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Mrs. Poquis
Ms. Morris**

Reading Literary Nonfiction

**AP English Language
and Composition
11th Grade**

**Summer Reading
Assignment
2009**

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- You decide which book you wish to read.
- You decide how many points you wish to work toward.
- You decide which passage best conveys the book's theme.

What is Literary Nonfiction?

This powerful, ever-controversial genre is called by many names:

- Literary nonfiction
- Creative nonfiction
- Factual fiction
- Documentary narrative
- The literature of actuality.

Whatever you call it, it is a form of storytelling as old as the telling of stories.

The genre recognizes both the inherent power of the real and the deep resonance of the literary. It is a form that allows a writer both to narrate facts and to search for truth, blending the empirical eye of the reporter with the moral vision -- the "I" -- of the novelist.

In a culture saturated by data without context, facts without insight and information without enlightenment, literary nonfiction holds a special and vital place.

"Facts... they lie unquestioned, uncombined," wrote the poet Edna St. Vincent Millay.

Wisdom enough to leech us of our ill is daily spun, but there exists no loom
To weave it into fabric.

But the loom does exist.

Literary nonfiction is the loom.

Throughout the centuries, inventive hybrid writers, from (novelist) Daniel DeFoe to (journalist) John Hersey to (essayist) Joan Didion have helped construct it. The stories they have woven on this loom are about real people, real places and real emotions.

They are timely stories that tap into the moment. But they are also timeless tales that transcend it.

This situation occurs because literary nonfiction is able to tell both the small story -- the damming of a river, the building of a house, a murder -- and the bigger one, the human narrative with its enduring themes.

The "literary" in literary nonfiction pertains to the exploration of these themes. It also defines how the story itself is told.

Literary nonfiction writers commonly use the techniques of fiction, including creation of a narrative arc, character development, scene-setting, action sequences, dialogue and interior monologue. The true stories they write using these techniques have the drama of fiction and force of fact.

Literary nonfiction takes shape in many forms, from reportage to memoir, from personal essay to biography. Nature writing, travel writing and science writing all have their literary practitioners. The true crime "novel" is an artifact of literary nonfiction.

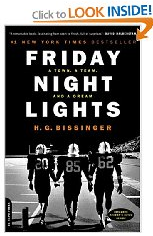
Writers in the genre tackle everything from prison riots to orchid collecting, from fifth grade classrooms to nuclear disasters, from wilderness hiking to frozen orange juice.

"Alternatively known as 'creative nonfiction,' 'literary journalism,' and the 'literature of fact,' literary nonfiction is that branch of writing which employs literary techniques and artistic vision usually associated with fiction or poetry to report on actual persons, places, or events. The genre is broad enough to include nature and travel writing, biography, memoir, and the familiar essay, as well as 'new journalism' and the nonfiction novel."

<http://www.nt.armstrong.edu/literary.html>

Read **ONE** of the following nonfiction titles and use it to complete the project.

***Friday Night Lights* by H. G. Bissinger**



From Library Journal

In 1988, Bissinger, a Pulitzer Prize-winning Philadelphia Inquirer editor, left his job to spend a year with a high school sports team. The sport he picked was football, the location, the depressed West Texas oil town of Odessa, called by Larry McMurtry "the worst town on earth." Here 20,000 fans turn out regularly to watch their Permian Panthers win. Here there is no high-blown talk of playing the game well; just the raw need to win at all costs. In this atmosphere, players

vomit from nervousness before each game and often play with injuries. On the few occasions when the team suffers a loss, the coach's front lawn sprouts "For Sale" signs. Bissinger makes you feel the tensions of the kids, who are not just playing a game, but literally fighting for the honor of their town. He also accomplishes the more difficult feat of making the team's rabid fans sympathetic. His language sometimes verges on the overblown, but it does echo the mythical proportions of the game and a season that will render the rest of the players' lives a dull denouement. Fascinating even for those, or maybe especially for those, with no interest in football. - *Nora Rawlinson, "Library Journal"*

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/product-description/0306809907/ref=dp_proddesc_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books

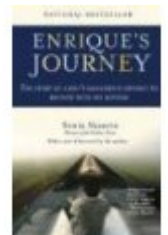
***Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario**

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Soon to be turned into an HBO dramatic series, Nazario's account of a 17-year-old boy's harrowing attempt to find his mother in America won two Pulitzer Prizes when it first came out in the *Los Angeles Times*. Greatly expanded with fresh research, the story also makes a gripping book, one that viscerally conveys the experience of illegal immigration from Central America.

