

EVERETT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT
GRADE TWELVE

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 11th grade and ease your transition to the 12th 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 12 – choose one

Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini (430 pages)

Hosseini's follow-up to his best-selling debut, *The Kite Runner*, views the plight of Afghanistan during the last half-century through the eyes of two women. Mariam is the illegitimate daughter of a maid and a businessman, who is given away in marriage at 15 to Rasheed, a man three times her age; their union is not a loving one. Laila is born to educated, liberal parents in Kabul the night the Communists take over Afghanistan. Adored by her father but neglected in favor of her older brothers by her mother, Laila finds her true love early on in Tariq, a thoughtful, chivalrous boy who lost a leg in an explosion. But when tensions between the Communists and the *mujahideen* make the city unsafe, Tariq and his family flee to Pakistan. A devastating tragedy brings Laila to the house of Rasheed and Mariam, where she is forced to make a horrific choice to secure her future. At the heart of the novel is the bond between Mariam and Laila, two very different women brought together by dire circumstances. Hosseini's magnificent second novel is a sad and beautiful testament to both Afghani suffering and strength. Readers who lost themselves in *The Kite Runner* will not want to miss this unforgettable follow-up.

Breath, Eyes, and Memory by Edwige Danticat (260 pages)

With a sensitive insight into Haitian culture, this graceful novel is about a young girl's coming of age under difficult circumstances. "I come from a place where breath, eyes and memory are one, a place where you carry your past like the hair on your head," says narrator Sophie Caco, ruminating on the chains of duty and love that bind the courageous women in her family. The burden of being a woman in Haiti, where purity and chastity are a matter of family honor, and where "nightmares are passed on through generations like heirlooms," is Danticat's theme. Born after her mother Martine was raped, Sophie is raised by her Tante Atie in a small town in Haiti. At 12 she joins Martine in New York, while Atie returns to her native village to care for indomitable Grandmother Ife.

Though her tale is permeated with a haunting sadness, Danticat also imbues it with color and magic, beautifully evoking the pace and character of Creole life, the feel of both village and farm communities, where the omnipresent Tontons Macoute mean daily terror, where superstitions still dominate. In simple, lyrical prose, she makes Sophie's confusion and guilt, her difficult assimilation into American culture and her eventual emotional liberation palpably clear.

19 Minutes by Jodi Picoult (480 pages)

Bestseller Picoult, author of *My Sister's Keeper*, takes on a contemporary hot-button issue in her brilliantly told new thriller, about a high school shooting. Peter Houghton, an alienated teen who has been bullied for years by the popular crowd, brings weapons to his high school in Sterling, N.H., one day and opens fire, killing 10 people. Flashbacks reveal how bullying caused Peter to retreat into a world of violent computer games. Alex Cormier, the judge assigned to Peter's case, tries to maintain her objectivity as she struggles to understand her daughter, Josie, one of the surviving witnesses of the shooting. The author's insights into her characters' deep-seated emotions brings this ripped-from-the-headlines read chillingly alive.

The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game by Michael Lewis (320 pages)

The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game by Michael Lewis (320 pages) As he did for baseball in *Moneyball*, Lewis takes a statistical X-ray of the hidden substructure of football, outlining the invisible doings of unsung players that determine the outcome more than the showy exploits of point scorers. Specifically, he focuses on the offensive linemen tasked with protecting the quarterback from the pass rusher.

A rare creature combining 300 pounds of bulk with "the body control of a ballerina," the anonymous left tackle, Lewis notes, is now often a team's highest-paid player. Lewis fleshes this out with the colorful saga of left tackle prodigy Michael Oher. An intermittently homeless Memphis ghetto kid taken in by a rich white family and a Christian high school, Oher's preternatural size and agility soon has every college coach in the country courting him. Combining sports analysis with a colorful story of the South's pigskin mania, Lewis probes the fascinating question of whether football is a matter of brute force or subtle intellect.

A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League by Ron Suskind (400 pages)

Cedric Jennings is the illegitimate son of an off-and-on drug dealer/ex-con and a hardworking, badly paid mother; it is her single-minded vision to have the boy escape the mean ghetto streets unscathed. Cedric has listened to her and is, as the book opens, an A student at a run-down, dispirited Washington, DC, high school, where he treads a thin line between being tagged a nerd and being beaten by gang leaders. Suskind, a Wall Street Journal reporter, follows the African-American youth through his last two years of high school and freshman year at Brown University. Inspirational sermons at a Pentecostal church, guidance from his mother, a love of black music and singing, and a refuge in the logic of math combine with the young man's determination and faith in the future to keep him focused on his goal of a topflight college education. Despite many low moments and setbacks, Jennings's story is one of triumph within both cultures, black and white, which together and separately put tremendous obstacles in his path out of the inner city. It is a privilege and an inspiration for readers to accompany Cedric on part of his long, difficult journey to maturity.

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

