

BHS SUMMER READING 2008

Dear Parents,

The English Department at Happy Valley School believes that reading is an essential tool in life-long learning and for developing self-awareness. Critical thinking skills are a fundamental component of true education. The ability to read critically fosters the development of these skills, which can only be enhanced through practice. The primary goals of summer reading are to cultivate the practice of reading, and to maintain essential skills while students are not engaged in a daily academic routine.

The books we have selected reflect a wide range of material that we feel are important works in the literary canon, in addition to serving as enhancements to the coming year's curriculum. We believe that reading is a pleasurable experience and want to encourage it as a practice among our students. Our goal is that these selections and the corresponding assignments will serve as vehicles to challenge students, while increasing literacy and cultivating a love of reading. Students should be aware that we will focus group discussion time during orientation week about their required reading selection, so they should have completed the reading before arrival for the 2008-2009 school year.

We hope that you enjoy them, and if you have any questions feel free to contact Portia Pelow-Dickerson at: ppelow@besanthill.org; she will be able to pass on messages to fellow members of the English Department.

Have a wonderful summer!

All the best,
The English Department

Reading Selections

Ninth Grade: *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho

Tenth Grade: *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

All Eleventh and Twelfth Graders: *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy

In addition to the above, Honors and AP students will read:

Eleventh Honors: *Brave New World* Aldous Huxley

Twelfth AP: *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien

For each book required for your upcoming course, choose three of the below assignments to complete. Please submit your responses via email no later than Friday, August 31st, 2008. Email responses can be sent to Portia Pelow-Dickerson (ppelow@besanthill.org) or Tina Leslie (tleslie@besanthill.org). Hard copies of the assignment can be mailed to:

Summer Reading
PO Box 850
Ojai, CA 93024

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1. Write an epilogue and/or prologue to the book, describing events that could have taken place before and after the plot of the book.
2. Write 10 discussion questions for the book **with complete answers**.
3. Compose two articles for a newspaper published at the time of your book. Each article will relate to an event from the book.
4. Create a script for one scene of your book and/or film the scene.
5. Write a eulogy or an obituary for the main character.
6. Pretend you are the author and explain why you wrote the book and how you chose the title, setting, and created the characters.
7. Take photographs and make a photo album that depicts the experiences of a character.
8. Draw a map of the main setting of the book, labeling important locations.
9. Write a different ending for the book.
10. Keep a journal as you read the book; include your reactions, thoughts, and feelings.