

**San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts
Middle School
Reading List and Writing Assignment 2009**

Incoming students are required to read a book and write an essay based on their reading. **Essays are due September 25th, 2009** and will be incorporated into the first quarter's grade in English.

Purpose:

- Improve students' reading and writing ability
- Develop curiosity about the world through novels
- Create artists and scholars that are citizens of the world

The novels chosen represent a range of reading and interest levels, with the age and maturity level of different students in mind. Some novels may contain mature language or situations. Parents: approve your child's novel before they read it.

Going into Grade 6

Please read one of the following:

- *Fig Pudding*, Ralph Fletcher (family relationships, coping with death)
- *Cirque du Freak: A Living Nightmare*, Darren Shan (vampires, loyalty, trust, friendship, family)
- *Stargirl*, Jerry Spinelli (knowing yourself, conformity vs individuality, popularity)
- *Esperanza Rising*, Pam Muñoz Ryan (cultural differences/tolerance, family)
- *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*, Mildred D. Taylor (historical fiction, racial conflict, independence, the strength in family, injustice)
- *Walk Two Moons*, Sharon Creech (coping, self-identity, hope)
- *Freak the Mighty*, Rodman Philbrick (friendship, courage, dealing with death and disability)
- *Tangerine*, Edward Bloor (family problems, parental favoritism, children's cruelty to their peers, violence, ethnic strife, living with a disability)
- *Welcome to the Ark*, Stephanie Tolan (telepathy, adolescent alienation, gifted children, power of cooperation, violence in society)

Going into Grade 7

Please read one of the following:

- *Eragon*, Christopher Paolini
- *The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkien
- *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
- *Little Women* or *Little Men*, Lousia May Alcott
- *That was Then, This is Now*, S.E. Hinton
- *The Midwife's Apprentice*, Jane Yolen
- *Where the Red Fern Grows*, Wilson Rawls
- *Shabanu*, Suzanne Fisher Staples

Going into Grade 8

Please read one of the following:

- *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury
- *The Light in the Forest*, Conrad Richter
- *Before We Were Free*, Julia Alvarez
- *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Mark Twain
- *Tears of a Tiger*, Sharon Draper
- *Monster*, Walter Dean Meyers
- *New Moon*, Stephanie Meyer

Writing Prompt

Any student that attends the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts should demonstrate a strong desire to study at least one of the following: dance, drama, instrumental music, vocal music, or the visual/media arts. SCPA wants you to become a successful academic student as well. To help foster your creative talents and to reinforce the necessary skills of critical reading and writing, all SCPA students need to participate in a reading and writing assignment.

Directions: Read a novel from the list and imagine how you would represent it using your chosen field in the arts (dance, drama music, or visual/media arts). Using the ideas and graphic organizer below, organize your thoughts into an essay.

1. Choose a book from the list provided. You should pick an appropriate reading level, not too easy, not too hard. If you are unable to read the easiest of the books, read it as a family.

As you read, think about these parts of the novel:

- ❖ Plot (story)
- ❖ Characters (main characters and others)
- ❖ Setting (where and when does the story take place?)
- ❖ Conflict (the problems in the book)
- ❖ Theme (What is the message in the story?)

When you finish the book, think about how you might use your chosen arts field to adapt or present one of the parts listed above.

Would you: *Create a dance that demonstrates... Write a song about... Choose and sing a song that shows... Paint a picture of... Choose an instrumental piece that shows.... Write and perform a short play about... Perform a monologue that shows.... Make a video showing....* **You are not being asked to complete this project, just to explain what you would choose to do and how you would go about doing it.**

2. Complete the graphic organizer that is attached
3. Using the organizer and the outline, write an essay by responding to the prompts.

Writing Expectations

- Write as well as you can with minimal spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
- Make sure your sentences flow from one to the next in a way that makes sense.
- Use details, and if possible, use some of the specialized vocabulary from your arts field (attached)
- Use your *own* voice (your way of expressing yourself) as a reader, writer, and artist.
- Use **all** your own words. Any copying from the Internet or another source is plagiarism and earns an automatic zero on the assignment.
- If possible, type your essay:
 - ... Use 12 point Times New Roman or Arial (regular, no bold)
 - ... 1 inch margins
 - ... Double line-spacing
 - ... Indent paragraphs with one tab; do not skip lines between paragraphs
 - ... Full name, Grade, and art field in the upper left corner.
 - ... Title centered
- If you cannot type, write in your *very neatest* handwriting, cursive or printing.
Indent clearly *or* skip a line between paragraphs; skip a line after the title.
- Paper length (minimum five strong paragraphs, minimum 300 words)

Suggestions

- *Do not wait until August to begin reading and writing*
- *Brainstorm and take notes before writing*
- *Discuss your ideas and share your essay with several people (family and friends); make any recommended changes.*

Student's Name (first and last) _____

Title and Author of Book _____

Organizer for Summer Assignment (to be submitted with essay)

Plot	List the major events of the story:
Setting	Where and when does it occur?:
Characters	List the major and minor characters that are important to the story; add notes about them:
Conflict	What is the main problem that must be resolved? How is it resolved?
Theme	What is the author trying to say about the world or about life?

Outline for Essay:

Introduction: (1st paragraph)

- ❖ Start with an opening sentence that captures the reader's attention (a question, statement, quote, fact...).
- ❖ In one or two sentences tell the name of the novel, the setting, and the story's concept or theme.
- ❖ Conclude with one or two sentences explaining how you will represent the novel using your art

Second Paragraph:

- ❖ Write a detailed description of the part of the novel you are choosing to portray (a character? The conflict? the setting? the theme?)

Third Paragraph and Fourth Paragraphs (more if you think it's necessary):

- ❖ Describe the way you would present the part you described in the second paragraph. (This is where you tell exactly what you will do); use details, and try to use the specialized vocabulary for your art. If you would create your own music or a play, explain your vision; if you would sing or play already created music, which music would you choose and why? How would you perform the pieces? If you chose drama, would you turn it into a play? Would you create a monologue for the main character? If you would draw or paint, what would it be? How would it look? What feeling would it give the viewer? If you chose media arts, what kind of video would you produce?

Concluding Paragraph:

- ❖ Tell what you hope your audience would get out of your performance or adaptation.

Rubric for Evaluating Middle School Assignment

Follows Directions; uses proper format (25):

- *If typed: paper is in 12 point, Times New Roman, double spaced.*
- *If handwritten: writing is neat and clear without cross-outs or smudges. If you do not have neat handwriting, you must type.*
- Paper includes at least five paragraphs; all paragraphs, including any extra, follow the provided outline.
- Paper is submitted to English teacher on the first day of school

Completes the Graphic Organizer (25):

- Each section of the organizer is filled out, neatly.
- Entries show an understanding of the plot, characters, theme(s), and conflicts

Content: (25)

- The paper answers the prompt, *How would you use your chosen arts field to portray a part of this book?*
- Each paragraph addresses the appropriate topics.
- There are transitions between ideas
- Writing is clear; sentences make sense; there is no confusion for the reader.

Conventions (25):

- There are *no* errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar.

95 or 100: Paper meets or exceeds the expectations (see above)

75 or 85: Paper is within reach of the expectations

50 or 65: Parts of the assignment may be missing; student may not have followed directions; there may be many errors; paper may lack proper punctuation; paper may be hard to read due to poor sentence structure or messy handwriting.

Below 50: Paper is unacceptable, needs to be rewritten for credit