separate narratives: the story of LuLing, a young girl in 1930s China, and that of LuLing's daughter, Ruth, as a middle-aged woman in modern San Francisco. Ruth is a ghostwriter chafing under the weight of a stagnant relationship and coming to terms with the growing senility of her formidable mother. A widow for four decades, LuLing struggles to raise Ruth while battling the demons that chased her from her childhood in China to her new life in America. She longs for her beloved Precious Auntie, whose restless spirit wanders the world because her dead body was thrown off a cliff, not buried.

(Summary taken from Barnes and Noble)

The Revenant by Michael Punke

The Revenant opens in 1823, two decades after the trailblazing expedition of Lewis and Clark, when thirty-six-year-old Hugh Glass joins the Rocky Mountain Fur Co. on a venture into perilous, unexplored territory. A seasoned frontiersman, Glass is scouting ahead of the main troop when he is attacked and savagely mauled by a grizzly bear. His wounds are grievous - scalp nearly torn off, back deeply lacerated, throat clawed open - and he is unconscious when his fellow trappers find him. Though they wait for Glass's death, he is still drawing breath three days later. "Facing hostile territory and the press of winter, the expeditions captain pays two volunteers - John Fitzgerald, a ruthless mercenary, and young Jim Bridger, the future "King of the Mountain Men" - to stay behind and bury Glass when his time comes. But the fidelity of these volunteers proves short-lived." When Indians approach their camp, Fitzgerald and Bridger abandon Glass. Worse yet, they rob the wounded man of his rifle and knife, even his flint and steel - the very things that might have given him a chance on his own. Deserted, defenseless, and furious, Glass vows his survival and his revenge.

(Summary taken from Barnes and Noble)

Rocket Boys by Homer Hickman Jr.

The book recounts the rocket launching adventures of Homer Hickam and his friends during their teenage years in Coalwood, West Virginia, in the 1950s. Inspired by the historic Soviet Sputnik launch in 1957, Hickam and his self-proclaimed Big Creek Missile Agency decided to launch a rocket into space. Unbeknownst to them, this seemingly harmless pursuit changes a destiny bound for a life of laboring in Coalwood's bituminous coal mines. Hickam would, in fact, grow up to be a pioneering NASA engineer at the Marshall Space Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Hickam's plain-spoken narrative captures the wide-eyed innocence of the era and draws the reader into a world of boyhood friendships, school-girl crushes and adolescent dreams. Coalwood, an impoverished small town where a promising future consisted of issuing a young boy a mining hat upon high-school graduation, however, is a less than idyllic place for dreams. Instead it serves as a reminder of the author's youthful yearning for a brighter future. In Hickam's teenage world, characters are observed through idle talk or the occasional encounter, emotions are distant curiosities, and glimpses of life in the 1950s are only frames of reference. This is neither a famous astronaut's autobiography nor a dramatic portrayal of life in Cold War America. It's simply a true-life adventure that tickles the imagination while it evokes a more idealistic time.

(Summary taken from Barnes and Noble)

Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

Lily Owens has shaped her entire life around one devastating, blurred memory - the afternoon her mother was killed, when Lily was four. Since then, her only real companion has been the fierce-hearted, and sometimes just fierce, black woman Rosaleen, who acts as her "stand-in mother." When Rosaleen insults three of the deepest racists in town, Lily knows it's time to spring them both free. They take off in the only direction Lily can think of, toward a town called Tiburon, South Carolina - a name she found on the back of a picture amid the few possessions left by her mother. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters named May, June, and August. Lily thinks of them as the calendar sisters and enters their mesmerizing secret world of bees and honey, and of the Black Madonna who presides over this household of strong, wise women. Maternal loss and betrayal, guilt and forgiveness entwine in a story that leads Lily to the single thing her heart longs for most.

(Summary taken from Barnes and Noble)

English II AP TWO BOOKS REQUIRED

Rationale: Students are required to read two of the 20th century works representing the long silenced minority voice in American literature.

Assessment: A common assessment will be administered in the second week of first quarter. Each essay question will emulate the kind of questions that appear on the AP test.

Summaries:

Choose **two** of the following three options

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

Esperanza and her family didn't always live on Mango Street. Right off she says she can't remember all the houses they've lived in but "the house on Mango Street is ours and we don't have to pay rent to anybody, or share the yard with the people downstairs, or be careful not to make too much noise, and there isn't a landlord banging on the ceiling with a broom. But even so, it's not the house we thought we'd get." Esperanza's childhood life in a Spanish-speaking area of Chicago is described in a series of spare, poignant, and powerful vignettes. Each story centers on a detail of her childhood: a greasy cold rice sandwich, a pregnant friend, a mean boy, how the clouds looked one time, something she heard a drunk say, her fear of nuns: "I always cry when nuns yell at me, even if they're not yelling." Esperanza's friends, family, and neighbors wander in and out of her stories; through them all Esperanza sees, learns, loves, and dreams of the house she will someday have, her own house, not on Mango Street.

The Color of Water by James McBride

James McBride grew up one of twelve siblings in the all-black housing projects of Red Hook, Brooklyn, the son of a black minister and a woman who would not admit she was white. The object of McBride's constant embarrassment, and his continuous fear for her safety, his mother was an inspiring figure, who through sheer force of will saw her dozen children through college, and many through graduate school. McBride was an adult before he discovered the truth about his mother: the daughter of a failed itinerant Orthodox rabbi in rural Virginia, she had run away to Harlem, married a black man, and founded an all-black Baptist church in her living room in Red Hook. In this remarkable memoir, she tells in her own words the story of her past. Around her narrative, James McBride has written a powerful portrait of growing up, a meditation on race and identity, and a poignant, beautifully crafted hymn from a son to his mother.

Hunger for Memory by Richard Rodriguez

Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez is a 1982 autobiography by Chicano intellectual Richard Rodriguez. The book, written as several separate essays, narrates Rodriguez's educational history. Central to these narrations are Rodriguez's experience of separation from family, personal alienation and finally assimilation into American society due to having to break away from his private, Spanish speaking childhood household into the English speaking American public sphere. Rodriguez's further argues against bilingual education, stating that if he hadn't been forced to learn English, he would have never been able to attain a functional public identity and become a productive member of society.

