

2009 Summer Project for 8th Grade Pre-AP Language Arts/Social Studies
Liberty Middle School
Camas School District

Congratulations for being selected to participate in the Pre-AP program! This project is designed to prepare you for the activities that will happen in class during the academic year. The final product must be typed double spaced in Times New Roman or Arial 12 point font. Please submit all parts of the assignment, separated into distinct sections in a neatly organized binder. The project is due on the first day of school and no late work will be accepted in line with the Language Arts/Social Studies Department's policies.

Part One:

Select a novel from the accompanying list and read it over the summer. In a journal, write a series of 8 responses using the attached "**Book Response Questions.**" Each entry should be at least one-half page in length and be supported with text based details explaining why your answer relates to the prompt. Include a parenthetical citation for each text based quote. A parenthetical citation includes the page number in parentheses like so: (45).

Part Two:

Compile a list of 30 words from your selected novel that are unfamiliar to you. Define them and use 15 in a short story you create to show the meaning in context.

Part Three:

Select three characters from your novel. Define their character e.g. greedy, lazy, mean, ambitious, etc. Generate a list of three synonyms for the trait, and then quote three sentences that support your chosen character trait. Be sure to include a short analysis of each quote you select.

Part Four:

Describe the culture the characters live in. How does religion, level of education, and income level (are they rich or poor) affect your character's world view?

Please e-mail me at tom.brossia@camas.wednet.edu if you have any questions.

Book Response Questions for your chosen novel

Remember to support your answers with details from the book.

1. **Setting:** Where and when does the story take place? What kind of details does the author include to establish a sense of time and place?
2. **Lead-in:** What incident, problem, conflict, or situation does the author use to get the story started?
3. **Technique:** What does the author do to create suspense and to make you want to read on to find out what happens?
4. **Plot:** Trace the main events in the story. Could you change their order or leave any out? Why or why not?
5. **Resolution:** Think of a different ending to the story. How would the rest of the story have to change to fit the new ending? Does your replacement ending seem more appropriate? Why or why not?
6. **Resolution:** Did the story end the way you expected it to? Reflect back on the story. What clues did the author offer along the way to prepare you for the ending? Did you recognize these clues as important to the story when you were reading it?
7. **Character Development:** Is there one character you know more about than the others? Who is this character and what kind of person is he/she? What words would you use to describe the main character's feelings in this book? How does the author reveal the character's traits and feelings to you?
8. **Turning Point:** Are the beliefs, ideas, or feelings of any character dramatically changed during the story? If so, describe the turning point which facilitated this change. Compare and contrast the character before and after the transformation. Did the transformation seem believable and true to the character? Why or why not?
9. **Secondary Character:** Some characters play small but important roles in the story. Name such a character and explain why this character is necessary for the story? How would the absence of this character affect the outcome of the story?
10. **Voice:** Who is the teller of the story? How does the author create a sense of voice through the teller? Describe the author's technique. Why do you think the author chose to tell the story this way?
11. **Mood as setting:** Does the story as a whole create a certain mood or feeling? What is the mood? How is it created?

12. **Theme:** What is the overall message or theme of the story? Give examples of how the author makes you think of this theme as you read.
13. **Compare/Contrast:** Is this story like any other you have read or watched in terms of characters, plot, setting, or theme? Briefly summarize the stories and then compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the two.
14. **Ideas and Content:** What ideas or issues does the story make you think about? How does the author get you to think about this? How has your own understanding of these ideas or issues been enriched?
15. **Connections:** Do any particular feelings come across in this story? Does the story make you feel any certain way or does it make you think what it's like to feel that way? How?
16. **Style:** Is there anything that seems to make this particular author's work unique? If so, what? Discuss.
17. **Patterns:** Did you notice any particular patterns in the form of this book? Describe. If you are reading this book more than one sitting, are there natural points at which you can break off your reading? If so, what are these points?
18. **Voice:** Does the story language seem natural for the intent of the story and for various speakers? How does the author employ language or dialect (ways of speaking) to add depth to the setting and characters?
19. Every fiction writer creates a make-believe world and peoples it with characters. Even where the world is far different from your own, how does the author make the story seem possible, probable, or real to you?
20. If you could engage in a meaningful discussion with the author of your book, what kinds of questions would you ask and what would you discuss?

Reading List

Biography *Young, Black, and Determined: A Biography of Lorraine Hansberry* by Pat McKissack, Fredrick McKissack

The daughter of influential, black upper-class parents, her early childhood in Chicago was studded with visits from African-American notables, such as W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, Jesse Owens, and Duke Ellington. However, from an early age, she identified with those of her race who suffered the effects of poverty and discrimination.

