

# CCA Summer Reading

Mrs. Hanley – Grades 9 & 10

Dear Student,

Attached, you will find the summer 2011 reading list for your class. Your list consists of 10 or more carefully selected books. Each book is accompanied by a brief review or description that should provide you with enough information about the plot to determine whether or not it may be of interest to you. Your summer assignment is as follows:

## **The Reading –**

1. Select and read any two books (minimum) from the list.
2. Decide which book you found most interesting (and best understood).
3. Choose one of the book reporting written activities on the attached sheet (the circled numbers are the ones available for you to choose from).
4. Complete the activity *with excellence*.

## **The Book Report Activity –**

1. Regardless of the activity you choose, each activity must be *typed, double spaced, and written in size 12 font*.
2. The activity should reflect careful thought and time spent. By its quality and creativity, it should show that you took the assignment seriously and gave your best effort.
3. Length: there is no set length. Follow the guidelines given in the activity description, and keep in mind that something short and hastily written will receive the grade it deserves.

## **Final Note –**

This may not be the type of reading you're used to, or would necessarily choose for yourself, but pray that God would grant you an open mind as you tackle these books. They're called classics for a reason, and each has something to teach us about human nature and the nature of God. Don't feel limited to the required two – if you have time and the desire, read as many books as you possibly can! Extra reading expands your vocabulary, which leads to better thinking and writing skills. Those skills, in turn, lead to greater opportunities both within school and beyond!

## 10<sup>th</sup> English Summer Reading List

### 1. *Animal Farm* – George Orwell

*Amazon.com*: Since its publication in 1946, George Orwell's fable of a workers' revolution gone wrong has rivaled Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* as the Shortest Serious Novel It's OK to Write a Book Report About. (The latter is three pages longer and less fun to read.) Fueled by Orwell's intense disillusionment with Soviet Communism, *Animal Farm* is a nearly perfect piece of writing, both an engaging story and an allegory that actually works. When the downtrodden beasts of Manor Farm oust their drunken human master and take over management of the land, all are awash in collectivist zeal. Everyone willingly works overtime, productivity soars, and for one brief, glorious season, every belly is full. The animals' Seven Commandment credo is painted in big white letters on the barn. All animals are equal. No animal shall drink alcohol, wear clothes, sleep in a bed, or kill a fellow four-footed creature. Those that go upon four legs or wings are friends and the two-legged are, by definition, the enemy. Too soon, however, the pigs, who have styled themselves leaders by virtue of their intelligence, succumb to the temptations of privilege and power. "We pigs are brainworkers. The whole management and organization of the farm depend on us. Day and night, we are watching over your welfare. It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples." While this swinish brotherhood sells out the revolution, cynically editing the Seven Commandments to excuse their violence and greed, the common animals are once again left hungry and exhausted, no better off than in the days when humans ran the farm. Satire *Animal Farm* may be, but it's a stony reader who remains unmoved when the stalwart workhorse, Boxer, having given his all to his comrades, is sold to the glue factory to buy booze for the pigs. Orwell's view of Communism is bleak indeed, but given the history of the Russian people since 1917, his pessimism has an air of prophecy. --Joyce Thompson

### 2. *Cry, the Beloved Country* – Alan Paton

*Amazon.com*: Cry, the beloved country, for the unborn child that is the inheritor of our fear. Let him not love the earth too deeply. Let him not laugh too gladly when the water runs through his fingers, nor stand too silent when the setting sun makes red the veld with fire. Let him not be too moved when the birds of his land are singing, nor give too much of his heart to a mountain or valley. For fear will rob him of all if he gives too much."

The most famous and important novel in South Africa's history, and an immediate worldwide bestseller when it was published in 1948, Alan Paton's impassioned novel about a black man's country under white man's law is a work of searing beauty. The eminent literary critic Lewis Gannett wrote, "We have had many novels from statesmen and reformers, almost all bad; many novels from poets, almost all thin. In Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* the statesman, the poet and the novelist meet in a unique harmony." *Cry, the Beloved Country* is the deeply moving story of the Zulu pastor Stephen Kumalo and his son, Absalom, set against the background of a land and a people riven by racial injustice. Remarkable for its lyricism, unforgettable for character and incident, *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a classic work of love and hope, courage and endurance, born of the dignity of man.

### 3. *The Chosen* – Chaim Potok

*Amazon.com*: Few stories offer more warmth, wisdom, or generosity than this tale of two boys, their fathers, their friendship, and the chaotic times in which they live. Though on the surface it explores religious faith--the intellectually committed as well as the passionately observant--the struggles addressed in *The Chosen* are familiar to families of all faiths and in all nations.

