

Meadow Glen Middle School
English I: 2017-2018
Summer Reading Assignment



Summer reading offers students an opportunity to enjoy quality literature while improving independent reading skills. Students demonstrate their abilities through standards-based engagements in comprehension and vocabulary. This self-directed experience will allow students to reinforce skills previously learned and to prepare them for future learning.

English I students will begin the 2017-2018 school year with our first module of study *So You Want a Double Life?: Reading Closely and Writing to Analyze*. In this module, students read, discuss, and analyze contemporary and classic texts while focusing on how authors develop complex characters and central ideas. Study also focuses upon the effects of an author's structural choices and their impact upon text as a whole.

In order to help our students prepare for their future learning, the summer reading assignment has been carefully selected to provide a meaningful learning experience that is directly linked to the curriculum. Students are to read **two** books and write an evaluative book review for each. One book is to be selected from the attached list; the second book is self-selected and chosen by the student. To assist you in completing this assignment, please refer to instructions and the exemplars that are provided with this assignment. **If you would like to choose a book that is not on this list, you may do so; however, please email one of the teachers listed below for approval **before you begin reading**.

The due date for this assignment is Monday, August 28, 2017.

If you have any questions about this assignment, please feel free to contact either Ms. Jennifer Hamilton (mjhamilton@lexington1.net) or Mrs. Trudie Montgomery (tmontgomery@lexington1.net).

Writing Evaluative Book Reviews



Evaluative book reviews are succinct- they are short but packed with information and are approximately one page in length, typed. They offer a brief description of the text's key points and provide a short appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Write in the present tense, not past tense.

Step 1: Think about your overall reaction to the book.

- Write a strong introduction. Consider starting with a catchy sentence that grabs the reader's attention. Possibly make it a question (Have you ever wondered...?; Have you ever been to...?; Have you ever wished you could...?; Do you know how to...? Do you want to know how to...?; etc.)
- Include the following basic information: title, author, genre, subject matter, suggested age range, etc. **Remember that book titles are *italicised* if typed and underlined if handwritten.

Step 2:

- Write a short summary of the work, but do not give too much away. Most summary reviews are limited to a paragraph. Reviews of nonfiction texts provide the basic idea of the book's argument without too much detail. **Remember: DO NOT GIVE AWAY THE ENDING or any other spoilers for that matter. "The Five Ws" is an acceptable format to follow when writing this section (who, what, when, where, why).

Step 3:

- What did you like or dislike about the book? Be mindful that you are to add details and examples when discussing your opinion. For example:

"The author's cartoon drawings are a unique way to keep a reader's interest. I laughed out loud at the illustrator's caricature of Simon's mother with her laser eyes boring a hole through him, her smoking ears, and her burning hair. His mom was mad, and I know just what that's like."
(This example and detail is acceptable).

"I liked this book because I like books that make me think, and this one definitely did."
(This example and detail is not acceptable.)

Step 4:

- Provide information about the literary elements of the text. Think about the author's purpose and his/her use of literary elements and how they impact the book, characters, tone, or mood. One sentence is not enough. This will be the longest part of your review. Choose one or two elements from the list below:

*plot

*irony

*conflict

*symbolism

*humor

*imagery

*setting

*dialogue

*text features (pictures, graphs, sketches, etc.)

*flat and round characters

*protagonists and antagonists

*foreshadowing

For example:

"The author also pairs humor with serious insights into Simon's family and his own role in the family unit. This conflict within the family will resonate with teens and keep them reading to see how Simon's voice comes through with the occasional profanity and graphic reference – not too over the top but enough to feel and identify with his real emotions."

Step 5: If your book has been made into a movie...

- include specific differences between the book and the movie versions; and,
- provide a specific reason why someone who has seen the movie should read the book.

Step 6:

- Write a conclusion that includes what type of reader would likely enjoy the book. Help the prospective reader decide whether or not to read the book by providing a rating: Not Recommended, Recommended, or Highly Recommended.

For example:

“Most teens will appreciate the honesty of Simon’s voice as he grapples not only with everyday drama, but also the in-your-face stereotypes of race and poverty that motivate his actions. This book is highly recommended for public and school libraries.”

Step 7:

- Reread your review and check to make sure:
 - ✓ You have supported the rating you give the book.
 - ✓ Your writing flows smoothly throughout the review.
 - ✓ You use a variety of word choices (not repeating the same words over and over).
 - ✓ You have used correct conventions (grammar, punctuation, and spelling).

