

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date you received this assignment \_\_\_\_\_

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Literary Genres/Creative Writing Summer Assignment**

Welcome readers and writers to Literary Genres and Creative Writing! We look forward to working with you during the next school year. As part of this course, students will read a fictional novel and a self-selected novel over the summer and complete a dialectical journal, and a media project (further instructions below).

The purpose of the LG/CW summer assignment is an established convention at most schools offering these courses, and the rationale for it seems simple enough: Reading over the summer helps keep the students' minds "in the game," and it adds to the number of major literary works the students will have read by the time they take their AP or IB exams in High School. Also, students in a given class arrive to school in August having had a common literary experience, providing them and their teacher immediate instructional opportunities.

**STUDENTS WILL BE TESTED ON FAHRENHEIT 451 IN THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL. PLEASE COME TO SCHOOL PREPARED ON DAY ONE. Students who do not complete the summer reading assignments will be moved into a general education class.**

Any questions that students or parents have should be sent to Ms. Johnson at [SarahJohnson1@dallasisd.org](mailto:SarahJohnson1@dallasisd.org).

### **PART I: Fahrenheit 451 DIALECTICAL JOURNAL**

#### **Steps to Success**

1. Read the book! While reading, keep a dialectical journal. This will assist in your comprehension and help you collect reflections on characters, plot, setting, theme, conflicts, and key vocabulary. Since a dialectical journal is probably a new type of assignment, it can get confusing! **Please see the attached dialectical journal example. There should be 25 entries total. Please use a 1 inch binder and sheet paper. This binder will be used in class as a portfolio for the rest of the year. It will not be brought home.**

Note: If you are struggling, please go to [bit.ly/SJEnglishClass](http://bit.ly/SJEnglishClass) and view the video under the summer reading tab. Do not click into either class for information on the dialectical journal.

2. Choose one of the following topics found in *Fahrenheit 451* to use in your journal. This topic will act as a "lens" through which to think about the novel. Many of your entries will be tied back to this statement, so pick one that interests you. (You do not need to pair *every* entry.)

- The repression of free thought through censorship.
- The ways in which words can empower
- Our need for communication and expression as humans

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- The importance of books as a way of carrying on culture

4. Don't wait until the week before school starts to try and read the novel and complete your dialectical journal. Unexpected events might pop up that could get in the way of you completing your assignment on time. Make a plan for the number of pages or chapters you are going to read per week and stick to it. The same goes for your dialectical journal. **Work on your journal while you are reading. Do not wait until you are finished with the novel. The journal is meant to be a collection of your thoughts AS you read, not after.**

5. Because we will be using this novel as the basis for much of the work completed during the first weeks of school, students are expected to bring their copy of their **novel** and their **dialectical journal** on the **first day of class**.

6. Students can expect an assignment or multiple assignments over their summer reading during the first few weeks of class. Please be prepared! If you read the book at the beginning of the summer, glance over your annotations or dialectical journal to review.

#### **Notes to Remember:**

- The book can be purchased cheaply online or at local bookstores such as Half Price Books or Barnes and Noble in either electronic or paper copy. If you are unable to purchase the novel, you can check it out from your local library. There is a VERY limited amount of novels that can be borrowed from JL Long and these books will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. *We highly suggest purchasing the book online due to availability.* Furthermore, there is an online PDF available for free download (search *Fahrenheit 451* PDF in google) if you have an e-reader.
- You may choose to write this by hand or type your journal.
- Though annotating is not required, it is highly recommended. People annotate in all different ways and the sooner you find your style, the easier my class (and reading in general) will be! Here are a few examples:
  - Some people like to write notes directly on the pages. They can underline, draw arrows, make comments, and interact with the text easily this way.
  - Other people struggle to write on pages of books and like them to stay clean (I'm one of them!). If you're like me, you might like to annotate using sticky notes. I can write my comment on a sticky note and put it on the page, then remove it later if I need to take it away. This is also handy if you're planning to use the book for a discussion.

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## **PART II: SELF-SELECTED NOVEL AND MEDIA PROJECT**

### Steps to Success

1. Choose and read a novel off the selected list below.

**Note to parents: some of these books may contain controversial content. Please work with your student to choose a book that you both think is appropriate. We are NOT requiring that students read all the books on this list; we just wanted to give students a wide variety of choices to appeal to all readers.**

### **Fiction**

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak  
*The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky  
*Eleanor and Park* by Rainbow Rowell  
*A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving  
*The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver  
*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon  
*Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld  
*Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys  
*Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer  
*The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd  
*The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern  
*Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs  
*It's Kind of a Funny Story* by Ned Vizzini  
*My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult  
*The Luxe* by Anna Godbersen  
*Cinder* by Marissa Meyer  
*Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets to the Universe* by Benjamin Saenz  
*Code Name Verity* by Elizabeth Wein  
*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie  
*Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton  
*Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi  
*Knights of the Hill Country* by Tim Tharp  
*Leviathan Wakes* by James S. Corey  
*We are all Molecules* by Susin Nielsen  
*Anne of Green Gables* by L. M. Montgomery  
*Little Women or Little Men* by Louisa May Alcott  
*Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe  
*The Time Machine* by H. G. Wells

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### **Non-fiction**

*I am Malala* by Christian Lamb and Malala Yousafzai

*Creativity, Inc.* by Ed Catmull

*Quiet* by Susan Cain

*Bossypants* by Tina Fey

*I Beat the Odds* by Michael Oher

*Bomb* by Steve Sheinkin

*Guinea Pig Scientists* by Leslie Dendy and Mel Boring

*Sugar Changed the World* by Marc Aronson and Marina Budhos

*I Will Always Write Back* by Caitlyn Alifirenka and Martin Ganda

**Students are also welcome to read classic novels! Please simply email me to get them approved ahead of time.**

2. After reading, students will create a media project which utilizes the novel. Choices include, but are not limited to:

- Book trailer (2 minute minimum)
- Advertisement (such as a poster, commercial, etc.)
- Vlog book review
- Podcast
- Storyboard/movie pitch
- Newspaper review
- A new book jacket/book cover

If you have other ideas or questions, e-mail [SarahJohnson1@dallasisd.org](mailto:SarahJohnson1@dallasisd.org).

3. ALL projects **must have:**

- Title and author
- Introduction of protagonist/antagonist (if there is one)
- Minimum 250-word “summary” of the story. It CANNOT spoil the ending, so it is not a true summary. Think of the kind of summary you see on the back of a book - character, setting, conflict, etc.
- Your personal opinion about the book.

**\*Note: If you did, for example, a poster, you do not need to include all of the information on the front of the poster or in the middle of the advertisement. The summary and opinion can be attached to the project if it would hurt the aesthetic of the overall piece.**