

## Mahwah High School Summer Reading

The Mahwah High School English Department wishes to develop a community of readers while recognizing the different abilities and interests of our students. Further, we understand the correlation between reading fluency and reading comprehension and the importance of analyzing a variety of genres.

The goals of the English Department of Mahwah High School summer reading program are to:

- Create a common reading opportunity for each grade level
- Promote an appreciation for and joy of reading for pleasure
- Cultivate twenty-first-century critical-thinking skills

Over the summer, in order to achieve these goals, students will:

1. Read:
  - One book for college preparatory classes
  - Two books for honors classes
  - A background article on *Animal Farm* for 9<sup>th</sup> grade honors classes (included as the last page of this document)
2. All texts must be read by Thursday, September 13, 2018.
  - a. Honors students will take a book test on September 14<sup>th</sup>.
3. Please use the **attached active reading strategies** and tips to better help you better understand the text and prepare for the in-class writing. Please consider the reading focus listed next to your books as you read.
  - a. Specific essay topic to be announced in class and written no later than September 30, 2018.

When the school year begins, students will demonstrate their understanding of text(s) by:


- Participating in activities such as class discussions, Socratic Seminars, and thematically-related sources
- Making connections between the summer text and teacher-selected sources

To be clear, over the summer students are only expected to read the assigned book(s) for their grade level while thinking about the particular reading focus. Although taking notes is encouraged, reading the book over the summer is the only assignment. Once school starts, there will be assessments and class activities based on the assigned titles.

Students can acquire their grade-level book(s) from the Mahwah Public Library, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, or another bookstore. **If there are concerns about obtaining the book, please see your English teacher before June 15, 2018.**

The Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS) is a consortium of seventy-five libraries in northern New Jersey. You can reserve a copy of the film at the Mahwah Public Library or at [www.bccls.org](http://www.bccls.org).

## Mahwah High School Summer Reading 2017

Grade	Title	Reading Focus
9 <sup>th</sup>	<p>1 – CP and Honors - <i>Tuesdays with Morrie</i>, by Mitch Albom</p> <p>2 – Honors – <i>Animal Farm</i>, by George Orwell, along with this article on background material (also included on the last page):</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">shmoop.com-Animal Farm.pdf</p>	<p>Consider how characters' beliefs coincide with or contradict with the values of modern society, such as views on money, youth, and connectedness.</p>
10 <sup>th</sup>	<p>1 – CP and Honors - <i>The Crucible</i>, by Arthur Miller</p> <p>2 – Honors - <i>The Invention of Wings</i>, by Sue Monk Kidd</p>	<p>Reflect on how the importance of geography and setting impacts conflict and personal growth the characters experience.</p>
11 <sup>th</sup>	<p>1 – CP and Honors - <i>And Then There Were None</i>, by Agatha Christie</p> <p>2 – Honors – <i>1984</i>, by George Orwell</p>	<p>Contemplate how characters react to injustice and whether they are justified in their own actions.</p>
12 <sup>th</sup>	<p>1 – CP and Honors - <i>I am Malala</i>, by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb</p> <p>2 – Honors – <i>A Long Way Gone</i>, by Ishmael Beah</p>	<p>Consider individual and societal reactions to violence.</p>

## Active Reading Strategies to Help You Clarify and Understand

These strategies should help you through the reading process to ensure complete understanding and help prepare you for your classroom activities and assessments in September. Although you are encouraged to follow these strategies, taking notes is not a requirement, and your notes will not be checked.

You need to have a copy of the book that you will use through this process and during our classwork and assessment on your summer reading.

Annotations:

- Use sticky notes to help you keep track of interesting quotes, questions you have, predictions, unclear vocabulary words, or connections.

Visualize

- Quick Sketch
- Mental Images

During Reading Notes:

- Sticky notes

Connections:

- Text to Self: How does this reading remind me of my life and me?
- Text to Text: How does this text remind me of something else I've read?
- Text to World: How does this text remind me of what goes on in the world?

Ask Questions

- Turn the information into a question that can be answered
- Use sticky notes. Write down questions that you have as you read. If you find the answers later in the text, write down the answer.

