

Dear Prospective Pre-AP student,

I am so excited to begin the school year! We are going to have a great year and study some wonderful works of literature, but first thing's first. Your summer reading assignment is quite extensive, but extremely rewarding. I first read *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak over winter break two years ago, and it immediately became one of my all time favorite books. An obvious choice for summer reading, *The Book Thief* possesses every attribute of a great book: suspense, mystery, humor. The story resonates. I don't want to give too much of the plot away, so I'll just borrow a line from the book jacket: "Zusak has crafted an unforgettable novel about the ability of books to feed the soul."

Before you rush out and buy *The Book Thief*, I want you to be aware of one minor detail: the book is 550 pages long. To some of you, this is no big deal; you could read it in your sleep (which I don't suggest). Others are already thinking NO WAY. Before you even step foot in my classroom, I want you to know this: Pre-AP English I is a reading and writing intensive class. There are **no** shortcuts to success. You must **fully** read the books to make it. There are no Spark Notes to get you through life, and Spark Notes **will not** get you through my class. I have to prepare you for a future in the Poteet AP program. My job is to help you evolve into a critical thinker, reader, and writer, and I take my job extremely seriously. It is your job to take your position as an Honors student seriously. This means having the drive to rise to the challenges set before you.

Please do not freak out and think I'm some horrible ogre before you've even met me! I **want** you to be successful. I **know** you can have some fun and learn in my class. This assignment will get you started. Though *The Book Thief* looks intimidating, it is a fast read; it contains pictures, and the text is divided by large spaces. Give it a chance. You definitely won't be sorry.

You can find a copy of *The Book Thief* at any book store in the Young Adult section; it is in paperback at a reasonable price. Please buy a fresh copy of the book, with no previous annotations. It will lay the thematic foundation for our year. Here is a list of the other books we will enjoy together:

Cold Sassy Tree by Olive Ann Burns (We will begin the year with this book. Buy a copy over the summer but do not start reading it.)

The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

Night by Elie Wiesel

The Odyssey by Homer (Robert Fagles edition)

DO NOT WAIT to begin your assignment, or you will not finish. Please start in June! The following pages include the specifics of your assignment. There are **four** parts; please read my instructions **carefully**, and you can email me at smckinney@mesquiteisd.org if you have any questions. I will check my email regularly during the summer and be happy to help you.

**2010-2011 Summer Reading Assignment for Pre-AP English I
Poteet High School-Ms. McKinney**

Part 1

While you are reading *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, annotate the book.

Annotate means mark key passages in the book that make you think, question, or provoke a strong reaction. Underline the part of the text that you are responding to and then mark one of these symbols in the margin. Please use the following symbols to make your annotations more uniform:

- , = mark a comma next to a passage that makes you pause and think. This thinking can occur because you made a connection with the text, you like the writer's style, or for any other reason that made you pause and THINK while reading.
- ? = mark a question mark next to a passage that makes you question. This question can stem from confusion, but it can also be a question that you want to explore further (you already know the answer, but you want to see what others think.)
- ! = mark an exclamation mark next to a passage that makes you think "WOW!" This means that you've had a strong reaction to the story because you can't believe an event just happened or you laugh out loud.
- [] = mark brackets around a character's name the first time it appears in the text. (You only have to bracket the character's name once). At the top of the page, write a brief description of the character to help you keep track. (FYI: This book has many characters!☺)
- O = circle unfamiliar words.
- FS = This stands for foreshadow, which means that a clue is given about an event that will happen in the future. This book is full of foreshadowing. Any time that you think an event is being foreshadowed, mark FS.

Some tips about annotations:

- Annotations are meant to *slow down* your reading but not hinder it. It is important to absorb this book and THINK about what you are reading; these codes will guide you through this.
- How much should you be annotating? I think you should have at least one symbol marked on each page; some pages will have more and some will have less.
- If you want to add more codes or write more notes in your margins, this is fine by me! But please use these codes so that we can all be consistent.
- Annotating is a SKILL that is taught on every level of the AP English program. We will annotate EVERY book that we read. It might be awkward at first, but you will get use to it, and it will become second nature to you.
- I will check your annotations for a grade. **Please bring your book on the first day of class.**
- You need to start reading this book ASAP! Do not wait until August! You will stress yourself and your family out! DO NOT PROCRASTINATE

Part 2

After you have read and annotated *The Book Thief*, choose **THREE** passages that you feel are the most important in the book from the , ? ! and FS categories. This means that you will have THREE passages from each category making a total of TWELVE passages from the book. **You will make a dialectical journal for each category.** Please follow this format:

PASSAGES THAT MADE ME THINK (,)	MY THOUGHTS
1. p. number of passage and first three words of the quote	Why this passage made you stop and think. Your comments should reflect DEEP THINKING! (see my example)
2.	
3.	

You can find an example of this on the following pages. In addition to the example, your column headings will include:

- PASSAGES THAT MADE ME QUESTION (?)
- PASSAGES THAT PROVOKED A STRONG REACTION (!)
- PASSAGES WHERE I NOTICED FORESHADOWING (FS)

Some specifics for your dialectical journal:

- Please read the directions carefully and look at the example on the following pages.
- Please type your responses if possible.
- The “MY THOUGHTS” column should reflect a close reading of the book.
- Your passages should be spread out across the book; do not choose the first three that you marked; choose the ones that you think are the MOST IMPORTANT.
- I will check your dialectical journal for a grade. **Please bring it on the first day of class.** Please do not put your assignment in a spiral, journal, or folder.
- You need to complete your dialectical journal soon after reading the book while the story is fresh in your mind.

