

# Summer Reading Assignment for LA11

## 2017 / 2018

### Northwest Pennsylvania Collegiate Academy

Welcome to the summer reading assignment for Language Arts 11. Please read the entire assignment before you begin. Be sure to pay close attention to the “Academic Integrity” section.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me this summer.

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## The Assignment

Please choose a novel at the end of this document to enjoy this summer.

During the first week of school, you will write an in-class essay on the book that you read. The writing prompt will focus on **one** theme topic/motif from your chosen book. The Pennsylvania Department of Education defines a literary theme as the following:

**THEME - A topic of discussion or work; a major idea broad enough to cover the entire scope of a literary work. A theme may be stated or implied. Clues to the theme may be found in the prominent and/or reoccurring ideas in a work. Theme is often a universal message from the author.**

You will not see the specific essay prompt until the first week of school. Remember that your essay will focus **only** on one of the themes of your chosen book. (You choose which theme you will focus on.) To earn the highest score, your essay must do the following:

- make a compelling argument
- quote frequently and thoughtfully from the book
- cite those quotations according to MLA guidelines (Thus, your annotations must include citations.)
- analyze those quotations thoroughly and thoughtfully
- make it clear that you’ve read the book through your inclusion and analysis of details

You will **not** be able to use your book to write the essay; however, you may use any annotations that you make. As you read, record as many annotations as you’d like. These annotations must be handwritten on sticky notes or notecards. They must be your work. They may not be typed. They may not be written on sheets of paper. They may not be summaries or analyses printed or copied from a website. If your annotations do not adhere to all of these requirements, you will not be allowed to use them when you write your essay.

You may format your annotations however you want, but if you want to earn the highest score on the essay, we recommend that each annotation include the following:

- some brief context for the quotation (this will help you when you write the essay without the book in front of you)
- the direct quotation itself, followed by the page number in parentheses (You MUST include page numbers on your annotations in order to correctly cite direct quotes.)
- a thorough and insightful analysis of the quotation

When you write the essay, you will be allowed to remove the annotations from your book and use them as you write. **Again, you will not be able to use the book itself.**

You may choose not to do annotations, but bear in mind that you cannot receive higher than a 70 percent on the essay without direct quotations from the book. **Here's a quick recap:**

1. Choose a novel from the list.
2. Focus your annotations on one theme.
3. Follow all directions for those annotations.
4. Bring your book and annotations on the first day of school. You will write an essay, and you can use your annotations—but not the book itself—as you write.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Every assignment you do in school is meant to measure your knowledge of something or your ability to do something. The grade you receive on the assignment should reflect that knowledge or ability, but an assignment cannot truly measure your knowledge or ability if you have not done your own work. The summer reading assignment should be the product solely of **your** thoughts, effort, and ideas. Do not use websites. Sites like Wikipedia, Shmoop, and SparkNotes serve a purpose, but using them for an assignment like this one is dishonest. Furthermore, your teachers are not interested in what SparkNotes says. We are interested in *your* ideas, interpretations, and arguments. We want to know what *you* think. Your ideas are far more interesting than the ones regurgitated again and again on the internet, and looking at those websites will color your thinking and prevent you from developing your own ideas. Although there will doubtless be collaborative assignments throughout the school year, this is not one of them. Do your own work. You may not in any way work with someone else on this assignment. **If your annotations show any evidence of your having copied from a website, a classmate, or any other source, you will receive a zero on the essay.**

# Summer Reading Assignment for LA11 – Book Choices

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- *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner - A novel concerning Addie Burden of Mississippi, her sons (Cash, Darl, Jewel, and Vardaman) and the family trip to bury her. A series of mishaps besets the family: in crossing a flooded river, the mules are drowned, Cash's leg is broken, and the coffin is upset and rescued by Jewel. Later the family rests at a farmhouse, where Darl sets fire to the barn in an attempt to destroy the rotting remains in the coffin. The family finally reaches Jefferson, where Addie is buried; Darl is taken to the insane asylum, and Anse acquires a new wife.
- *Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway - *The Old Man and the Sea* is one of Hemingway's most enduring works. Told in language of great simplicity and power, it is the story of an old Cuban fisherman, down on his luck, and his supreme ordeal -- a relentless, agonizing battle with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream. Here Hemingway recasts, in strikingly contemporary style, the classic theme of courage in the face of defeat, of personal triumph won from loss. Written in 1952, this hugely successful novella confirmed his power and presence in the literary world and played a large part in his winning the 1954 Nobel Prize for Literature.
- *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller - This play is the genuine article--it's got the goods on the human condition, all packed into a day in the life of one self-deluded, self-promoting, self-defeating soul. The tragedy of Loman the allAmerican dreamer and loser works eternally, on the page as on the stage.
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston - One of the most important and enduring books of the twentieth century, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* brings to life a Southern love story with the wit and pathos found only in the writing of Zora Neale Hurston. Out of print for almost thirty years—due largely to initial audiences' rejection of its strong black female protagonist—Hurston's classic has since its 1978 reissue become perhaps the most widely read and highly acclaimed novel in the canon of African-American literature.
- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison (1970) – This novel shows that “black is beautiful.” Pecola Breedlove, a young black girl, prays every day for beauty. Mocked by other children for the dark skin, curly hair, and brown eyes that set her apart, she yearns for normalcy, for the blond hair and blue eyes that she believes will allow her to finally fit in. Yet as her dream grows more fervent, her life slowly starts to disintegrate in the face of adversity and strife. A powerful examination of our obsession with beauty and conformity, Toni Morrison's virtuosic first novel asks powerful questions about race, class, and gender with the subtlety and grace that have always characterized her writing.