

Draper Park Middle School
8th Grade Honors ELA

Summer Reading Assignment

Instructions: Choose a fictional novel that you have NOT already read that is **over 150 pages**, and read it! After reading your chosen novel, complete parts 1-3. Although you may choose any novel, a list of novels approved by the district for middle school students, as well as extra copies of this packet, can be found at the website dpms8honors.weebly.com.

Part 1: Theme

Identify a theme within your book and record it on the attached handout. A theme is the message or lesson that the author wants the reader to learn from the story. This lesson is a **complete sentence** (more than just one word!) that is **universal**, or can apply to anyone, in any time period, in any place. To find the theme, try asking yourself "What did the main character learn?" or "How did the character(s) grow or change?" Below are some example themes from books you may have read:

Example: Deathwatch

Theme: Intelligence is more powerful than physical strength.

Not a theme (not universal): Madoc's greed allows him to justify his evil actions. *Not a theme (one word):* Survival

Example: A Christmas Carol

Theme: There are more important things in life than money.

Not a theme (not universal): Scrooge learns family and relationships are more important than money. *Not a theme (one word):* Greed

If you Google the theme of your book, you will likely find themes that are one word or not universal—**these are not actually themes!** However, these answers may help you find the theme of the book. Ask yourself how someone else's incorrect answer can be made universal or turned into a complete sentence.

Part 2: Headlines and Characters

The remaining part of the handout asks you to choose two chapters and write a headline (or chapter title) for each. If your book already names its chapters, come up with new ones! For each headline, explain why you made the choice you did.

Next, select a character (besides the main character) and explain why they are significant to the story.

Finally, choose two quotes that help the reader understand who this character is. Explain what each quote shows us about him/her.

Part 3: Text-to-World Connection

Look through a newspaper or search online to find an article about a **current** event (less than 1 year old) that connects with/gives an example of the theme you identified in Part 1. Start by writing (typed) a **one-paragraph summary** of your article. In a second typed paragraph, **explain how the article connects** to the theme from your book. Use the sample on the back of this page as a model for the required format.

Example.

Part 3: Text-To-World Connection

Article: “Mahony Comes Up Short”

Source: Los Angeles Times

Theme connection: Sometimes secrets should be told.

Article summary: Cardinal Roger M. Mahony of the Los Angeles Archdiocese submitted a report titled “Report to the People of God” in response to the recent cases of abuse in Los Angeles Catholic churches. This report includes the names of 211 priests of the 244 that are accused of child abuse, all of which were released by the media or in court. Cardinal Mahony left out the names of the 33 priests who have not yet been identified because he is afraid that, by submitting these names, people will assume that these priests are guilty. However, authorities say that these priests will not be assumed guilty, as our justice systems holds that accused individuals are “innocent until proven guilty.” Unfortunately, by keeping these names a secret, Cardinal Mahony leaves the authorities unable to identify these priests and bring justice where justice is due.

Lesson Connection: In *Romeo and Juliet*, Friar Laurence also holds a secret that would have benefited everyone if he had shared it with the Capulet and Montague families. Should he have notified the two families of their intentions, Romeo and Juliet would not have carried out the plans that led to a misunderstanding when Friar John was quarantined in Verona and, therefore, the lovers’ unnecessary suicides. Just as the secret Friar Laurence keeps could have changed the fates of Romeo and Juliet, Cardinal Mahony’s secret could provide protection to and justice for the children who were abused by priests if he were to reveal it. Both cases are examples of situations in which people would benefit from secrets being told.

Name: _____

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Summer Reading Assignment*

*Please use your best handwriting; if your handwriting is difficult to read, even when you are really trying to write well, please type and print your responses!

Book title & author: _____

Part 1: Theme

Theme: _____

Part 2: Headlines and Characters

Chapter _____ headline: _____

Explain your headline choice:

Chapter _____ headline: _____

Explain your headline choice:

Part 3: Text-to-World Connection

Character: _____

Significance of character to story: _____

Quote: _____

What this shows us about _____ :

Quote: _____

What this shows us about _____ :

Due Date: First Friday in School!

To submit: Remove the assignment instructions and sample work. **Attach your Part 3 two-paragraph write-up and the article you found to Parts 1 & 2 (this paper, or your typed version of this paper).** Your teacher will give you instructions on how to turn your summer reading assignment in on the first day of class.