

Ramapo-Indian Hills English Department
2012 Summer Reading Assignment - **English 1CP/CPE**

Review the book titles listed below and the brief summaries as excerpted from barnesandnoble.com. Please select one of the following books, read it, and complete the assignment as detailed on the “General Directions” handout. The related quotes follow this list.

They Cage the Animals at Night by Michael Jennings Burch

One rainy day in Brooklyn, Jennings Michael Burch's mother, too sick to care for him, left him at an orphanage, saying only, "I'll be right back." She never returned. Shuttled through a series of bleak foster homes and institutions, he never remained in any of them long enough to make a friend. Instead, Jennings clung to a tattered stuffed animal, his sole source of warmth in a frightening world. This is the poignant story of his lost childhood. But it is also the triumphant tale of a little boy who finally gained the courage to reach out for love-and found it waiting for him.

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Rex and Rose Mary Walls had four children. In the beginning, they lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly. Rose Mary, who painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family, called herself an "excitement addict." Cooking a meal that would be consumed in fifteen minutes had no appeal when she could make a painting that might last forever.

Later, when the money ran out, or the romance of the wandering life faded, the Walls retreated to the dismal West Virginia mining town — and the family — Rex Walls had done everything he could to escape. He drank. He stole the grocery money and disappeared for days. As the dysfunction of the family escalated, Jeannette and her brother and sisters had to fend for themselves, supporting one another as they weathered their parents' betrayals and, finally, found the resources and will to leave home.

A Long Way Gone – Memoirs of a Boy Soldier by Ishmael Beah

My new friends have begun to suspect I haven't told them the full story of my life. "Why did you leave Sierra Leone?" "Because there is a war." "You mean, you saw people running around with guns and shooting each other?" "Yes, all the time." "Cool." I smile a little. "You should tell us about it sometime." "Yes, sometime."

This is how wars are fought now: by children, hopped-up on drugs and wielding AK-47s. Children have become soldiers of choice. In the more than fifty conflicts going on worldwide, it is estimated that there are some 300,000-child soldiers. Ishmael Beah used to be one of them.

What is war like through the eyes of a child soldier? How does one become a killer? How does one stop? Journalists have profiled child soldiers, and novelists have struggled to imagine their lives. But until now, there has not been a first-person account from someone who came through this hell and survived.

After you read your novel, please select one of the following quotes to complete your assignment (Please see Summer Reading Assignment 2012 for directions):

1. "Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." -Dr. Seuss
2. "An identity would seem to be arrived at by the way in which the person faces and uses his experience." -James Baldwin
3. "Children need people in order to become human.... It is primarily through observing, playing, and working with others older and younger than himself that a child discovers both what he can do and who he can become—that he develops both his ability and his identity.... Hence to relegate children to a world of their own is to deprive them of their humanity, and ourselves as well." -Urie Bronfenbrenner
4. "One of the main tasks of adolescence is to achieve an identity—not necessarily a knowledge of who we are, but a clarification of the range of what we might become, a set of self-references by which we can make sense of our responses, and justify our decisions and goals." - Terri Apter
5. "The only thing that will make you happy is being happy with who you are, and not who people think you are." -Goldie Hawn
6. "I am now quite cured of seeking pleasure in society, be it country or town. A sensible man ought to find sufficient company in himself." - Emily Bronte
7. "To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment." -Ralph Waldo Emerson
8. "Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation." -Oscar Wilde
9. "I am not made like any of those I have seen. I venture to believe that I am not made like any of those who are in existence. If I am not better, at least I am different." -Jean-Jacques Rousseau
10. "Do not free a camel of the burden of his hump; you may be freeing him from being a camel." -G.K. Chesterton