**Some information obtained from the Purdue Online Writing Lab <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource>

Evaluative Book Review Exemplar

Fans of Percy Jackson and Harry Potter will be enchanted as they discover the colorful and action packed world of Mythos Academy in Jennifer Estep's *Killer Frost*.

Set in a boarding school hidden away in the mountains of North Carolina, a student population containing descendants of ancient warriors with magical abilities, a slightly sarcastic yet brave heroine with plenty of bad guys to fight, and a dangerous enemy, this series is one you don't want to miss. Throughout the series, The female protagonist Gwen Frost is learning how to use her powers to defeat Loki, the Norse God of Chaos, and his vicious cutthroat followers the Reapers of Chaos. She faces many challenges and suffers many losses, but she never lets go of her hope and the faith that she has within herself.

The mixture of Greek, Roman, Norse, and other mythologies along with the descriptions of famous warriors tribes like the Spartans and the Amazons add a fresh take on current mythology-based urban fantasies. Ms. Estep includes a solid mix of humor and sarcasm into the storyline. Each character is described in vivid detail and gives the reader a clear mental image of each scene. Gwen is primarily portrayed as a positive role model who underestimates herself and believes she is not a true warrior. But as the story continues, she begins to see herself in a different light. Staged attacks from the Reapers of Chaos are strategically planned throughout the plot to keep the novel interesting, surprising, and foreshadowing a much bigger problem.

Most teens will enjoy the dark humor and bits of romance intertwined within the plot of *Killer Frost*. It's perfect for history buffs, the characters are memorable and entertaining, and the plot unfolds perfectly in the fast paced finale of the *Mythos Academy* series. I highly recommend this book for public and school libraries.

Summer Reading Book List

Choose one book from the list below; do not choose a book that you have previously read. Your second book choice is a self-selected book of your own choosing.

- ***Being Sloane Jacobs*** by Lauren Morrill
Seriously stressed-out figure-skater Sloane Emily Jacobs and spunky ice hockey player Sloane Devon Jacobs meet by chance in Montreal and decide to trade places for the summer. Each girl thinks she's the lucky one: no strangers to judge or laugh at Sloane Emily, no scouts expecting Sloane Devon to be a hero. It's not long before the Sloanes discover that convincing people you're someone else might be more difficult than being yourself.
- ***Big Top Burning: The True Story of an Arsonist, a Missing Girl, and the Greatest Show on Earth*** by Laura A. Woollett
This novel draws upon primary source documents and survivor interviews to recount the story of one of the worst disasters in American history, the 1944 Hartford Circus fire. The fire claimed the lives of over one hundred people.
- ***Book Scavenger*** by Jennifer C. Bertman
Just after twelve-year-old Emily and her family move to San Francisco, she teams up with her new friend James to follow clues in an old book they find. The friends hope to figure out the book's secrets before the men who attacked Garrison Griswold, Emily's hero, are able to solve the mystery and come after them.
- ***Fantasy League*** by Mike Lupica
Twelve-year-old Charlie is a Fantasy Football guru. When his podcasts about Fantasy picks get noticed by a sports radio host, Charlie becomes famous. Can he handle the pressure and remain just a regular kid?
- ***Fast Break*** by Mike Lupica
Since his mother's death, twelve-year-old Jayson has focused on basketball and just surviving. He is placed with an affluent foster family of a different race. Jayson must learn to accept many challenges, including facing his former teammates in a championship game.
- ***Girl on a Wire*** by Gwenda Bond
Sixteen-year-old Jules Maroni's dream is to follow in her father's footsteps as a high-wire walker. When her family is offered a prestigious role in the new Cirque American, it seems that Jules and the Amazing Maronis will finally get the spotlight they deserve, but the presence of the Flying Garcias may derail her plans. When Jules discovers a peacock feather (an infamous object of bad luck) planted on her costume, she nearly loses her footing. Jules has no choice but to seek help from the unlikeliest of people, Remy Garcia. As more mysterious talismans believed to possess unlucky magic appear, Jules and Remy unite to find the culprit. If they don't figure out what's going on soon, Jules may be the first Maroni to do the unthinkable: fall.
- ***I am Princess X*** by Cherie Priest
Best friends Libby Deaton and May Harper invent Princess X when they are in fifth grade. When a car Libby is riding in goes off a bridge, she is presumed dead. Three years later, Princess X is everywhere, including in an entire underground culture focused on a webcomic. May believes her friend must still be alive.
- ***I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives***
Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda, with Liz Welch
This novel chronicles the friendship between an American girl and her pen pal from Zimbabwe, and how a class assignment was the beginning of the correspondence that spans six years and changed two lives.
- ***Listen, Slowly*** by Thanhha Lai
Mai can't wait to spend her vacation at the beach, but this year is different. Instead, Mai must travel to Vietnam with her grandmother. Mai's parents think this trip will be a great opportunity for their daughter to learn more about her family's culture, but Mai disagrees. To survive her trip, Mai must find a balance between her two completely different worlds.
- ***Mark of the Thief*** by Jennifer A. Nielsen
Forced to enter a sealed cavern that reputedly holds the lost treasures of Caesar, slave boy Nic discovers an amulet imbued with divine power and finds himself at the center of a conspiracy to overthrow the emperor and spark the Praetor War.