Biography *A Young Patriot : The American Revolution as Experienced by One Boy* by Jim Murphy

" Eye opening story of a 15 year old boy who enlists in the army during the American Revolution.." readers experience the young soldier's excitement and fear during battle, his boredom while marching, and the deprivation of a winter encampment.

Young Adult Fiction *Poison* by Chris Wooding

Pale and thin, with long black hair and violet eyes, the sullen, moody girl named Poison is an appropriate heroine for this over-the-top gothic horror fantasy. The 16-year-old has never been out of the Black Marshes, one of the remote backwaters settled by humans in a Realm ruled by phaeries and inhabited by a cast of foul creatures that includes trolls, daemons, and a particularly nasty Spider Woman.

Young Adult Fiction *Autobiography of My Dead Brother* by Walter Dean Myers

Fifteen-year-old Jesse lives a clean and relatively careful life in contemporary Harlem. His best friend and honorary brother, Rise, is two years older and plays life faster and looser. Myers's story of urban violence and wasted youth unfolds inexorably, but the relationships among his characters—Jesse and his frightened parents; C. J. and Jesse; a local cop and the neighborhood boys; Jesse and a love-starved but sexually knowing girl—are nuanced and engaging rather than predictable.

Young Adult Fiction *Fallen Angels* by Walter Dean Myers

Fallen Angels is the story of Perry, a Harlem teenager who volunteers for the service when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry and his platoon come face-to-face with the Vietcong and the real horror of warfare. But violence and death aren't the only hardships. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments, and why the U.S. is there at all. *Fallen Angels* won the 1989 Coretta Scott King Award.

Fantasy *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien

"The Hobbit or There and Back Again" is the first story of Middle-Earth that was ever read by the masses. And to this day it remains a beloved favorite due to Tolkien's exceptional writing, realistic and lovable characters, and the fantastic, complicated world with its unlikely hero: a fuzzy-footed hobbit.

Bilbo Baggins lives a pleasantly stodgy and dull life in the Shire, in a luxurious hole under a hill. ("It was a hobbit hole, and that means comfort") But his life is completely turned upside-down by the arrival of the wizard Gandalf and thirteen dwarves. The

dwarves, led by the exiled king-in-waiting Thorin Oakenshield, want to regain the Lonely Mountain (and a lot of treasure) from the dragon Smaug, who drove out the dwarves long ago. Why do they want Bilbo? Because Gandalf has told them that he'd make a good burglar (even though Bilbo has never burgled in his life).

Sci-Fi Ender's Game by Orson Scott

Intense is the word for Ender's Game. Aliens have attacked Earth twice and almost destroyed the human species. To make sure humans win the next encounter, the world government has taken to breeding military geniuses -- and then training them in the arts of war... The early training, not surprisingly, takes the form of 'games'... Ender Wiggin is a genius among geniuses; he wins all the games... He is smart enough to know that time is running out. But is he smart enough to save the planet?

Fiction The Color Purple by Alice Walker

It won a Pulitzer Prize in 1983. A feminist novel about an abused and uneducated black woman's struggle for empowerment, the novel was praised for the depth of its female characters and for its eloquent use of black English vernacular.

Fiction Lord of the Flies by William Golding

William Golding's classic tale about a group of English schoolboys who are plane-wrecked on a deserted island is just as chilling and relevant today as when it was first published in 1954. At first, the stranded boys cooperate, attempting to gather food, make shelters, and maintain signal fires. However, the situation deteriorates as the trappings of civilization begin to fall away.

Fiction Transall Saga by Gary Paulson

The Transall Saga follows 13-year-old Mark on his first solo desert camping trip. After stepping into a mysterious beam of light, Mark is transported to another place--a strange and hostile world. As Mark tries to find his way back home, he learns to survive in this dangerous jungle, calling on reserves of strength he didn't know he had. Encountering wild creatures, primitive tribes, and a more advanced and warlike group of humans, the young protagonist is forced to grow up before he can return to the life he once knew. In the process, he becomes a slave, a warrior, and falls in love--all before the mystery of exactly where he is becomes clear.

Fiction Kira-Kira by Cynthia Kadohata

The Japanese-American Takeshima family moves from Iowa to Georgia in the 1950s when Katie, the narrator, is just in kindergarten. Though her parents endure grueling conditions and impossible hours in the non-unionized poultry plant and hatchery where they work, they somehow manage to create a loving, stable home for their three children: Lynn, Katie, and Sammy. When Lynn develops lymphoma, it's heartbreaking, but through the course of her worsening illness, Katie does her best to remember Lynn's "kira-kira" (glittery, shining) outlook on life. Small moments shine the brightest in this poignant story; told beautifully and lyrically in Katie's fresh, honest voice.

