

Ramapo-Indian Hills English Department
Summer Reading Assignment 2011
General Directions for CP & CPE Classes
(*Honors and AP Classes should refer to separate assignments)

Reading is a pleasurable and worthwhile pursuit; it not only allows you to experience a variety of interesting people, places, and events, but it also affords you the opportunity to practice your comprehension skills, to sharpen your reading rate, and to expand your vocabulary. In order to provide you with these positive opportunities, we have designed the following assignment, which we hope you will find both enjoyable and valuable.

In an effort to appeal to various readers, the summer reading assignment has an element of choice this year. Select a novel *from the appropriate grade level list* and *after you receive the permission of your parent(s) or guardian(s)*, begin to read it. After you finish the novel, complete the following activities:

- 1) Review the quotes provided and select a quote that you think best relates to the novel that you read. Consider how the quote *supports or refutes* the major theme(s) of the work. (See specific grade level reading lists for titles and related quotes);
- 2) Identify and write out (with page numbers) **five** textual passages that show how the novel you read relates to the quote that you chose; and
- 3) In a well-developed paragraph of **six to ten** sentences, explain the relationship between the selected textual passages and the quote. (Note: You will have **five** selected passages and **five** paragraphs when you are done).

The summer reading assignment will be collected on Monday, September 12th. This assignment will be counted as a quiz grade. If you have any questions about the assignment, be sure to approach your teacher prior to the due date.

Requirements:

- The assignment is due Monday, September 12th
- Your name, the book you read, and the quote that you chose should be typed at the top of your assignment
- All responses must be typed/double-spaced/size 12 font
- All responses should be in paragraph form and should be 6-10 sentences
- Each response must have textual support from the novel (including page number)

Assessment Guide:

The following rubric will be used to evaluate your work:

A	An "A" response demonstrates an excellent understanding of the task, completes all requirements skillfully, and provides an insightful explanation/opinion that links to or extends aspects of the text.
B	A "B" response demonstrates an above average understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides good explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
C	A "C" response demonstrates an understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides some explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
D	A "D" response may address all of the requirements, but demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, and uses text incorrectly or with limited success resulting in an inconsistent or flawed explanation.
F	An "F" response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task, does not complete the requirements, and provides only a vague reference to or no use of the text.

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.

Riding the Bus with My Sister: A True Life Journey by Rachel Simon

Beth is a spirited woman with mental retardation, who spends nearly every day riding the buses in Philadelphia. The drivers, a lively group, are her mentors; her fellow passengers are her community. When Beth asks her sister Rachel to accompany her on the buses for one year, they take a transcendent journey together that changes Rachel's life in incredible ways and leads her to accept her sister at long last--teaching her to slow down and enjoy the ride.

Full of life lessons from which any reader will profit, *Riding the Bus with My Sister* is "a heartwarming, life-affirming journey through both the present and the past...[that] might just change your life" (Boston Herald).

The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid by Bill Bryson

Some say that the first hints that Bill Bryson was not of Planet Earth came from his discovery, at the age of six, of a woolen jersey of rare fineness. Across the moth-holed chest was a golden thunderbolt. It may have looked like an old college football sweater, but young Bryson knew better. It was obviously the Sacred Jersey of Zap, and proved that he had been placed with this innocuous family in the middle of America to fly, become invisible, shoot guns out of people's hands from a distance, and wear his underpants over his jeans in the manner of Superman.

In this hilarious memoir, he travels back to explore the kid he once was and the weird and wonderful world of 1950s America. He modestly claims that this is a book about not very much: about being small and getting much larger slowly. But for the rest of us, it is a laugh-out-loud book that will speak volumes — especially to anyone who has ever been young.

After you read your novel, please select one of the following quotes to complete your assignment (Please see Summer Reading Assignment 2011 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

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.