In 1940s Brooklyn, New York, an accident throws Reuven Malter and Danny Saunders together. Despite their differences (Reuven is a Modern Orthodox Jew with an intellectual, Zionist father; Danny is the brilliant

son and rightful heir to a Hasidic rebbe), the young men form a deep, if unlikely, friendship. Together they negotiate adolescence, family conflicts, the crisis of faith engendered when Holocaust stories begin to emerge in the U.S., loss, love, and the journey to adulthood. The intellectual and spiritual clashes between fathers, between each son and his own father, and between the two young men, provide a unique backdrop for this exploration of fathers, sons, faith, loyalty, and, ultimately, the power of love.

#### 4. ***Crime and Punishment*** – Fyodor Dostoevsky

*Amazon.com: Crime and Punishment*—the novel that heralded the author’s period of masterworks—tells the story of the poor and talented student Raskolnikov, a character of unparalleled psychological depth and complexity. Raskolnikov reasons that men like himself, by virtue of their intellectual superiority, can and must transcend societal law. To test his theory, he devises the perfect crime—the murder of a spiteful pawnbroker living in St. Petersburg.

In one of the most gripping crime stories of all time, Raskolnikov soon realizes the folly of his abstractions. Haunted by vivid hallucinations and the torments of his conscience, he seeks relief from his terror and moral isolation—first from Sonia, the pious streetwalker who urges him to confess, then in a tense game of cat and mouse with Porfiry, the brilliant magistrate assigned to the murder investigation. A *tour de force* of suspense, *Crime and Punishment* delineates the theories and motivations that underlie a bankrupt morality.

#### 5. ***Into Thin Air*** – Jon Krakauer

*Amazon.com: Into Thin Air* is a riveting first-hand account of a catastrophic expedition up Mount Everest. In March 1996, *Outside* magazine sent veteran journalist and seasoned climber Jon Krakauer on an expedition led by celebrated Everest guide Rob Hall. Despite the expertise of Hall and the other leaders, by the end of summit day eight people were dead. Krakauer's book is at once the story of the ill-fated adventure and an analysis of the factors leading up to its tragic end. Written within months of the events it chronicles, *Into Thin Air* clearly evokes the majestic Everest landscape. As the journey up the mountain progresses, Krakauer puts it in context by recalling the triumphs and perils of other Everest trips throughout history. The author's own anguish over what happened on the mountain is palpable as he leads readers to ponder timeless questions.

#### 6. ***Uncle Tom's Cabin*** – Harriet Beecher Stowe

*Amazon.com:* This is one of those books that everybody has heard about but few people these days have actually read. It deserves to be read - not simply because it is the basis for symbols so deeply ingrained in American culture that we no longer realize their source, nor because it is one of the best-selling books of all time. This is a book that changed history. 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. In a time when women might see the majority of their children die, Harriet Beecher Stowe portrays beautiful Eliza fleeing slavery to protect her son. In a time when many whites claimed slavery had "good effects" on blacks, **Uncle Tom's Cabin** paints pictures of three plantations, each worse than the other, where even the best plantation leaves a slave at the mercy of fate or debt. By twentieth-century standards, her propaganda verges on melodrama, and it is clear that even while arguing for the abolition of slavery she did not rise above her own racism. Yet her questions remain penetrating even today: "Is man ever a creature to be trusted with wholly irresponsible power?"

7. ***2001: A Space Odyssey*** – Arthur C. Clarke

*Amazon.com:* When an enigmatic monolith is found buried on the moon, scientists are amazed to discover that it's at least 3 million years old. Even more amazing, after it's unearthed the artifact releases a powerful signal aimed at Saturn. What sort of alarm has been triggered? To find out, a manned spacecraft, the *Discovery*, is sent to investigate. Its crew is highly trained--the best--and they are assisted by a self-aware computer, the ultra-capable HAL 9000. But HAL's programming has been patterned after the human mind a little too well. He is capable of guilt, neurosis, even murder, and he controls every single one of *Discovery's* components. The crew must overthrow this digital psychotic if they hope to make their rendezvous with the entities that are responsible not just for the monolith, but maybe even for human civilization. Clarke wrote this novel while Stanley Kubrick created the film, the two collaborating on both projects. The novel is much more detailed and intimate, and definitely easier to comprehend. Even though history has disproved its "predictions," it's still loaded with exciting and awe-inspiring science fiction. --*Brooks Peck*

8. ***Night*** –Elie Wiesel

*Amazon.com:* In Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel's memoir *Night*, a scholarly, pious teenager is wracked with guilt at having survived the horror of the Holocaust and the genocidal campaign that consumed his family. His memories of the nightmare world of the death camps present him with an intolerable question: how can the God he once so fervently believed in have allowed these monstrous events to occur? There are no easy answers in this harrowing book, which probes life's essential riddles with the lucid anguish only great literature achieves. It marks the crucial first step in Wiesel's lifelong project to bear witness for those who died.

