



South Elgin High School

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*"Taking the future by **STORM**"*

Melanie Meidel, Principal

Dear Freshman Honors Student:

Summer Reading 2012

Welcome to summer reading South Elgin High School style! Each student enrolled in Freshman Honors English is required to read **two** memoirs for the summer. **Please purchase a copy of each of the books**, as you will need them in class when you come back to school in August. Also, please purchase a composition book and complete the following assignments in it. We will use this composition book in class all year!

The First Memoir

You are to read one book from this list. It is a list of memoirs about different cultures and governments in the world today.

1. *The Translator* by Daoud Hari

This is the story of a young man whose village was attacked by the Sudanese government-backed militia. The village and his family were destroyed and he escaped.

2. *When Broken Glass Floats* by Chanrithy Him

This memoir is a story of a young woman's experience with the killing fields in Cambodia.

3. *A Long Way Gone* by Ismael Baeh

This is the story of government rebels killing the family of this young man and his journey through the ranks of the rebels to freedom in the United States.

4. *Burned Alive, A victim of the Law of Men* by Souad

This is the story of a young woman's indiscretion and the consequences of her action.

After reading this memoir, answer the following questions **in your composition book**. These answers are to be complete, well thought out responses in paragraph form, not bullet points or lists.

The First Memoir Journal Assignment

1. You are to journal about the main character's family. Who are the members of this family? How does the family function? Is there an extended family relationship or close friends? Who are they and how do they impact the life of the main character?
2. There are cultural expectations and traditions in each of these novels. What are these cultural expectations and traditions, and how do these expectations and traditions impact the character's life and set the plot for the novel?
3. How does this character's life compare and contrast to your life?

The Second Memoir -

You are to read one book from this list. It is about the difficulties that some young people experience in their daily lives.

1. *A Wolf at the Table: A Memoir of My Father* by Augusten Burroughs

When Augusten Burroughs was small, his father was a shadowy presence in his life: a form on the stairs, a cough from the basement, a silent figure smoking a cigarette in the dark. As Augusten grew older, something sinister within his father began to unfurl. Something dark and secretive that could not be named.

2. *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

This is a story about a young woman who became a success even though she was an extremely neglected child.

3. *Sickened* by Julie Gregory

This story deals with a young girl whose mother creates illnesses for her daughter so that the mother can appear to be a very concerned mother and receive attention.

4. *Look Me in the Eye* by John Elder Robison

This story is about a young man who has difficulty connecting with people. By the time he becomes a teenager, people notice his strange behaviors. John Elder Robison is Augusten Burroughs' brother.

The Second Memoir Journal Assignment

1. Locate two quotations which capture the main character's essence. Copy the quotation, correctly cite it using MLA citation form, and explain why you believe each quotation exemplifies the main character. Your explanations must be well written and thoughtful responses. [To cite a quotation, you must include the author's last name and the page number the quotation was taken from. For example, for *Look Me in the Eye*, the citation would read, (Robison 20).]
2. Write two possible themes for the novel. [A theme is an underlying message or meaning a writer wants to convey to his or her readers.] Try to write themes which reflect your own understanding of the text. After writing each theme, find a quotation from the novel which supports that theme. Copy the quotation, correctly cite it using MLA citation form, and explain why you believe each quotation supports the theme. Your explanations must be well written and thoughtful responses.
3. How do forces such as diseases and familial issues affect the authors of the memoirs? Why might authors choose to write about these topics?

In order to take advantage of early sales on school supplies, these are the things you will need for the first day of school in Freshman Honors English:

- ❖ A good supply of post it notes.
 - ❖ A composition notebook. (This is the one sewn together with the black and white speckled cover. It also comes in other colors and patterns. We don't want you to rip out the pages.)
 - ❖ Colored markers, colored pens for editing and pencils
 - ❖ Highlighters
 - ❖ Pens (blue or black) and pencils (No gel pens!)
 - ❖ A **flash drive** (also called a jump drive or thumb drive)
 - ❖ A roll of dimes for the copier in the library!
 - ❖ One box of facial tissues (Given to the teacher because we will share them all year long)
 - ❖ Loose leaf paper for class assignments.
 - ❖ A three ring binder is needed for handouts, vocabulary study, and returned work and writing assignments.
- I will provide construction paper and other incidentals that the students will need to use during the year.

Reading is important, so keep a list of the other books you read this summer. If you are a good reader, you will be a good writer.

"If you don't have the time to read, you don't have the time or the tools to write." - Stephen King

We can be reached this summer through our district e-mail. Please do not be afraid to contact us in this manner. We check our e-mail often.

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Academic Success for ALL