

# Why do Summer Reading?

**The Essential Question:** Why are students in English classes required to read over the summer at Luke M. Powers Catholic High School?

## **Summer Reading Program Objectives:**

- To help students maintain reading and writing skills over the summer and avoid summer reading loss
- To prepare students for the next level of English curriculum and the college experience
- To encourage students to become lifelong learners

## **Parents and Students of PCHS:**

At Powers Catholic, we believe that it is important to foster essential reading and writing skills over the summer to help students avoid summer reading loss, a documented and studied phenomenon often resulting in a loss of several months on standardized reading tests. Richard Allington, a professor of education at the University of Tennessee, compares a good summer reading program to athletic training when he said, "Virtually all human skills and proficiencies deteriorate without practice. Imagine an athlete who takes several months off from training. It will take weeks, if not months, of training to return to peak performance. The same is true with readers and their reading." (CBC Magazine: Perspectives 1). Over one hundred years of research supports the use of summer reading programs to help students hone their reading and writing skills.

What makes high school students successful in a summer reading program is when their parents engage in the text with them and ask them about what they are reading. We have provided a suggested reading schedule for each book at the regular and advanced levels of English to help facilitate time management of reading over the summer. If parents would speak with their students about what they are reading, asking them to summarize and discuss the text, students are more likely to remember what they read and be prepared for class discussion when in English class.

Most colleges and universities have moved to a required summer reading list for their incoming freshman to combat summer reading loss and to make sure their students are prepared to be avid readers from the day they walk through their doors. Our goal is to create the same kind of atmosphere at Powers Catholic where students learn that it is important to develop and maintain their reading and writing skills during the summer to make the transition back into school that much smoother. They will not only be prepared for the rigor of their chosen level of English, but they will also transition into colleges and universities much better after they graduate from high school.

Students are encouraged to buy a copy of the books they have been assigned to read so they may annotate. However, students may download the books onto their iPads and keep notes on what they read on a separate tab or check the books out from the library and keep their annotations in a notebook. The list and assignments required for each title will be posted on the Powers Catholic High School website. Any questions should be directed to the Department Chair of the English department Stacey Turczyn ([sturczyn@powerscatholic.org](mailto:sturczyn@powerscatholic.org)).

Happy Reading!!

## NINTH GRADE ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### Summer Reading

Each student in Advanced Communication Skills is required to read TWO books: ONE required and ONE book of choice from a list provided. (Make sure you do not complete the project for the required book).

1. **Required Book- *The Alchemist*** by Paulo Coelho

This is a story about an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an Alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest.

**TASKS:**

- a. While reading the novel annotate. Your annotations are due on Tuesday, September 8, 2015. **PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED GUIDE ON ANNOTATING**
- b. An in-class assessment will be given on Tuesday, September 8, 2015.

2. **Choose a book from the list:**

- a. ***The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*** by Douglas Adams
- b. ***Wintergirls*** by Laurie Halse Anderson
- c. ***Ender's Game*** by Orson Scott Card
- d. ***Orphan Train*** by Christina Baker Kline

**TASKS:**

- a. While reading the novel annotate. Your annotations are due on Tuesday, September 8, 2015. **PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED GUIDE ON ANNOTATING.**
- b. Write responses to both of the following AND pick one project to complete; due on Tuesday, September 8, 2015:

We are defined by our actions, words, habits, relationships, vices, beliefs, religion, possessions, upbringing, where we live, mannerisms, hobbies, interests, etc. A good author creates memorable characters that drive the plot - characters who feel real. No matter how good the plot is, without compelling characters, the reader won't be hooked by the novel.

**Your responses should be 2-3 paragraphs each, typed or neatly written in ink.**

1. Discuss how your character is developed. How does he or she change or grow over the course of the novel? What events/circumstances prompt these changes? What lessons does your character learn as he or she develops? Are these lessons important to all of us? Why or why not? Provide specific details to support your response.

2. How did you relate to your character? In what ways are you alike or different? Make connections between yourself and your chosen character. Use specific examples from the text and from your life to support the connections you make.

**PROJECT CHOICES (PICK ONE TO COMPLETE)**

Choice 1: Create a character tissue box.