Part 3

Literary Devices Journal

This year, we aren't just *reading* literature; we're *studying* literature. Understanding an author's technique is so important in being able to analyze his/her work and understand the ideas he/she is trying to convey. For part three of your assignment, you are going to create a literary devices journal to aid you throughout the year. On the next page is a list of the devices that should be included in your journal. You should be familiar with these on the first day of school, and you should be able to recognize them in action. We will add to the list throughout the year, so do not tear out the blank pages of the journal. Below are the instructions for completing your journal.

- Buy a small(180 page) spiral notebook
- For each literary device, start a fresh page in the journal (leave the back blank)
- Each page should contain **three** parts:
 - The word written on the title line
 - The definition
 - A real world example of the device in use.
 - This example can be from a newspaper, a billboard, something you've read, something you've seen on TV, or any thing else that might grab your attention. You *must* have a visual of the example, so if you read something, make a copy and paste it in your journal. If it is something you see out in the world, take a photograph. If it is something you see on TV, write the program name, the date you watched it, and draw a visual.

On the back is an example of what a page in your journal might look like.

Literary Devices- Figures of Speech

1. **Metaphor**-a word or phrase that ordinarily means one thing is used to designate another
Example: It's raining cats and dogs!
2. **Simile**-a comparison between two otherwise unlike objects or ideas by connecting them using "like" or "as"
Example: She swims like a fish!
3. **Personification**-a figure of speech where animals, ideas, or inorganic objects are given human characteristics
Example: Mother Nature is relentless.
4. **Hyperbole**-an intentionally exaggerated figure of speech for emphasis
Example: I'm so hungry I could eat an elephant!
5. **Repetition**- repeating a word or phrase for rhetorical effect
Example: We came, we saw, we conquered.
6. **Imagery**-words and phrases that appeal to the five senses(seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling)
Example: The rain pounded against the tin roof. (hearing)
7. **Alliteration**-a pattern of sound that includes the repetition of consonant sounds. The repetition can be located at the beginning of successive words or inside the words.
Example: "big book" "Silly Sally"
8. **Assonance**-repetition of vowel sounds
Example: "black cat" "hay and bray"
9. **Onomatopoeia**-the use of words that sound like what they mean
Example: POW! BANG!
10. **Oxymoron**-two words or phrases with contrasting ideas
Example: Jumbo Shrimp, bittersweet

Part 4

After you have finished reading *The Book Thief*, completed your dialectical journal, and completed your literary devices journal, please choose a book that YOU want to read and enjoy.

Some specifics about your book of choice:

- You do not have to annotate the book or do an assignment over it; just read.
- **Please bring your completed book of choice on the first day of class. There will be an assignment on the first day of class.**
- Please do not read a book that you've read before; use this as an opportunity to read something new. Don't try to fool me. Teachers talk. I know what you've read in your previous English classes. Also, please do not read a book from the list that we will be reading as a class (on the front of this paper).
- This book can be fiction or non-fiction, and it needs to be on a high school reading level.
- If you finish your book of choice and you still have some summer left, keep reading! You only have to bring one book of choice that you completed on the first day of class, but please make a list of other books that you complete over the summer. Reading is the BEST vocabulary builder; it's good for your BRAIN, too!

Final Words

A note to my non-readers: If you are thinking, this is TOO MUCH reading; I don't like to read, then you need to reconsider being in Pre-AP English. Please remember that this is a college-prep class! If you are college bound, then this is the class for you, but like I said before, you will have to READ, THINK, and WRITE. If you begin this assignment and feel like it's too much for you, then please go to the registrar's office at Poteet and get your schedule changed for next year. Trust me; I do not get joy from your misery! You can get your schedule changed before August. If you wait until August, then it will be too late.

I am a reader myself! I want you to know that I don't just dish it out; I plan to spend my summer reading as well. When I graduated college, it had been years since I had had time to sit down and read what I wanted to read, and though I am able to squeeze in a couple of books throughout the year, summer is when I really like to kick it into high gear. I will revisit *The Book Thief* and *Cold Sassy Tree* in anticipation for the beginning of our year. I also spent an embarrassing amount of money at Borders last week on books for pleasure in anticipation of summer! Summer is my pleasure reading time and it should be yours, too! ☺ Here are some titles that I'm excited about reading: *Let the Great World Spin* by Colum McCann, *A Glass of Water* by Jimmy Santiago Baca, *Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski, *The Lotus Eaters* by Tatjana Soli, *Lincoln on Leadership* by Donald T. Phillips, and many more believe it or not!

A recap of what to bring on the first day of class:

- Your annotated copy of *The Book Thief*
- Your dialectical journal with 12 passages included(3 from each category)
- Your literary devices journal with 10 entries
- Your self select book that you completed
- DO NOT FORGET TO BRING THESE!!

Again, please email me if you have questions of any kind. Enjoy your summer, and I so look forward to meeting you all in August. This year is going to rock! Happy Reading!