- ***Paper Things*** by Jennifer R. Jacobson
When forced to choose between staying with her guardian and being with her big brother, Ari chooses her big brother. There's just one problem—Gage doesn't actually have a place to live. Told in an open, authentic voice, this nuanced story of hiding in plain sight may have readers thinking about homelessness in a whole new way.
- ***Snow Like Ashes*** by Sara Raasch
A fierce warrior from the Kingdom of Winter, Meira has lived her entire life as a refugee. She would do anything to help Winter rise to power again, including putting herself in danger. When Meira finds a way to restore Winter's power, she is thrust into a world of evil magic and dangerous politics.
- ***The Chosen Prince*** by Diane Stanley
Prince Alexos, the long-awaited champion of the goddess Athena, follows the course of his destiny through wars, loss, and a deadly confrontation with his enemy. On a magical, fog-shrouded island, he meets the unforgettable Aria and faces the greatest challenge of his life. This book is based loosely on William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.
- ***The Cure for Dreaming*** by Cat Winters
Olivia Mead is a headstrong, independent suffragist in an age that prefers its girls to be docile. It's 1900 in Oregon, and Olivia's father is concerned she's headed for trouble. He convinces a stage mesmerist to try to hypnotize the rebellion out of her. But the hypnotist, an intriguing young man named Henri Reverie, gives Olivia a terrible gift instead: she's able to see people's true natures, manifesting as visions of darkness and goodness, while also unable to speak her true thoughts out loud.
- ***The Mark of the Dragonfly*** by Jaleigh Johnson
Piper has never seen the mark of the dragonfly until she finds a girl amid the wreckage of a caravan in the meteor fields. The girl doesn't remember a thing about her life, but the intricate tattoo on her arm is proof that she's from the Dragonfly Territories and protected by the king. If Piper can get the girl home, it will mean a great reward. Life for Piper has just turned dangerous, a little bit magical, and very exciting...if she can manage to survive the journey.
- ***The Seventh Most Important Thing*** by Shelley Pearsall
In 1963, thirteen-year-old Arthur is sentenced to community service helping the neighborhood junkman after he throws a brick at the old man's head in a moment of rage. However, the junk he collects might be more important than Arthur suspect. This book is inspired by the work of American folk artist James Hampton.
- ***The Walk On*** by John Feinstein
After moving to a new town his freshman year in high school, Alex Myers is happy to win a spot on the varsity team as a quarterback. However, Alex must deal with the idea of not playing for two years since the first-string quarterback is not only the local hero, but also the son of the corrupt head coach.
- ***The Worst Class Trip Ever*** by Dave Barry
When Miami's Culver Middle School's eighth grade civics class takes a trip to Washington, DC, Wyatt Palmer finds himself in deep trouble before the plane even lands. His best friend Matt has decided the men sitting behind them are terrorists, and it is up to the boys to stop an attack.
- ***Walk on Earth: A Stranger*** by Rae Carson
Lee Westfall has a secret. She can sense the presence of gold in the world around her- veins deep beneath the earth, pebbles in the river, nuggets dug up from the forest floor. The buzz of gold means warmth and life and home until everything is ripped away by a man who wants to control her. Left with nothing, Lee disguises herself as a boy and takes to the trail across the country. Gold was discovered in California, and where else could such a magical girl find herself and find safety?