- a. Top: Title, Author, Your Name (leave room for the tissue to be used!)
- b. Side 1: Character's name and picture or visual representation of character
- c. Side 2: Character's major traits with an example from the text for support for each
- d. Side 3: Other characters and their impact on your character
- e. Side 4: Items that are important to your character OR memorable lines from character

Choice 2: Convert the events of the story into a ballad or song. Write the lyrics and music or adapt words to a melody by someone else. Record your version and include the lyrics which should include a comprehensive review of the events and at least five verses (4-6 lines each). A chorus should be included. (Total line minimum: 30)

Choice 3: Write an extension of the story, explaining future occurrences in characters' lives. (700-1000 words)

## How-to-Annotate Bookmark

### Before Reading:

- Read the title and any subtitles.
- Note the author.
- Examine any illustrations.
- Examine the text (book, short story, essay, diary, dialogue, article, etc.).

### During Reading:

#### Mark in the text:

- Characters (who)
- Setting (when, where)
- What
- Why

#### Vocabulary:

- Word choice
- Note words you do not know or are not sure of their meanings and define them.

#### Write in the margins or use sticky notes:

- Summarize
- Make predictions
- Ask questions
- Answer questions
- Analyze the writer's craft
- Reflect/react/comment
  - Agree/disagree
  - Make connections
- Look for patterns/repetitions
- Observe and note:
  - Themes
  - Literary devices *such as*:
    - alliteration
    - allusion
    - imagery
    - tone
    - personification
    - simile
    - metaphor
    - symbolism
    - characterization
    - rhetorical question
    - irony

(You will add to the list as the school year progresses.)

### After Reading:

- Reread annotations—draw conclusions
- Examine patterns/repetitions—determine possible meanings
- Review/re-determine meaning of the title

### NOTES:

## Annotation Instructions/Suggestions

Annotation is a key component of **close reading**. Since we will annotate texts all year, you need to develop a system that works for you (within the following guidelines). Effective annotating is both economical and consistent. The techniques are almost limitless. Use any **combination** of the following:

- Make brief comments in the margins. Use any white space available - inside cover, random blank pages
- Make brief comments between or within lines of the text. Do not be afraid to mark within the text itself. In fact, you must.
- Circle or put boxes, triangles, or clouds around words or phrases.
- Use abbreviations or symbols - brackets, stars, exclamation points, question marks, numbers, etc.
- Connect words, phrases, ideas, circles, boxes, etc. with lines or arrows.
- \*Underline – CAUTION: Use this method sparingly. Underline only a few words. **Always combine** with another method such as comment. Never underline an entire passage. Doing so takes too much time and loses effectiveness. If you wish to mark an entire paragraph or passage, draw a line down the margin or use brackets.
- \*Highlight – See *underline*. You cannot write with a highlighter anyway.
- Use post-it notes **only** if you have exhausted all available space (unlikely), or if you do not own the book.
- Create your own code.

### Close Reading:

What should you annotate? Again, the possibilities are limitless. Keep in mind the reasons we annotate. Your annotations **must** include comments. I want to see evidence of thinking. Have a conversation with the text. Talk back to it.

- **Ask questions (essential to active reading).**
- Comment on the actions or development of a character. Does the character change? Why? How? The result?
- Comment on something that intrigues, impresses, amuses, shocks, puzzles, disturbs, repulses, aggravates, etc.
- Comment on lines / quotations you think are especially significant, powerful, or meaningful.
- Express agreement or disagreement.
- Summarize key events. Make predictions.
- Connect ideas to each other or to other texts.
- Note if you experience an epiphany.
- Note anything you would like to discuss or do not understand.
- Note how the author uses language. Note the significance if you can.
  - effects of word choice (diction) or sentence structure or type (syntax)
  - point of view / effect
  - reliability of narrator
  - repetition of words, phrases, actions, events: patterns, motifs or cluster ideas
  - narrative pace / time / order of sequence of events
  - irony, imagery, theme(s), tone, mood
  - contrasts / contradictions / juxtapositions / shifts
  - allusions
  - setting / historical period
  - symbols
  - any other figure of speech or literary device

The most common complaint about annotating is that it slows down your reading. Yes, it does. That's the point. If annotating as you read annoys you, read a chapter, then go back and annotate. Reading a text a second time is preferable anyway.

Bring all of your annotated texts to class.

Approach the works with an open mind. Let them inspire you and stretch your imagination.