

June 2018

Dear Rising Ninth Grader,

I hope you are enjoying your vacation and finding the time to get out and take advantage of all that summer has to offer! (Some of what it has to offer is empty hours you might spend with a book!)

For your summer reading assignment, choose one of the books from the list below. You have a variety of books to choose from, though all four are fiction. You might look at each of these books at the library, at a bookstore, or online and read the description and several pages of each to determine which one you might enjoy.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian, Sherman Alexie

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Mark Haddon

Speak, Laurie Halse Anderson

The Glass Castle, Jeannette Walls

Whichever book you read, take notes in the book (or in a notebook) as you go, keeping track of main events, characters, and ideas (especially ideas and images that repeat). Then write a response to the prompt below. Your response should be at least two pages long, typed, double-spaced, in a 12-point serif font such as Times New Roman.

Imagine that you have been asked to *write a letter* to an older relative or family friend about your summer reading book. Do not summarize your book beyond a brief description of it. Instead, explain what you liked and appreciated as well as what you disliked or simply found confusing about your book. Be sure to discuss your book in specific detail and to use *at least three direct quotes from your book* to illustrate or support your insights. As you explain your reactions to the book, focus on its literary aspects, such as the narrator, tone (implied emotional content or attitude), imagery, style of the writing, characterization, setting, and symbolism. What made the narrator annoying or likable? Was the tone sarcastic, nostalgic, hopeful, or something else? Did any imagery stand out, and what effect did that have? Was there a memorable theme or idea? What did you take away from the book? Would you want to read another book by that author? You are *not* required to answer all of these questions; they are merely guidelines to focus your thinking and writing. Remember, the letter must convey what you *think* about the literary aspects and how they affect the reading experience; do not simply summarize them.

Your response will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Your insight on the reading
- The clarity of your writing
- The organization of your ideas
- The use of evidence from the text to support your ideas
- Careful review and revision of your writing

Be sure to include a salutation (greeting) and a closing for your letter, which is due the *first* full day of class when you return to school in September.

If you have any questions, please contact me at wpreston@mphschool.org. In late August, I will post at the class website, which you can access through my homepage in the MPH online faculty directory. I look forward to working with you in the fall.

Sincerely,
Mr. Preston