Dear Parents/Guardians.

Educational research confirms the importance of reading on grades. Since students who read generally excel in all areas of study, students enrolled in Bennington High School honors English classes will be required to read during the summer for the upcoming school year. This will help them to maintain their skills in reading, thinking, and vocabulary.

I am asking juniors to select one novel to read over the summer from the list. When the students return to school in the fall, they will be asked to take a test based on their novel choice. The test will consist of multiple-choice questions as well as an essay portion. These books may be purchased by the student or checked out at the local library.

**Please sign and return this bottom portion to Honors English 10 teacher Mrs. Byrd by May 15th clearly stating you and your student understand the requirements and expectations of taking this honors class.**

**Parent/Guardian:   
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student:   
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Bennington High School

2015-2016

Summer Reading Program

Grade Eleven –   
Honors English

Laura McGrew

Language Arts 9-12

[lauramcgrew@bennps.org](mailto:lauramcgrew@bennps.org)

**Expectations**

1. Student will complete independent work outside of class and know that the pace of learning will be faster than in non-Honors. Students understand a high level of independent study is required on their part.
2. Students will complete summer assignment understanding it is their first grade of the year.
3. Students will be challenged to think more in-depth about reading material rather than just basic comprehension techniques.
4. Students are expected to participate and interact with each other respectfully. As an Honors class, this is one of the requirements used for grading purposes.
5. Students will be assessed frequently on selected readings throughout the course.
6. Students will approach coursework with open minds and a positive attitude.
7. Students will understand this course will challenge them both academically and intellectually to guide them towards a successful future.
8. Students need to be aware that grades are earned and not as easily as obtained in past classes.
9. Students will seek extra help when needed on their own.
10. Students will approach the teacher with any issues, questions, and concerns dealing with the class (not parents).

Dear Student,

Because reading is essential to high-quality thinking and writing, each student entering Bennington High School’s Honors English 11 class will be required to complete a reading assignment in preparation for the fall semester.

Requirements

You will need to read **ONE** novel from the following list of classic American literature. You can obtain this novel by checking it out at the local library, purchasing your own copy, or checking one out from Mrs. McGrew. When you return to school in the fall, you will take a multiple-choice test as well as write an essay on a designated topic within the novel. This test will be the first grade of class.

Suggestions:

1) Take some type of notes while you read. Summary notes of each chapter would be a great idea. Give yourself something to go back to before school begins; sometimes it’s hard to remember things that happened.

2) Review the book a couple days before school begins. Make sure you know who the characters are and big events that take place.

Late Enrollment

Students who enroll after the start of the first semester will have two weeks to complete the summer reading assignment.

Novel Choices (choose 1)

* *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain
  + 1876 novel about a young boy growing up along the   
    Mississippi River and the crazy adventures he gets himself   
    into
* *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger
  + a native New Yorker Holden Caulfield leaves his prep school  
    in Pennsylvania and goes underground in New York City for three days
* *Their Eyes were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston
  + One person the citizens of Eaton are inclined to judge is   
    Janie Crawford, an African American woman who has   
    married three men and been tried for the murder of one of them, but she feels no compulsion to justify herself to the   
    town
* *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
  + Guy Montag is a fireman. In his world, where television rules and literature is on the brink of extinction, firemen start fires rather than put them out. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in   
    which they are hidden.
* *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls
  + Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Hers is a story of triumph against all odds, but   
    also a tender, moving tale of unconditional love in a family that despite its profound flaws gave her the fiery   
    determination to carve out a successful life on her own   
    terms.
* The Awakening by Kate Chopin
  + Chopin's daring portrayal of a woman trapped in a stifling marriage, who seeks and finds passionate physical love outside the straitened confines of her domestic situation.

**Syllabus Outline for Honors English 11 Class**

Basic Overview: Honors English 11 is centered on developing an awareness of and appreciation for American Literature from the colonial period to the present day. As the year progresses, we will be examining both content and structural elements, such as literary techniques, to improve your understanding of literature. We will also trace the development of American Literature through history, recognizing the major developments in prose and poetry. We will recognize and consider how a piece of literature is inextricably tied to its historical context and how it reflects the ideas and values of American society today.

* Reading is a life-skill which needs to be practiced daily to improve. Challenging reading improves critical thinking. Outside quarter readings will be assigned through the year.
* We will be using language effectively in class discussions to develop interpersonal communication skills.
* We will also be writing several research papers. Learning to write research papers teaches students to go beyond the usual sources and explore the world of information, recognize facts, opinions, and expert sources. These skills are important in the 21st century in both education and the world of work.
* Added to reading and writing is the essential practice of the basic rules of grammar as well as vocabulary.

Novels Taught Throughout the Year

* *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
* *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane
* *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
* *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
* *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines