

Christian Academy of Western New York
High School English & Literature
Summer Reading 2010

Dear Students and Parents,

Ahhhhh, Summer. I hope you are enjoying it so far. While we take a rest from the hard work of school, we never take a rest from the work of getting wisdom. We are always learning. And we must be very deliberate about what it is we are learning. The purpose of this letter is to direct and make more deliberate your learning over the summer. So, kick back, have a seat by the pool, grab a Timmy's Ice Capp, and crack open the cover of a new book.

C.S. Lewis wrote "Literature exists to teach what is useful, to honor what deserves honor, to appreciate the delightful. The useful, the honorable, and delightful are superior to it [literature]. It exists for their sake. Its own use, honor, or delightfulness is derivative from theirs'."

This summer read to *use the useful*: these books have survived in Western culture because they are useful; they transmit ideas that have shaped who we are and how we interpret the world. If we do not interact with them, they will act upon us. We will understand ourselves and our world by studying them closely.

This summer read to *honor the honorable*: discover the major themes and ideas of these books, which are either in accord with or in disharmony with the Truths of Scripture. Use this opportunity to sharpen your Christian worldview. Ask: How consistent is the author's view of the world with a Christian world-and-life view?

This summer read to *delight in the delightful*: notice the author's masterful use of language and literary device. Appreciate the writer's skill and emulate his or her craftsmanship in your writing. The writers you are reading are great writers because they are better at human expression than most people who have walked this earth. Appreciate their rhetoric.

Most of all, this summer, read to glorify God: remember that He blessed these authors with their skill; He sovereignly purposed their influence on our culture; and He has placed you here, right now, to take captive their thoughts for your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Use this opportunity to become more effective cultural change-agents.

At this point you may have a few questions.

What is my assignment?

1.) Each incoming high school student is required to read one age-appropriate book (student's choice) that he/she has never read before. If you are not sure about the appropriateness or reading level of a book check online at libraries or book sellers' sites, ask a librarian, or email Mrs. Wells. A typed report will be due the first Friday when school resumes. The book report should contain the name of the book, author, a brief summary of the book and a personal response to the book. (*See the end of this letter for additional help with this report.*)

2.) Students wishing to sign an Honors English contract in the fall will need to read and report on a second book of choice.

-AND-

3.) Each grade level has one required book individual to each class. This book must be read before school starts. Students will complete essays and activities pertaining to these books during the first 2 weeks of school. It is recommended that students take notes on these books and bring the notes with them to school in the fall.

Required Reading Books: (do not do your report on these books – these will be studied through a Christian worldview in class)

English 9: *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson

English 10: *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

American Literature 11: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

British Literature 12: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

AP English: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley **and** *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

When is my assignment due?

Book reports for student-choice books are due the first Friday when school resumes.

Assigned books must be read before the start of school. Students will complete essays and activities pertaining to these books during the first 2 weeks of school.

How will the summer reading assignment be graded?

Students who read a book and complete the required report will receive a 100% Test grade during the first quarter.

Students who choose not to complete the book report will receive a 50%/F Test grade. Assignments for the required books will be given and graded during the English classes in the fall. For any additional books read, one point for each additional book will be awarded to the reading test, quizzes, or homework averages. A report must accompany each of the additional books read.

Where can I find a book?

Your local library is a great place to start. They are able to make recommendations to you for age-appropriate books, and you can borrow from there for free. Or you may choose to purchase books from a local or online book store such as Barnes & Noble or Amazon.com.

May I just watch a movie?

No! Reading a book and watching a film are two completely different experiences. Don't be fooled into thinking you know the story just from the movie. Books are much more detailed and often differ greatly from their film versions. ***Read the book before seeing the movie.*** Then you can intelligently observe the changes and decide whether or not the filmmakers made good choices in adapting the original. Parents should view the films first for any inappropriate content.

Why do we do summer reading?

Richard Allington from the University of Tennessee says, "For the past several years my colleague Anne McGill-Franzen and I have been studying the impact of summer reading, or the lack of it, on children's reading achievement. At this point it seems safe to conclude that children who don't read during summer vacation experience a summer reading loss. The loss is typically one of several months on standardized reading tests. But such small losses accumulate to substantial losses over time. On the other hand, children who read several books during the summer months experience no such loss and may actually find their scores on standardized tests improve a bit."

I hope this letter is helpful for you. If you have further questions regarding the Summer Reading assignment you may email Mrs. Wells at: jlwells@ymail.com .

Happy Reading & God Bless,

Mrs. Wells

High School English Teacher

Christian Academy of Western New York

P.S. While most of these books are considered classics, CAWNY does not wholly endorse everything contained within them and remind you that the required books will be discussed with a Christian worldview. We encourage parents to be involved in their child's selection of their summer reading books and although these books have been recommended to be summer reading books by colleges and other Christian schools, we realize that not all the books on the list may be deemed appropriate by all families.