

9th Grade Gifted English Summer Assignment- Fayette County High School

Greetings! Welcome to Ms. Niedermeyer's 9th grade gifted English class! I am looking forward to an exciting year of reading, writing, and thinking with you. Your success in this class will depend on a variety of factors, including a regard for literature, composition, and learning in general. It will also be necessary to cultivate the desire to become a self-motivated and educated individual. Bearing these things in mind, the directions for your summer assignment are as follows:

Texts: The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

You are responsible for procuring your own copies of the texts and turning in the assignment, which will be due the first day of school. You may also expect a reading test that covers these texts. The test will not be difficult if you have completed the reading (not Googled, Spark-Noted, or relied upon the movies based on these books), and it will serve as a check to make sure that you have indeed completed the assignment the way it was intended. The class will participate in a complete in-depth discussion and analysis of the material during the first weeks of school.

Assignment: You will need a spiral notebook or black and white composition book to serve as your reading journal. This journal will house all of our outside reading assignments for the year. As we complete assignments, this journal will be graded and returned to you.

- Directions for reading journal:**
1. *Summarize* each chapter of the book; summaries should run between 6-8 sentences or so. The point of summaries is to hit the highlights of the chapter, NOT retell the entire narrative in your own words. Please keep in mind that Spark Notes and other such sites present their material in chunks of 3 chapters; reading journal summaries presented in this format by students are a dead giveaway. ALSO: MUCH EASIER IF YOU COMPLETE THIS STEP AT THE END OF EACH CHAPTER.
 2. *Annotate each summary*. This means to write in the margins of the summary page. Ask questions of the text; they can be simple or complex. Make comments about the actions or the behavior of the characters. Make a note of any motifs (ideas or symbols that repeat through the whole of the book) or developing themes. The point of this exercise is to INTERACT with the text and think deeply about the ideas that the author presents. This is not a formal paper, so have fun with your annotations and be yourself.
 3. *Vocabulary study of 20 words per book*. Copy the sentence where the word appears in the book out of the book; define the word based on how it is used in the sentence; write a synonym.

Things to Keep in Mind About Academic Honesty: I have the same access to the internet and to movies that you do. I usually award plagiarism with a grade of "1", because you were at least truthful about the name on the assignment. One cannot Google one's way to academic success, and most students find themselves unsuccessful in analyzing literature in any meaningful way once the graded discussions, projects, and papers arrive on the heels of the reading. Please develop yourself as a reader and thinker and prepare yourself for success in 9th grade Gifted Literature. I am looking forward to getting to know you this year. Have a terrific summer ☺

M. Niedermeyer