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

In a not-too-distant future, the United States of America has collapsed, weakened by drought, fire, famine, and war, to be replaced by Panem, a country divided into the Capitol and 12 districts. Each year, two young representatives from each district are selected by lottery to participate in The Hunger Games. Part entertainment, part brutal intimidation of the subjugated districts, the televised games are broadcasted throughout Panem as the 24 participants are forced to eliminate their competitors, literally, with all citizens required to watch.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the “rez” to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he thought he was destined to live.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, Christopher is autistic. Everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning for him. At fifteen, Christopher’s carefully constructed world falls apart when he finds his neighbor’s dog Wellington impaled on a garden fork, and he is initially blamed for the killing.

Christopher decides that he will track down the real killer and turns to his favorite fictional character, the impeccably logical Sherlock Holmes, for inspiration. But the investigation leads him down some unexpected paths and ultimately brings him face to face with the dissolution of his parents’ marriage. As Christopher tries to deal with the crisis within his own family, the narrative draws readers into the workings of Christopher’s mind.

Feed by MT Anderson

In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble.

For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon — a chance to party during spring break and play with some stupid low-grav at the Ricochet Lounge. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy girl who has decided to fight the feed and its omnipresent ability to categorize human thoughts and desires. National Book Award winner M. T. Anderson creates a not-so-brave new world — and a smart, savage satire ushering us into an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now.

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

This is the story of what it's like to grow up in high school. More intimate than a diary, Charlie's letters are singular and unique, hilarious and devastating. We may not know where he lives. We may not know to whom he is writing. All we know is the world he shares. Caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it puts him on a strange course through uncharted territory.

After you read your novel, please select one of the following quotes to complete your assignment (Please see Summer Reading Assignment 2011 for directions):

1. "Every act of rebellion expresses a nostalgia for innocence and an appeal to the essence of being."
-Albert Camus
2. "The rebel can never find peace. He knows what is good and, despite himself, does evil." – Albert Camus
3. "The happiness of society is the end of government." - John Adams
4. "Society cares for the individual only so far as he is profitable." - Simone De Beauvoir
5. "Society is a masked ball, where everyone hides his real character, and reveals it by hiding." - Ralph Waldo Emerson
6. "He who is unable to live in society, or has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god." - Abigail Adams
7. "Society is a republic. When an individual tries to lift themselves above the others, they are dragged down by the masses, either by ridicule or slander." - Victor Hugo
8. "The great society is a place where men are more concerned with the quality of their goods than with the quantity of their goods." - Lyndon B. Johnson
9. "You must not fight too often with one enemy, or you will teach him all your tricks of war." - Napoleon Bonaparte
10. "I truly believe that individuals can make a difference in society...It is up to each of us to make the best use of our time to create a happier world." - Dalai Lama

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.

Bread Givers by Anzia Yeziarska

*(*This is the **required** title for students enrolled in American Studies; students not enrolled in American Studies may **not** select this title.)*

This masterwork of American immigrant literature is set in the 1920s on the Lower East Side of Manhattan and tells the story of Sara Smolinsky, the youngest daughter of an Orthodox rabbi, who rebels against her father's rigid conception of Jewish womanhood. Sarah's struggle towards independence and self-fulfillment resonates with a passion all can share. Beautifully redesigned page for page with the previous editions, Bread Givers is an essential historical work with enduring relevance.

Catch Me if You Can by Frank Abagnale

Frank W. Abagnale, alias Frank Williams, Robert Conrad, Frank Adams, and Robert Monjo, was one of the most daring con men, forgers, imposters, and escape artists in history. In his brief but notorious criminal career, Abagnale donned a pilot's uniform and copiloted a Pan Am jet, masqueraded as the supervising resident of a hospital, practiced law without a license, passed himself off as a college sociology professor, and cashed over \$2.5 million in forged checks, all before he was twenty-one. Known by the police of twenty-six foreign countries and all fifty states as "The Skywayman," Abagnale lived a sumptuous life on the lam-until the law caught up with him.

