

EVERETT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT
GRADE ELEVEN

Please choose one title from the list below. You are responsible for reading the novel carefully and completing a dialectical journal during the process. Directions are included.

During the first week of school, there will be classroom activities, including discussion groups, related to the novel you've chosen. Your journal will be due on September 3, 2009, and you will be tested on the novel on Friday September 11, 2009.

Your summer reading assignment is a very important part of your first quarter grade. Please do your best. Reading over the summer will help you maintain the skills you've developed in the 10th grade and ease your transition to the 11th grade. We have carefully selected the following titles to ensure variety and high-interest as well as literary merit.

These titles can be found at the Parlin and Shute Libraries or from local bookstores. Enjoy your summer.

GRADE 11 – choose one

Twisted by Laurie Halse Anderson (272 pages)

Tyler Miller was a socially invisible nerd ("Your average piece of drywall who spent too much time playing computer games" who calls himself "a zit on the butt of the student body") before he sprayed some attention-getting graffiti and became a legend. Sentenced to a summer of physical labor, he enters his senior year with new muscles that attract popular super-popular Bethany Milbury, sister of his tormentor, Chip, and daughter of his father's boss. Tyler's newfound physique has attracted her interest and infuriated Chip, leading to ongoing conflicts at school.

All too quickly, Tyler's life spirals out of control. Tyler must tackle the complex issues of integrity, personal responsibility, and identity on his own as he struggles to understand what it means to be a man. His once humorous voice now only conveys naked vulnerability. With gripping scenes and a rousing ending, Anderson—author of *Speak*—authentically portrays Tyler's emotional instability as he contemplates darker and darker solutions to his situation. The strong, confident writing will cause this story to linger long after the book is set down.

The Boy who Dared by Susan Bartoletti (192 pages)

Bartoletti has taken one episode from her Newbery Honor Book, *HITLER YOUTH*, and fleshed it out into thought-provoking novel. When 16-year-old Helmuth Hubner listens to the news on an illegal short-wave radio, he quickly discovers Germany is lying to the people. But when he tries to expose the truth with leaflets, he's tried for treason. Sentenced to death and waiting in a jail cell, Helmuth's story emerges in a series of flashbacks that show his growth from a naive child caught up in the patriotism of the times, to a sensitive and mature young man who thinks for himself.

The teen's perspective makes this a particularly gripping way to personalize the history, and even those unfamiliar with the background Bartoletti weaves in—the German bitterness after World War I, the burning of the books, the raging anti-Semitism—will be enthralled by the story of one boy's heroic resistance in the worst of times.

Where the Heart Is by Billie Letts (380 pages; Oprah's Book Club pick)

For 17-year-old Novalee Nation, seven months pregnant, the phrase "home is where your history begins" has a special meaning. Leaving behind a trail of foster homes in Tennessee trailer parks to live in a real house with her boyfriend, Willy Jack Pickens, Novalee instead finds herself abandoned in front of a Wal-Mart in Sequoyah, Okla. With nowhere to turn, she cleverly conceals herself within the store, keeping careful accounts until giving birth to the "Wal-Mart baby" turns her into a local celebrity. Happily, the community reaches out to Novalee and baby she names Americus. Sequoyah's one-woman welcoming committee, Sister Husband, takes them in; cultured librarian Forney Hull takes a shine to them; photographer Moses Whitecotton encourages Novalee's raw talent for photography by teaching her all he knows; Lexie Coop, who has a huge appetite for food, diet fads and the wrong men, befriends her; and legendary Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton gives her a job. Meanwhile, Willy Jack, an aspiring musician, gets a shot at the big time before hitting bottom and realizing what he's left behind. Letts's wacky characters are depicted with humor and hope, resulting in a heartfelt and gratifying read.

The Assist: Hoops, Hope, and the Game of Their Lives by Neil Swidey (390 pages)

In this engaging book about Boston's Charlestown High School basketball team, Swidey, a staff writer for the *Boston Globe Magazine*, explains that [b]eing part of the Charlestown program was no guarantee that a kid would become a success.... But dropping out of the program dramatically increased the odds that he wouldn't. Head coach Jack O'Brien benefited from the team aside from its gaudy won-loss record. Unmarried and with a shattered family history, O'Brien found that the rigid team structure... offer[ed] the trappings of home. Like a concerned parent, O'Brien worked year-round to keep his kids away from the overwhelming daily wave of crime and bad influences and into the security of a college-educated future. Swidey masterfully shows over the course of two seasons the struggle O'Brien and his players face in maintaining success on and off the court. The coach observes the lives of his two star players, Ridley Johnson and Jason Hood White, go in very different directions after they land out-of-state college scholarships. Swidey expertly examines the slippery slope of Charlestown's success, tying it into Boston's disastrous busing scandal and an underwhelming legal system that perpetuates crime, while he builds narrative momentum and details his subjects with the touch of a skilled novelist. This is a compulsively readable book that readers (sport fans or not) will savor.

