

## English 9 – Required Summer Reading 2009 Chantilly High School

### **Rationale:**

Summer reading is an FCPS requirement of all rising ninth grade students. Returning to school in September is much easier for those who have maintained the habit of responsive reading during the summer. Summer reading provides a pleasurable broadening of a teenager's experiences. Students who read as a source of both intellectual stimulation and overall relaxation are likely to become lifelong readers. Those who read over the summer months are more articulate speakers and more graceful writers, skills that are aligned with the Chantilly High School English Department's goals for each and every student.

### **English Nine Students (Students enrolled in either Pre-AP or World Civilizations see next page for summer assignment):**

#### ***Fever 1793* Summary:**

The opening scene of Anderson's ambitious novel about the yellow fever epidemic that ravaged Philadelphia in the late 18th century shows a hint of the gallows humor and insight of her previous novel, *Speak*. Sixteen-year-old Matilda "Mattie" Cook awakens in the sweltering summer heat on August 16th, 1793, to her mother's command to rouse and with a mosquito buzzing in her ear. She shoos her cat from her mother's favorite quilt and thinks to herself, "I had just saved her precious quilt from disaster, but would she appreciate it? Of course not." Mattie's wit again shines through several chapters later during a visit to her wealthy neighbors' house, the Ogilvies. Having refused to let their serving girl, Eliza, coif her for the occasion, Mattie regrets it as soon as she lays eyes on the Ogilvie sisters, who wear matching bombazine gowns, curly hair piled high on their heads ("I should have let Eliza curl my hair. Dash it all"). But thereafter, Mattie's character development, as well as those of her grandfather and widowed mother, takes a back seat to the historical details of Philadelphia and environs. Extremely well researched, Anderson's novel paints a vivid picture of the seedy waterfront, the devastation the disease wreaks on a once thriving city, and the bitterness of neighbor toward neighbor as those suspected of infection are physically cast aside. However, these larger scale views take precedence over the kind of intimate scenes that Anderson crafted so masterfully in *Speak*. Scenes of historical significance, such as George Washington returning to Philadelphia, then the nation's capital, to signify the end of the epidemic are delivered with more impact than scenes of great personal significance to Mattie.

**Assessment:** You should expect to be tested on your knowledge of one of these novels within the first three weeks of school. Your test may include an objective section, a writing portion and/or a quote identification section.

**If you have any questions, please contact Allison Lowe at [Allison.lowe@fcps.edu](mailto:Allison.lowe@fcps.edu).**

## **English Nine Pre-AP and World Civilizations Students:**

Students enrolled in Pre-AP 9 or World Civ are required to complete **two** assignments which will serve as the basis for their study of classical literature during the school year. They will read selections from **Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*** as well as specific books from **Homer's *The Odyssey***. **Additionally, they must complete the written assignment that is paired with *The Odyssey*.**

### ***Mythology:***

Greek mythology has had a profound influence on Western literature from the Middle Ages to the modern era; familiarity with major characters and stories from the Greek chronicles will enhance your cultural literacy and provide a sound foundation for your continued English studies here at Chantilly High School. Please purchase (borrow, or dig up) a copy of Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* and read the following sections:

1. Part 1: Chapter I "The Gods"
2. Part 4: Chapter I "The Trojan War," Chapter II "The Fall of Troy," and Chapter III "The Adventures of Odysseus"
3. Part 5: Chapter I "The House of Atreus"

**Assessment:** You should expect to be tested on your knowledge of these chapters by the third week of school. You should be able to identify the **major** characters from the myths and **briefly** (1-2 sentences) recount their stories. You are not required to take notes, but doing so will help you retain the information.

### **Robert Fagles' translation of Homer's *The Odyssey***

Odysseus is one of the most famous heroes in history and an excellent introduction to Campbell's ideas. After reading Hamilton's account of the Greek hero (to familiarize yourself with the basic plot), please read the following Books in **Robert Fagles' translation of *The Odyssey***:

Book 5 "Odysseus—Nymph and Shipwreck"

Book 6 "The Princess and the Stranger"

Book 9 "In the One-Eyed Giant's Cave"

Book 10 "The Bewitching Queen of Aea"

Book 11 "The Kingdom of the Dead"

Book 12 "The Cattle of the Sun"

Book 22 "Slaughter in the Hall"

Odysseus was the greatest hero of ancient Greek civilization; they viewed Odysseus as the exemplar of manhood and kingship. Even further, his story, as told by Homer, was regarded by the Greeks not only as history but also as religion. The Greeks believed that Odysseus' adventures presented lessons in morality and citizenship.

Modern readers, however, often respond critically to Odysseus; many modern readers believe that Odysseus does not meet their standards of heroism. Where the Greeks saw cunning, modern readers might see deceit. Where the Greeks saw courage, modern readers might see arrogance. Where the Greeks saw faith and loyalty, modern readers might see selfishness and infidelity.

Our exploration of *The Odyssey* will begin with a close examination of Odysseus' character. We will consider him, primarily, from the Greek perspective to understand why they venerated the king of Ithaca. We will, however, also discuss Odysseus' relevance to our own society and determine whether he deserves our respect as well.

**Please see the next page for instructions on completing your summer assignment.**

**Pre-AP Nine and World Civilizations**  
***The Odyssey Companion Assignment***

After the destruction of Troy, Odysseus encounters many challenges on his journey home:

1. The Cicones
2. The Laistrygones
3. The Lotus Eaters
4. The Cyclops
5. Circe
6. The Underworld
7. The Sirens
8. Scylla and Charybdis
9. Helios' Island
10. Calypso
11. The Phaeacians
12. The Suitors

In each of these adventures, Odysseus demonstrates the qualities the Greeks admired so much (courage, cunning, loyalty, leadership, etc.). Again, modern readers might see in Odysseus' actions the opposite characteristics (cowardice, deceit, disloyalty, weakness, etc.). As you read about each of Odysseus' adventures, look for evidence of his heroism...or lack of heroism. Look for quotations that show Odysseus to be courageous or cowardly, loyal or disloyal, etc. Underline or highlight these quotations as you find them. Try to find AT LEAST TWO quotations for EACH ADVENTURE (24 quotations total). These quotations may be complementary or contradictory; that is, both quotations might show Odysseus' admirable characteristics OR each quotation might show opposing characteristics (i.e. one positive and one negative).

On a separate sheet of paper, list each of Odysseus' adventures and copy the quotations that you found. **Please include the Book # and line # for each quotation.**

This list is due the first day of school. I prefer that the assignment be typed, but, if you're completing this on the beach and must handwrite the assignment, please write NEATLY on one side of each page only.

**If you have any questions, please contact Allison Lowe at**

**[Allison.lowe@fcps.edu](mailto:Allison.lowe@fcps.edu) or Eric Richardson at [eric.richardson@fcps.edu](mailto:eric.richardson@fcps.edu)**