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

Be prepared to meet three unforgettable women: Twenty-two-year-old Skeeter has just returned home after graduating from Ole Miss. She may have a degree, but it is 1962, Mississippi, and her mother will not be happy till Skeeter has a ring on her finger. Skeeter would normally find solace with her beloved maid Constantine, the woman who raised her, but Constantine has disappeared and no one will tell Skeeter where she has gone. Aibileen is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Something has shifted inside her after the loss of her own son, who died while his bosses looked the other way. She is devoted to the little girl she looks after, though she knows both their hearts may be broken. Minny, Aibileen's best friend, is short, fat, and perhaps the sassiest woman in Mississippi. She can cook like nobody's business, but she can't mind her tongue, so she's lost yet another job. Minny finally finds a position working for someone too new to town to know her reputation. But her new boss has secrets of her own. Seemingly as different from one another as can be, these women will nonetheless come together for a clandestine project that will put them all at risk.

The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride

*(Students who read this text as part of the 9th grade curriculum may **not** select this title.)*

As a boy in Brooklyn's Red Hook projects, James McBride knew his mother was different. But when he asked about it, she'd simply say, "I'm light-skinned." Later he wondered if he was different too, and asked his mother if he was black or white. "You're a human being," she snapped. "Educate yourself or you'll be a nobody!" And when James asked what color God was, she said, "God is the color of water."

As an adult, McBride finally persuaded his mother to tell her story—the story of a rabbi's daughter, born in Poland and raised in the South, who fled to Harlem after encountering anti-Semitism in her small town. Upon marrying a black man, her family promptly disowned her, causing her to launch a second existence as (to quote her son) "a flying compilation of competing interests and conflicts, a black woman in white skin." The Color of Water is a poignant exploration of race, family, and identity, juxtaposing the author's experiences with his mother's stories.

Scratch Beginnings: Me, \$25, and the Search for the American Dream by Adam Shepard

Is the American Dream still alive or has it, in fact, been drowned out by a clashing of the classes? Is the upper class destined to rule forever while the lower classes are forced to live in the same cyclical misery?

Millions of Americans fight for the answers to these questions every day, and here, in *Scratch Beginnings*, one man makes the attempt at discovering the answers for himself. Carrying only a sleeping bag, the clothes on his back, and \$25 cash, and restricted from using previous contacts or his education, Adam Shepard sets out for a randomly selected city with one goal on his mind: work his way out of the realities of homelessness and into a life that will offer him the opportunity for success.

The Devil and the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America by Erik Larson

*(*Students who are assigned to read this for AP US2 may **not** select this title.)*

Bringing Chicago circa 1893 to vivid life, Erik Larson's spellbinding bestseller intertwines the true tale of two men—the brilliant architect behind the legendary 1893 World's Fair, striving to secure America's place in the world, and the cunning serial killer who used the fair to lure his victims to their death. Combining meticulous research with nail-biting storytelling, Erik Larson has crafted a narrative with all the wonder of newly discovered history and the thrills of the best fiction.

After you read your novel, please select one of the following quotes to complete your assignment (Please see Summer Reading Assignment 2011 for directions):

1. "The American lives even more for his goals, for the future, than the European. Life for him is always becoming, never being." - Albert Einstein
2. "Only Americans can hurt America." - Dwight D. Eisenhower
3. "We are a puny and fickle folk. Avarice, hesitation, and following are our diseases." - Ralph Waldo Emerson
4. "For this is what America is all about. It is the uncrossed desert and the unclimbed ridge. It is the star that is not reached and the harvest that is sleeping in the unplowed ground." - Lyndon B. Johnson
5. "The American Dream has run out of gas. The car has stopped. It no longer supplies the world with its images, its dreams, its fantasies. No more. It's over." - J.G. Ballard
6. "We need a new spirit of community, a sense that we are all in this together, or the American Dream will continue to wither." - Bill Clinton
7. "The American, by nature, is optimistic. He is experimental, a builder who builds best when called upon to build greatly." - John F. Kennedy
8. "America is not merely a nation but a nation of nations." - Lyndon B. Johnson
9. "There is nothing the matter with Americans except their ideals. The real American is all right; it is the ideal American who is all wrong." - G. K. Chesterton
10. "Humanity's survival does not depend on reducing differences to a common identity, but on learning to live creatively with differences." - Anonymous

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.