THE DIALECTICAL JOURNAL

This method of reading and writing is an effective way to keep a record of your reading responses – positive or negative, sure or unsure. It offers a chance to respond personally, to ask questions, wonder, predict, or reflect on the characters, events, literary elements, or language of a text. Do not summarize! Instead, record your textual observations.

Instructions for keeping a dialectical reading log:

- Use notebook paper (one side only) or you may type it.
- You **MUST** have 2 columns (divide the page in half)
- Title the column on the left: "Quotations from the Text"
- Title the column on the right: "Commentary/Responses to the Text"
- **30 entries are required for grades 9 – 12 regular classes**
- **25 entries per book for grade 9 Honors classes**

Responses may begin:

- “The imagery reveals . . .”
- “The setting gives the effect of . . .”
- “The author seems to feel . . .”
- “The tone of this part is . . .”
- “The character(s) feel(s) . . .”
- “This is ironic because . . .”
- “The detail seems effective/out of place/important because . . .”
- “An interesting word/phrase/sentence/thought is . . .”
- “This reminds me of . . .”
- “Something I notice/appreciate/don’t appreciate/wonder about is . . .”

Or you may begin an entry with something else you feel is appropriate.

Generally, each response should be

- 3 – 5 sentences
- include your analysis of the literary techniques present in the quotations
- include the author’s attitude
- include the author’s purpose or tone
- include a statement of relation to personal experience

Further guidelines:

- Show you have read the entire book by responding to the novel from the first to the last page.
- Make sure that you note the page number for the quotations.
- Quotations should feature proper punctuation and the page reference in parentheses as above.

Your journal will be used to determine your comprehension of the text.

REMEMBER:

These logs are not meant to be personal diaries. They are meant to be read by others and should relate only to the assigned material. You may be sharing your journals in class, so keep this in mind as you write. When sharing, you will have the opportunity to confirm, clarify, and modify your responses through discussion. You will also find that your journals can be helpful in writing literary analysis of the text.

SAMPLE Dialectical Journal for *Bless Me, Ultima*

Quotation from the Text

1. “She took my hand, and I felt the power of whirlwind sweep around me. Her eyes swept the surrounding hills and through them I saw for the first time the wild beauty of our hills and the magic of the green river. My nostrils quivered as I felt the song of the mockingbirds and the drone of the grasshoppers mingle with the pulse of the earth.” (12)

Commentary/Responses to the Text

1. The imagery reveals Tony’s sense of the earth around him. As Ultima touches his hand, he is drawn into what seems to be a new and wondrous universe. This powerful experience makes Tony think that Ultima knows his fate and that they will be close. It can be inferred that their relationship will be a significant part of the novel.

SAMPLE for *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Quotations from the text

1. "He might have hurt me a little,' Atticus conceded, 'but son, you'll understand folks a little better when you're older. A mob's always made up of people, no matter what. Mr. Cunningham was part of a mob last night, but he was still a man. . . So, it took an eight-year-old child to bring 'em to their senses didn't it?" (159 – 160)
-

Commentary/Response to the Text

1. The tone here is matter-of-fact. Atticus admits that Mr. Cunningham could have harmed him, but he explains that Mr. Cunningham's actions were not entirely his own; he was influenced by the crowd as is common for many people. It takes Scout recognizing him and talking to him to make Mr. Cunningham realize that what he is doing is wrong.

Dialectical Reading Log Scoring Guide

Level 4: Synthesis & Evaluation of the text

- Features detailed, meaningful passages & quote selections
- Coverage of text is complete & thorough
- Journal is neat, organized, & professional looking; student has followed directions for organization of the journal.
- Uses thoughtful interpretation & commentary; avoids clichés
- Makes insightful personal connections
- Asks thought-provoking & insightful questions
- A strong interest in the material as evidenced through an awareness of levels of meaning
- Judgments are textually & experientially based
- Predictions are thoughtful & keenly observed
- Character analysis is consistent with the material presented
- Show an understanding of character motivation
- Comparisons & connections are found between text & other literary & artistic work
- Recognizes the author's writing choices & reasons for those choices
- Awareness that their own personal beliefs may differ from those expressed in the text
- Demonstrates an awareness of point of view

Level 3: Some evidence, understanding & appreciation of the text

- Uses less-detailed, but good quote selections
- Adequately addresses all parts of the reading assignment
- Journal is neat & readable
- Follows directions for organizing the journal
- Uses some intelligent commentary
- Addresses some thematic connections
- Includes some personal connections
- Does not summarize, but rather reflects upon the narrative
- Predictions are plausible
- Demonstrates some understanding of character motivation
- Shows student's engagement in the text

Level 2: Literal surface encounter with the text

- Only a few good details from text; quotes may be incomplete or not used at all
- Most commentary is vague, unsupported, or plot summary
- Journal is relatively neat, but may be difficult to read
- Student has not followed all directions for organizing the journal (no columns, no page numbers, etc.)
- Shows limited personal connection to the text
- Asks few or obvious questions
- Addresses only part of the reading assignment
- Predictions are unrealistic or improbable
- Uses stereotypical responses
- Entries are too short
- Features off-topic responses
- Exhibits confusion about the text & lack of critical interest in literature

