

June 2, 2011

Dear Parents and Students,

Enclosed please find the summer Language Arts assignment for students entering 10th grade at Temima High School in August 2011. This assignment is designed both to engage students' minds through reading and writing and to prepare students for the upcoming school year.

The 10th grade required summer reading book is *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. Students can elect either to purchase the book at a local bookstore or may check out the book from the public library. We will be discussing this book as part of our first unit, so students should have access to a book during the first month of school. Students must read the book and complete the reading assignment listed on the following page before the start of the school year.

In addition, students should complete the reading and assignment for a second book of their choice from the list included in this packet.

If you have any questions or concerns before the start of the fall semester, you may leave a message for me at the school or contact me by email at mschafstall@temima.org. Students may also email me with any specific questions about the summer assignments.

Sincerely,

Melissa K. Schafstall
Language Arts Teacher
Temima High School for Girls

Language Arts 10

Part 1: Summer Reading Assignment

Due Date: The first day of class after orientation week. In addition to the assignment listed below, you will probably be given some kind of in-class writing assessment on this date.

Reading: *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

Annotation Assignment:

As you read the novel, you should annotate – write notes/highlight in your book or use post-it notes if you prefer not to write in your book. You should annotate specifically for the following:

- 1) The government in this novel attempts to create a utopia – a society that is “perfect” because all of its citizens are equal in every way. Look for the specific ways in which the government enforces this equality and the results it produces. What is everyone expected to do? What is everyone forbidden to do?
- 2) Trace the development of the novel’s main character, Guy Montag. Mark places where he makes decisions, has important conversations with others, etc.
- 3) Trace the motif (a recurring symbol) of either fire or mirrors by marking places where they are mentioned. **Honors students** should trace both fire and mirrors.

All of the topics listed above will be used for class discussion and student writing (including essays) in the fall.

When annotating your book, you must clearly mark which of the above items each annotation corresponds to. You may do this by using different colors of ink or highlighter (or post-it notes). For example, you could use a yellow highlighter for #1, green for #2, and blue for #3. You could also write all notes in blue pen but mark each annotation as either #1, #2, or #3. This will enable you to quickly pick out quotes for each item as we discuss them in the fall.

In addition, you should definitely annotate anything else in the book that you find interesting and/or confusing.

Due to the nature of this assignment, you may use abbreviations to a reasonable degree. This would include using “&” for “and” and other widely accepted abbreviations, such as “w/” for “with” and “b/c” for “because.” Do not use numbers to represent words, such as “2” for “to” or “4” for “for.”

Note: Under no circumstances will I accept for credit a book that has comments/annotations written by another student, friend, relative, etc. You must use a clean copy of the book.

You will receive a grade for your book annotations. Since this is our first unit of the fall semester, you might want to read the book close to the start of the school year if possible.

Happy reading! I look forward to discussing this book with you in the fall.

Language Arts 10

Part 2: Summer Reading Assignment

Due Date: The second week of classes – but I strongly suggest that you at least have the book read before school starts as I will begin assigning homework the first week of school.

Choice of one of the following books:

The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane

Civil War classic about one soldier's struggle with his inner demons as he prepares for and fights his first battle.

Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain

The adventures of the imaginative Tom Sawyer and growing up in Mississippi.

Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt

Jethro Creighton grows from a boy into a man when he is left to care for the family farm during the Civil War.

I Heard the Owl Call My Name by Margaret Craven

A young vicar's account of a Native American tribe and how their way of life is being destroyed by the influence of white men.

Billy Budd, Herman Melville

Billy Budd, a young handsome sailor, is admired by all men but Master-at-Arms Claggart, who plots to frame Billy for treason.

Written Assignment:

You will be writing an approach paper, which consists of the following sections:

I. Summary Paragraph: A three or four sentence paragraph which explains the ENTIRE novel using as much description and detail as you can manage. To encourage your writing style, every sentence must start out in a different way. Prepositional phrases, gerund phrases, normal word order clauses, participial phrases, and infinitive phrases are some of the different ways you might choose to start these sentences. This helps make your writing more interesting to read. This is often the most difficult section of the approach paper to write.

II. Character Descriptions: Choose three important characters in your novel. By each of these character's names, list four words which describe the character distinctly. This is a good time to think about vivid vocabulary words and to check the dictionary and thesaurus for ideas. If you use a particular word to describe one character, you may not use that same word to describe another character.

III. Discussion/Essay Questions: Write three questions that a teacher might ask you about the novel either in class or for an essay. These questions should be thought-provoking and almost always take more than one line to type because they ask readers to combine more than one idea. Just *writing* these types of questions helps you to anticipate what questions might be asked of you in class discussion or on a test and encourages you to think more insightfully about the book or play.

IV. Key Passage: Choose the most important passage in the novel (in your opinion). Type it up word-for-word in the approach paper. Make sure to identify the speakers (if dialogue) and list the page

number. **Honors students** should choose the **two** most important passages and follow the instructions for each.

V. Key Passage Explanation: In a fully-developed paragraph, explain why your chosen passage is important to understanding the novel. Discuss any mentioned or inferred themes connected to the key passage.

Sample Approach Paper for *To Kill a Mockingbird*:

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee is the story of three years in the childhood of Scout and her older brother Jem. As an adult narrator, Scout recalls a series of loosely connected episodes which occur in Maycomb, Alabama, in the 1930s, a time of racial segregation and extreme prejudice. Weaving two strands of narrative, Lee presents Boo Radley, the mysterious and reclusive neighbor whom the children find both intriguing and frightening, with the trial of Tom Robinson, a hardworking, innocent black man who is being defended by Scout and Jem's just and courageous father, Atticus Finch. The two strands of narrative tie together in the end when Boo Radley emerges from his seclusion to save Scout and Jem from a cowardly attack on them by Bob Ewell, who vowed vengeance on Atticus after the trial.

Scout Finch: strong-willed, intelligent, tomboyish, loyal

Jem Finch: thoughtful, steadfast, imaginative, maturing

Boo Radley: reclusive, lonely, simple, protective

1.

To Kill a Mockingbird deals with the issue of racial equality, but Harper Lee also includes the strong story line of Boo Radley. How does the Tom Robinson trial combine with the Boo Radley story thread to make a novel that speaks powerfully of more than just racial equality?

2.

What do Jem and Scout finally understand about their father: what he stands for in their own lives and in the lives of many of the townspeople?

3.

Discuss the three different views of Tom Robinson's trial and its outcome as seen by Atticus, Jem and Scout, and the townspeople.

From Chapter 3, page 30:

Atticus: "First of all," he said. "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

Atticus' entire philosophy of life seems to be summed up in his words to Scout. To be an objective and just

community member, one must be able to “climb into” another person’s “skin” and “walk around in it” or be able to see issues from another person’s perspective. Atticus offers these words to Scout after her first day of formal schooling in the first grade when she is upset that the teacher doesn’t understand her efforts to explain Walter Cunningham’s financial situation. These words from Atticus begin her first lessons in life. Through the course of the novel, Atticus will show the children his compassion for people different from their family, his attempts to “climb into someone’s skin and walk around in it” when he defends an innocent black man, Tom Robinson, against a town’s wishes, and when he instructs the children to be respectful and compassionate toward Boo Radley, a neighborhood recluse. One of the main themes of the novel is understanding and accepting people different from oneself.