



FAIRFAX COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Herndon High School

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Parents, Guardians and Students:

To meet the expectations of the Fairfax County Public Schools for encouraging intellectual growth and critical thinking skills, the Herndon High School English Department requires a summer reading assignment. This assignment, while generally required by Fairfax County, has been shaped by Herndon High to address the needs of our specific Program of Studies and these assignments take the place of the county list in fulfilling this requirement.

The summer reading list for all classes will be sent to area bookstores, including Barnes and Noble, Books-A-Million, and Borders. In addition, it will be available on the Herndon High School web site. If no written assignment is specified, students should bring the book with them on the first day of school in September. If a written assignment is required, it will be due on the first day as well.

We want students to take advantage of this opportunity to start the year successfully. We wish you an enjoyable and enriching summer.

Sincerely,

Janice Jewell, Chair
English Department

PRE-AP ENGLISH 9 SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

The journey through Pre-AP English 9 is a journey through questions about life. Through novels, epic, parables, drama and poetry, we explore man's earliest and most significant questions as they have been written about across time and genre. Ideas about culture, society, mythology and humanity are examined and reexamined with each unit.

This year we are using one of our core texts as the summer assignment. Please read the novel *Ishmael*, by Daniel Quinn. This novel explores the cultural assumptions that we make as a developed Western society, and asks us to examine other ways of being in the world. The novel unfolds as a Socratic conversation between the narrator (unnamed) and an intelligent gorilla, Ishmael. Some of the ideas in this text are thought-provoking and complex. If you struggle to understand what Ishmael and the narrator are talking about, take notes as you read.

After reading the whole novel, choose ONE of the following assignments. You will bring this with you on the first day of school.

Option 1

- Trace the development of the teacher/student relationship as it unfolds. How does the narrator initially relate to Ishmael? What happens as the novel progresses? Be specific. Use examples from the text.

Option 2

- Choose one chapter that you found particularly thought-provoking and choose six quotations. Annotate those quotations by:
 - Summarizing what's being said.
 - Responding (in some depth) to the passage: Why did it stick out? What was its appeal? What do I think about what I learned? Did Ishmael say something I'd never considered before? Discuss this. Make connections to other arguments that Ishmael makes. Be specific.

Option 3

- Ishmael uses the metaphor of a journey early in the novel. How does the whole novel work as the story of a journey? Use examples from the text.

Option 4

- What larger point does Ishmael use the following stories to illustrate? Answer all of the following:

Captivity

Mythology

The story of the jellyfish

The story about the airman

The story of Adam and Eve

The story of Cain and Abel

Option 5

- Discuss the significance of Ishmael being a gorilla. Why isn't he human? What points can he make that a human teacher might not? What ultimately does this say about our relationship with other species? Use examples. Be specific.