Enrique's mother, Lourdes, left him in Honduras when he was five years old because she could barely afford to feed him and his sister, much less send them to school. Her plan was to sneak into the United States for a few years, work hard, send and save money, then move back to Honduras to be with her children. But 12 years later, she was still living in the U.S. and wiring money home. That's when Enrique became one of the thousands of children and teens who try to enter the U.S. illegally each year. Riding on the tops of freight trains through Mexico, these young migrants are preyed upon by gangsters and corrupt government officials. Many of them are mutilated by the journey; some go crazy. The breadth and depth of Nazario's research into this phenomenon is astounding, and she has crafted her findings into a story that is at once moving and polemical.

http://www.amazon.com/Enriques-Journey-Sonia-Nazario/dp/0812971787/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1243861358&sr=1-1



PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

This assignment will introduce you to three key aspects of the AP English Language and Composition course:

1. the writer,
2. the writer's audience, and
3. the writer's purpose.

We will spend the entire year discussing the how a writer crafts his/her work (i.e. the writer's style), how writers get the attention of their audience (and often how they manipulate that audience), and what role the writer's purpose plays in both.

"We can all appreciate a good piece of writing, but we don't always understand *why* it is good until we examine it more closely."

Directions for the project:

After you have chosen your book, read over the assignment directions on this page. Then, look at page four to decide which point option you wish to work toward.

All work MUST be hand-written.

Part One: Double-Entry Discovery Journal

To create this double entry journal, you will draw a line down the center of each page and use the left side to write out the questions and evidence from the text that answers the question. On the right side, you will **comment on the textual evidence, answering HOW the evidence answers the question, HOW the textual passage is written, and WHY the author wrote the passage that way.**

Here are questions intended to provide guidance and direction for your entries. Answer one (or more) after every group of pages you read. Do not read the entire book and then go back and complete your entries. You are not expected to respond to all of the questions, but to one of them (or more if you are doing Option B or C).

- Who is the narrator of this book? Why is he/she telling this story (what is his/her purpose)?
- What is the most important part of the section you read today? Why would you classify it as important?
- What did you like about the section you read today? Discuss in detail why you liked this part — be as specific as possible.
- What surprised you about the selection you have just read? How does this change affect what might happen in the story?
- As you read today, what feelings did you experience in response to events or character (e.g. irritation, wonder, disbelief, recognition, etc.) and why do you think you responded this way?
- What startling/unusual/effective words, phrases, expressions, or images did you come across in your reading today that you would like to have explained or clarified? Which ones would you like to use in your own writing?
- With what characters do you identify most closely or feel the most sympathy? What is it about these characters that makes you feel this way?
- How much do you personally agree or disagree with the way various characters think and act and with the kinds of beliefs and values they hold? Where do they differ and why?
- What literary devices (such as metaphor, allusion, simile and imagery) did you come across in your reading today? How did the author use these devices to create meaning?

Keep in mind that you should focus your journal entries on the three key aspects: the writer and his style, the audience and how the writer is addressing them, and the writer's purpose in writing this book.

Your answers should be between 100-200 words in length.

Parts Two and Three: Poster and Critical Articles

You will be given directions on how to complete the poster and how to find and summarize the critical articles during your first few class periods. You need not worry about these portions of the project or the rubric before school starts.

Part Four: Word Play

On the first four pages of your journal, record words that you discover in your reading that are new to you, or words that you don't know the meaning of. Look up their definition and record it and the part of speech. Remember to include the page number where the word is located.

For example:

Vagrancy (pg. 137) — noun — the state or act of being vagrant (wandering from place to place)

Formatting Instructions**Project Due:
Fourth Class Meeting**

1. The only parts that need to be fully completed prior to the start of school are the double entry discovery journal and the word list.
2. Write your discovery journal on standard notebook paper. Make sure to indicate on the first page which book you read and include page numbers when referring to the text.
3. Make sure all of your work is neat, legible, and **handwritten**.