Humor The Teacher's Funeral by Richard Peck

In turn-of-the-century Indiana, 15-year-old Russell dreams of escaping the dreary boredom of the one-room schoolhouse by jumping a train to the Dakotas. To his horror, his bossy, no-nonsense older sister has become the town's new teacher, and she is determined to see him finish high school. In a seamless performance, Dylan Baker becomes Russell. He convincingly brings each character to life, turning a great story into an even greater listening experience. This book is so laugh-out-loud funny that its depth sneaks up almost by surprise.

Classic The Call of the Wild by Jack London (Aladdin Classics Version)

"Call of the Wild" is about a big, strong, suburban dog, who is dognapped by men who are procuring dogs for dogsleds during the Yukon Gold Rush of Alaska. From pampered city-dog, to mistreated domestic-going-feral mixed breed, to well-treated frontier dog, Buck learns survival, adaptation, and much about humanity's range of traits.

Young Adult Fiction Northern Light by Jennifer Donnelly

Mattie Gokey, 16, a talented writer, promised her dying mother that she would always take care of her father and younger siblings. She is stuck on a farm, living in near poverty, with no way of escaping, even though she has been accepted at Barnard College. She promises to marry handsome Royal Loomis even though he doesn't appear to love her. This is a breathtaking tale, complex and often earthy, wrapped around a true story. In 1906, Grace Brown was killed by Chester Gillette because she was poor and pregnant, and he hoped to make his fortune by marrying a rich, society girl.

Mystery Lost German Slave Girl: The Extraordinary True Story of Sally Miller and Her Fight for Freedom in Old New Orleans by John Bailly

A fascinating mystery obsessed and polarized New Orleans from 1843 until its shocking conclusion in 1849. A close-knit community of German immigrants made an amazing claim: they had seen a young slave woman whom they were sure was the daughter of a relative who had sailed with them from Holland years earlier. After her parents died, the girl and her sister had been sent off to become indentured servants. No one knew what had happened to them, but the community was positive that the slave woman known as Mary or Brigit Wilson was really Salome Muller.

Non-Fiction The Color of Water by James McBride

these two memoirs describe growing up interracial from the perspective of the sons of African American fathers and white mothers. McBride, an accomplished journalist and musician, has viewed the yawning chasm of racial division from both sides and, despite carving out a successful life, has been scarred. Unlike Williams and Minerbrook, though, he focuses on a single, singular parent, a rabbi's daughter who later helped her husband establish an all-black Baptist church in her home and saw 12 children through college. His mother's own story, juxtaposed with McBride's, helps make this book a standout.

Young Adult Fiction Speak by Laurie Anderson

Narrated by Melinda Sordino, the story begins on her first day as a high school freshman. No one will sit with Melinda on the bus. At school, students call her names and

harass her; her best friends from junior high scatter to different cliques and abandon her. Yet Anderson infuses the narrative with a wit that sustains the heroine through her pain and holds readers' empathy. A girl at a school pep rally offers an explanation of the heroine's pariah status when she confronts Melinda about calling the police at a summer party, resulting in several arrests. But readers do not learn why Melinda made the call until much later: a popular senior raped her that night and, because of her trauma, she barely speaks at all. Only through her work in art class, and with the support of a compassionate teacher there, does she begin to reach out to others and eventually find her voice.

Classic Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe

Harriet Beecher Stowe was appalled by slavery, and she took one of the few options open to nineteenth century women who wanted to affect public opinion: she wrote a novel, a huge, enthralling narrative that claimed the heart, soul, and politics of pre-Civil War Americans. It is unabashed propaganda and overtly moralistic, an attempt to make whites - North and South - see slaves as mothers, fathers, and people with (Christian) souls.

Gothic Fiction Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury

This is the story of two boys, James Nightshade and William Halloway, and the evil that grips their small Midwestern town with the arrival of a "dark carnival" one Autumn midnight. How these two innocents, both age 13, save the souls of the town (as well as their own), makes for compelling reading on timeless themes. What would *you* do if your secret wishes could be granted by the mysterious ringmaster Mr. Dark?

Classic Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson

Climb aboard for the swashbuckling adventure of a lifetime. *Treasure Island* has enthralled (and caused slight seasickness) for decades. The names Long John Silver and Jim Hawkins are destined to remain pieces of folklore for as long as children want to read Robert Louis Stevenson's most famous book. With its dastardly plot and motley crew of rogues and villains, it seems unlikely that children will ever say no to this timeless classic.