The Maltese Falcon by Dashiell Hammett

It's a treasure worth killing for. Sam Spade, a slightly shopworn private eye with his own solitary code of ethics, a perfumed grafter named Joel Cairo, a fat man name Gutman, and Brigid O'Shaughnessy, a beautiful and treacherous woman whose loyalties shift at the drop of a dime—these are the ingredients of Dashiell Hammett's coolly glittering gem of detective fiction, a novel that has haunted three generations of readers.

Little Bee by Chris Cleave

While on an ill-advised holiday to Nigeria to repair their failing marriage, Andrew Rourke, a journalist, and his wife, Sarah, editor of a fashion magazine, meet Little Bee, a 16-year-old girl, and her older sister, Kindness. The girls are running for their lives from the men who have ransacked their village for oil. Even after suffering an act of unimaginable violence that day, the participants can hardly imagine how their lives will intertwine—and be irrevocably changed. As Andrew spins out of control and Sarah struggles to raise the couple's child, the appearance of Little Bee, now a refugee who has come to London in search of the Rourkes, her last best hope, forces both women to make difficult choices.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

*(*Students who were enrolled in American Studies last year may not select this title.)*

Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's groundbreaking new novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement before he is marched to Dachau.

The Attack by Yashmina Khadra

Dr. Amin Jaafari is an Arab-Israeli surgeon at a hospital in Tel Aviv. As an admired and respected member of his community, he has carved a space for himself and his wife, Sihem, at the crossroads of two troubled societies. Jaafari's world is abruptly shattered when Sihem is killed in a suicide bombing. As evidence mounts that Sihem could have been responsible for the catastrophic bombing, Jaafari begins a tortured search for answers. Faced with the ultimate betrayal, he must find a way to reconcile his cherished memories of his wife with the growing realization that she may have had another life, one that was entirely removed from the comfortable, modern existence that they shared.

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Piccoult

Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate -- a life and a role that she has never challenged...until now. Like most teenagers, Anna is beginning to question who she truly is. But unlike most teenagers, she has always been defined in terms of her sister -- and so Anna makes a decision that for most would be unthinkable, a decision that will tear her family apart and have perhaps fatal consequences for the sister she loves. This novel examines what it means to be a good parent, a good sister, and a good person. Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life, even if that means infringing upon the rights of another? Is it worth trying to discover who you really are if that quest makes you like yourself less? Should you follow your own heart or let others lead you?

After you read your novel, please select one of the following quotes to complete your assignment (Please see Summer Reading Assignment 2011 for directions):

1. "It is our choices... that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." - J. K. Rowling
2. "You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' . . . You must do the thing you think you cannot do." - Eleanor Roosevelt
3. "The ultimate measure of man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." - Martin Luther King, Jr.
4. "I love those who can smile in trouble, who can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink, but they whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves their conduct, will pursue their principles unto death." - Thomas Paine
5. "How much more grievous are the consequences of anger than the causes of it." - Marcus Aurelius
6. "It's being willing to walk away that gives you strength and power - if you're willing to accept the consequences of doing what you want to do." - Whoopi Goldberg
7. "Make up your mind to act decidedly and take the consequences. No good is ever done in this world by hesitation." - Thomas Huxley
8. "Nothing is worth doing unless the consequences may be serious." - George Bernard Shaw
9. "Without reflection, we go blindly on our way, creating more unintended consequences, and failing to achieve anything useful." - Margaret J. Wheatley
10. "As simple as it sounds, we all must try to be the best person we can: by making the best choices, by making the most of the talents we've been given." - Mary Lou Retton