Project Options

**Option A****(100 points)**

Create a discovery journal entry, significant in both substance and in length, for approximately every 45-50 pages read. (50 points)

Find, print out, highlight, and write a summary of one critical article. (20 points)

Create a computer-generated poster for your book. (20 points)

Keep a word list (10 points)

Option B**(150 points)**

Create a discovery journal entry, significant in both substance and in length, for approximately every 25-45 pages read. (80 points)

Find, print out, highlight, and write a summary of two critical articles. (40 points)

Create a computer-generated poster for your book. (20 points)

Keep a word list (10 points)

Option C**(200 points)**

Create **two** discovery journal entries, significant in both substance and in length, for approximately every 25-45 pages read. (110 points)

Find, print out, highlight, and write a summary of three critical articles. (60 points)

Create a computer-generated poster for your book. (20 points)

Keep a word list (10 points)

Contact Information and Expectations

If you have questions about any part of this project, you should contact any of us via email. Please do not wait until the week before school begins, as we will be extremely busy during that week preparing for your first day. If you don't hear back from us for a few days, please be patient, as we may be traveling.

Mrs. Poquis' email address is Theresa.Poquis@fcps.edu, Ms. Morris' is Melissa.Morris@fcps.edu and Mr. Hannon's is Brian.Hannon@fcps.edu

Remember that this assignment will be our first impression of you, so you should do your best work. **This is an individual assignment, and we expect that the work you submit is your own and that it was not done with any form of outside assistance, be that the Internet, your parents, or your friends.**

We're looking forward to meeting all of you and working with you to prepare for the 2010 exam. See you in September.



Sample Journal Entry

QUESTION: What literary devices (such as metaphor, allusion, simile and imagery) did you come across in your reading today? How did the author use these devices to create meaning?

"I will see the city poured rolling down the mountain valleys like slag, and see the city lights sprinkled and curved around the hills' curves, rows of bonfires winding. At sunset a red light like housefires shines from the narrow hillside windows; the houses' bricks burn like glowing coals." (Prologue 3)

In this entry, Dillard uses many metaphors and similes to describe her hometown, making it into a living thing. By saying that the city resembled "slag," "bonfires," and "glowing coals," she shows that the city has a fire within it that makes it live. None of the comparisons are completely negative, though. She uses the verbs "rolling," "sprinkled," "winding," and "shines" to describe how the fires behave and lastly, she says the coals are "glowing." So, while coal warms the city, it also engulfs it. All of these descriptions also relate to the fact that Pittsburgh was a town that thrived on coal mining in the 1950s.

Note that none of this is a summary or a paraphrase of the text. Analyzing is writing about the HOW and the WHY.

Grading Rubric

Option A (100 points)

PART 1 Discovery Journal (50 points) - Journal entry significant in substance and length for every 45-50 pages of text.

_____ /5 -- Following directions (t-shape, questions and evidence on left side; how and why analysis on the right)

_____ /45 – Quality journal responses (adequate number of questions, valid responses, and sufficient analysis of how/why author makes choices)

PART 2 Critical Article (20 points) - Find, print out, highlight, and write a summary of a critical article on your book.

_____ /10 – Following directions (article chosen is appropriate, attached, highlighted and a summary has been written)

_____ /10 – Quality of Summary – (1/3 length of original article, correct MLA citation, summary is well-written and not a paraphrase)

PART 3 Poster (20 points) – computer-generated poster including a graphic and quote from the text and rationale explaining the significance of the quote

_____ /5 – Following directions (graphic, quote, title and author's name on front of poster with rationale on back)

_____ /15 – Quote chosen appropriately, with rationale explaining use of color and graphic and connection made between quote and theme

PART 4 Word Play (10 points) –

_____ /10 – word list with words defined and page number citations

Option B (150 points) / Option C (200 points)

PART 1 Discovery Journal (80 / 110 points) - Journal entry significant in substance and length for every 25-45 pages of text.

_____ /5 — Following directions (t-shape, questions and evidence on left side; how and why analysis on the right)

_____ /75 (or 105) – Quality journal responses (adequate number of questions, valid responses, and sufficient analysis of how/why author makes choices)

PART 2 Critical Article (40 / 60 points) - Find, print out, highlight, and write a summary of two critical articles about your book.

_____ /20 (or 30) – Following directions (article chosen is appropriate, attached, highlighted and a summary has been written)

_____ /20 (or 30) – Quality of Summary – (1/3 length of original article, correct MLA citation, summary is well-written and not a paraphrase)

PART 3 Poster (20 points) – computer-generated poster including a graphic and quote from the text and rationale explaining the significance of the quote

_____ /5 – Following directions (graphic, quote, title and author's name on front of poster with rationale on back)

_____ /15 – Quote chosen appropriately, with rationale explaining use of color and graphic and connection made between quote and theme

PART 4 Word Play (10 points) –

_____ /10 – word list with words defined and page number citations