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English 10 Mrs. Filor

Your Reading Life: Summer Reading Personal Response Essay

What does your reading life look like? I am interested in finding out about your reading life, and I would like you to take stock of it, now, at the beginning of the year, to help you form your goals for this year. Write a personal essay in which you include a discussion of the items listed below. Each bullet may be a paragraph or two in your essay; you’ll need to think about how to organize your writing. When considering genres of reading, think back to your Reading and Writing Survey; all types of reading count. You actually might read more than you think. Make sure you develop your writing to give a full picture.

* Introduce yourself in your introduction by giving an overall assessment of your reading life.
* How did you feel about reading in elementary school? Was it easy for you to learn how to read? Did your parents read to you? What types of things did you like to read? How much did you read? Did you read in and out of school? What do you remember?
* What about middle school? Did you read then? What books do you remember reading for school? What about for yourself?
* How about 9th grade? Did you do the assigned reading? Did you read on your own? If so, what?
* Now tell me about your summer reading. What did you chose from the Arlington High School list? Did you read it completely? How much did you read? When? How quickly? Did you enjoy it? What exactly did you like about it or not? Be specific.
* If you did read your summer reading, give me a sense of the important elements in the book? Who is the main character, what is the point of view, and what is the setting? What was the conflict and how did it play out in the plot? When you got to the end, what message did you feel was communicated through the characterization and plot? Is this a good message for other people your age to read about? Do you recommend the book? Again, be specific. Feel free to quote to show examples.
* Tell me about what other reading you did this summer. What did you read? Why? When? If you didn’t read a book from the list but chose something else, did you e-mail Mrs. Ogden, the head of the English department, for approval?
* Finally, set some reading goals for yourself this year. Think about what kind of reader you are and how you can push yourself to be better. Consider that most college students say they are assigned 200-600 pages of reading a week. Will you be up for that challenge? What obstacles will you face and how will you overcome them?

**If your teacher gave you this assignment last year, you may draw from it for the paragraphs on elementary school and middle school.**

Please be honest with yourself and me so we can work on getting the most out of English in your 10th grade year. Feel free to use personal pronouns in this assignment. It is due **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**. Please write it as neatly as you can in pen (Honors students, please type, if possible).

To receive extra credit on your summer reading essay, you may do one or more of the following:

* Submit a list of books (along with their authors) you read this summer in order of the one you liked the best to the least. Write a little paragraph discussing your order choice. Use the template below. Attach another sheet if needed.
* Make a donation to our classroom library of a book you love.
* Give a book talk to the class on a book you love. In a book talk, ideally you would hold the book, to show the class. You should summarize the theme, central conflict, or give other details of the book (such as setting), but don’t give away the ending. You could connect the book to other books that are similar. You must read a short passage from the book to hook readers.
* Take a selfie of yourself with a book you love and e-mail it to me at: jfilor2@acsdny.org. Write a little paragraph explaining why you love this book.

This extra credit is due by Friday, September 20th.

Books (and their authors) I Read This Summer In Order of Best to Least

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Explanation of Order:

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Books (and their authors) I Read Summer of 2015 In Order of Best to Least

1. *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys

2. *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy

3. *Book Love* by Penny Kittle

4. *Taken* by Erin Bowman

5. *Frozen* by Erin Bowman

6. *Forged* by Erin Bowman

7. *Butter* by Erin Jade Lange

8. *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson (listened to on Audible)

9. *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville (listened to on Audible)

10. *Ramona and Her Mother* by Beverly Cleary

Explanation of Order:

*Wide Sargasso Sea* is a book written from the perspective of Mr. Rochester’s first wife, a character from *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Bronte. I love *Jane Eyre* and I love the idea of telling a story from the perspective of a character other than the narrator. This richly written book is the heartbreaking story of a woman caught in a culture and time when she has little choice in her life. *Anna Karenina* was also in part about how women are trapped by society. I like that theme, as it resonates with my own life. It just was really long; it took me a month to read. *Book Love* was very inspirational, and I think it will change my teaching; however, I prefer to read novels over other types of books. Erin Bowman’s trilogy was entertaining, although a bit derivative of some other works, such as *The Hunger Games* series, and *Blade Runner*, but I liked the characters and it was suspenseful. I think I liked them in order of when they were written. I enjoyed *Butter* as well. I thought the story was a very interesting idea and gave a clear picture of how overweight people are dismissed by our society, but some of the dialogue seemed awkward. I spent a lot of time in the car this summer and listened to *Brown Girl Dreaming* and *Moby Dick* on Audible. I expected more from *Brown Girl Dreaming*, since it had been highly recommended by Penny Kittle, and I enjoyed this memoir, but I didn’t love it. It felt like just another memoir. *Moby* *Dick* was really hard to listen to and focus on. I’m not terribly interested in whaling. I wanted it to be more of a buddy story between Ishmael and Queequeg, but it only was at the beginning. I love the *Ramona* books, but I’m getting a little sick of them, as Celia listens to them on Audible over and over. Also, I like *Ramona and Beezus*, *Ramona the Pest*, *Ramona the Brave,* and *Ramona Quimby Age 8* best.