9. ***And Then There were None*** – Agatha Christie

*Amazon.com:* Considered the best mystery novel ever written by many readers, *And Then There Were None* is the story of 10 strangers, each lured to Indian Island by a mysterious host. Once his guests have arrived, the host accuses each person of murder. Unable to leave the island, the guests begin to share their darkest secrets--until they begin to die.

10. ***The Cross and the Switchblade*** – David Wilkerson

*Amazon.com:* The tortured face of a young killer, one of seven boys on trial for a brutal murder, started country preacher David Wilkerson on his lonely crusade to the most dangerous streets in the world. Violent gangs ruled by warlords, drug pushers and pimps held the streets of New York's ghettos in an iron grip. It was into this world that David Wilkerson stepped, armed only with the simple message of God's love and the promise of the Holy Spirit's power. Then the miracles began to happen. *The Cross and the Switchblade* is one of the most inspiring and challenging true stories of all time. It has sold millions of copies throughout the world and has been made into a feature film.

## **Book Reporting: Written Activities** \* Options are marked by grade

These alternative assignments to the standard "book report" can be used for reporting on fiction.

1. Write a skit or short play that utilizes the same main characters as the story. If you wish, you may add a new character to give freshness to the mix, Continue the plot of the original story; or invent a new conflict and resolution.
2. On a 3-inch X 5-inch note card, write a telegram about the book to send to a friend. Include specific things about the characters, story, and setting. Limit the telegram to fifty words by leaving out *ands* and similar, small words so you can say more in a short space.
- \* 6,7,8,9 3. Write a diary as if you were one of the main characters in the book. Tell not only what is happening to you and others, but how you feel about what is taking place. Make a minimum of ten sequential entries of at least five sentences each.
- \* 6,7,8,9 4. Write a letter to the-author of the book. Emphasize the parts of the book you liked best, one part you would change (telling specifically how), and name your favorite character. Tell exactly why you found the character likable and/or, believable.
- \* 8,9,10 5. Pretend you are a book critic and write a book review for a newspaper. Tell the name of the book, its author, something about the main characters, plot, setting, and conflict. Do not reveal the ending, but evaluate the book and the author's writing ability.
6. Rewrite the ending of the story. Be sure it is plausible and different from the one the author uses. Your ending should begin at the climax and take the main characters through to a different resolution or solution to their basic problem.
- \* 6,7,8,9 7. Choose a main character from the book. Write a letter to him or her, giving advice on what he or she should do to solve the conflicts that have been presented in the book. Be sure your advice is different from the way the author resolves the problems.
8. Write a one-page publicity article promoting the book. Be specific, but don't tell the story or the ending. Remember, you are trying to interest someone in reading the book, not summarizing it. Reading book jackets should help you get ideas.
9. Write a one-page biography of a character from the story. Use any and all information given by the author throughout the book. Write the facts about the character in chronological order, even if they weren't presented that way during the story.
- \*9, 10 10. Pretend you are a news reporter assigned to the obituary page. Write brief obituaries about two characters from the book. Give pertinent information about their lives, showing readers what you have learned about them and the legacies they leave.
- \* 8,9,10 11. If the book you read was adapted for television or the movies, write two long paragraphs (one page) comparing and contrasting the book and the television or movie version. In the first paragraph, tell the ways the versions were similar. In the second, tell the ways in which they differed.
- \* 8,9,10 12. In what period of history was the story set? Go to the library and research

the era. Add what you learned about the customs, dress, language, and so forth from the book to what you learn from your research. Summarize on one full page the historical period.

13. Search the book for similes, metaphors, or exceptional images the author used. Write them down exactly as stated. Label each with a S, M, or I to show that you know one from the other. Be sure to fill one complete page.
- \* 6 14. Write a one-page summary of the story. Be sure to include the main characters, setting, plot, climax, and resolution, but be brief and to the point. Put the title and author's name at the top of the page, and put your name at the bottom.
15. Take one interesting incident from the story. Use it as a springboard to write a short story for a young person of elementary school age. Limit yourself to two or three pages.
16. Write one page telling why you would or would not like the main character for a friend.
17. Write one page about one of the characters. In the first paragraph, tell how the character *is* like you. In the second, tell how the character differs from you.
- \* 6,7 18. Compare two books you have recently read. Tell all the ways they are alike. Be sure to list the complete titles and authors.
- \* 6,7 19. Contrast two books you have recently read. Tell all the ways they are different. Be sure to list the complete titles and authors.
20. Outline the book, using main headings such as SETTING, CHARACTERS, PLOT, INCIDENTS, and ENDING for your Roman numeral divisions.
21. Make up a shape poem relating to the book.
22. If you've read a myth, fable, or legend, make up one of your own and tell or read it to the class.