Two-Column Notes

- Select quotes and write a response

- Quotes · Notes (your responses)
- "Quote" and Page number · I think, I wonder, I like...

### Character Log

- Create a log of the major characters and identify means of characterization and conflicts with other characters

### Chart out the following plot points

- Exposition
- Rising Action
- Precipitating Events
- Crisis
- Climax
- Falling Action
- Denouement

### When reading a play:

- Read all the stage directions provided by the author. These often contain important information about setting, characterization, and mood.
- Just reading the dialogue results in a flat understanding.
- You need a full picture of the play in order to understand the themes.

**9<sup>th</sup> grade honors students should read the following article before they read *Animal Farm*:**

## **Animal Farm**

[www.shmoop.com/animal-farm/](http://www.shmoop.com/animal-farm/)

Move over, Babe and Wilbur: there's a new talking pig in town.

In fact, there are a lot of talking pigs. And talking horses and birds and cows, for that matter. But George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is no Jim Henson-inspired comedy about a pig who just wants to be a sheepdog, or bittersweet tale about interspecies love—it's a biting satire about tyrannical governments and a dark warning about the perils of Russian communism.

Today, *Animal Farm* is a classic. (In fact, we have a sneaking suspicion that you're here because you're being required to read it.) But when Orwell wrote the book in 1943-44, he could hardly find a publisher. In fact, no one took him up on it until 1945, and even then readers weren't too keen on it.

You see, *Animal Farm* takes a blow at the Soviet Union, especially its leader Josef Stalin—but the Soviet Union was an ally in the U.S.'s fight against Nazi Germany in World War II. Criticism of Stalin wasn't banned in wartime British press, but it wasn't exactly encouraged, either. Stalin may have been bad, but Hitler was worse. When publishing house Faber & Faber rejected Orwell, an editor pointed out that it was simply distasteful to depict Stalin as "a pig."

But Orwell was no knee-jerk anticommunist. In fact, he was a socialist, a simple word for a complex and varied set of beliefs. Let's just say that socialists believe that the means of production (like factories or businesses) should be controlled by the workers for the good of everyone, rather than controlled by a tiny subset of owners for their own profit. In other words, Wal-Mart should be owned by Wal-Mart employees, rather than by the Walton family. (Does that sound crazy? There are co-ops and employee-owned business today that operate in just that way.)

Since communism is an extreme form of socialism, Orwell actually fought alongside communists in the Spanish Civil War during the 1930s. Their enemy was Spanish leader Francisco Franco and his fascist followers, who believed in strong, militaristic national identity united under an authoritarian leader—think the Wizard World under Voldemort, or Mordor under Sauron. But Orwell quickly realized that the communists he was fighting for could be just as totalitarian and oppressive as the fascists.

In fact, his time in Spain made him realize "how easily totalitarian propaganda can control the opinion of enlightened people in democratic countries" (source). And that's where *Animal Farm* comes in: it shows Stalin's version of communism as the exact opposite of socialist values—as a brutal, oppressive, and unequal regime. Not that he saw Western leaders as much better. Brutal, drunken humans represent western leaders in *Animal Farm*—and the animals are more afraid of the humans regaining control than they are of the Stalinist pigs.

Orwell satirizes all political tyranny. He's just generous like that.

Okay. But why animals? Why not just write an essay? (Orwell was pretty good at the ol' essay-writing gig, after all.) Or why not write a novel with actual people, like his 1949 political satire *Nineteen Eighty-Four*?

Well, come on. If you're going to get a lecture about the evils of political tyranny, wouldn't you rather hear it from a talking horse?

Have you ever looked at yourself in the mirror and said, "I'm going to be the President of the United States one day"? Or—let's take it down a notch—have you ever run for class president on a platform of better cafeteria food and free sodas for all?

As your election gift, we'll wrap up for you our very own dog-eared copy of *Animal Farm*. Using barnyard animals, it provides (practically in bullet point form, and in less than 200 pages) over 200 years of knowledge about leadership and power, distilling all of the mistakes great (and not-so-great) leaders have made over time. Chief among them? Letting the power go to your head and keeping all the free soda for yourself.