

**San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts  
Middle School  
Summer Reading List and Writing Assignment 2008**

Incoming students are required to read a book and write an essay based on their reading. Essays are **due the first day of school in English** 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

**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)
- *Call of the Wild*, Jack London (survival, adaptation, instinct, the laws of nature vs the laws of man)

**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
- *The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton
- *The Midwife's Apprentice*, Jane Yolen
- *Where the Red Fern Grows*, Wilson Rawls

## Going into Grade 8

Please read one of the following:

- *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury
- *The Light in the Forest*, Conrad Richter
- *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*, Elizabeth Speare
- *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller
- *Shabanu*, Suzanne Fisher Staples
- *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Mark Twain

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 fields: 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, we are asking all SCPA students to participate in a reading and writing assignment over summer vacation.

- The essay will be collected by your English teacher on the very first day we return to school, September 2, 2008. This is not an optional assignment. ***It will count toward your first semester's grade in English.***

**Directions: Your assignment is to read a novel during the summer and to imagine how you would represent it using your chosen field in the arts. Using the ideas and graphic organizer below, you will organize your thoughts into essay form.**

1. Choose a book from the list provided. The books range from easy to difficult. You should pick an appropriate reading level, not too easy, not too hard. All incoming students must read one of these books. If you are unable to read the easiest of the books, then make it a family read-aloud.

**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.

Student's Name (first and last) \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Author of Book \_\_\_\_\_

**Organizer for Summer Assignment (must be submitted along 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: (1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## 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.*