

Spring 2018

**To: Parents of Gifted and Talented Academy Sophomores
Re: Summer Reading Program**

I look forward to working with the Sophomore students and embarking on our study of American Literature. The course, entitled The American Mosaic, seeks to draw together from many different times and places in American history the themes and experiences that define and explain the “American Experience.” The course will continue to prepare students to take Advanced Placement testing in the Junior and Senior years. As in past years, the coursework is substantial, rarely allowing class time for “reading.” The curriculum will focus on several major pieces of literature with shorter pieces and corresponding selections of other areas of the arts to complete the unit study. Each unit will feature an independent exploration by the student into further related material.

The summer reading program asks the student to read certain major works in advance, at a more leisurely pace, to be prepared for discussion in class at the beginning of school. The selections below introduce important themes and periods, along with a taste of more formal literary analysis. One selected title will be a novel; the second selected title is an informative/instructional text. Students will turn in one assignment **the first day** of school, typed, in 12 point Times New Roman font, utilizing MLA format:

1. Analytical Chart for *How To Read Literature Like a Professor* which follow the guidelines set forth (see additional pages).

The selected novel is Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood*, which will be discussed the first two weeks of school. The second book is a technical book aimed to assist students in “unpacking” prose. The book is Thomas C. Foster’s *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.

Copies of these books may be found in local libraries or purchased. Barnes and Noble has copies of the novel readily available, inquire about student discounts. There may also be discount copies available on Amazon.com, Powells.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Alibris.com and many other bookselling websites. Sometimes used copies are sold for as little as two or three dollars on these sites.

Questions about the program or the year’s curriculum are welcome. You can easily reach me through email over the summer. Summer assignments can also be accessed online over the summer at www.ehsgiftedacademy.weebly.com.

Cordially,

Cristina Cabrera
English Teacher
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Sophomore Summer Reading Log

You are to carefully read Thomas C. Foster's *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* and create a document which mimics the chart below. Once you have finished identifying a main idea from each chapter, you are going to find corresponding examples for the literary elements noted in Capote's non fiction novel *In Cold Blood*. Do not deviate from the example format. This assignment MUST be typed, in 12 point Times New Roman with proper MLA citations* and is **due the 1st day of school – NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Example from <i>How to Read Literature Like a Professor</i>	Example from <i>In Cold Blood</i>	My discussion of the point
“whenever people eat or drink together, it’s communion” (Foster 8).	“A few miles north, in the pleasant kitchen of a modest farm-house, Dick was consuming a Sunday dinner. The others at the table - his mother, his father, his younger brother - were not conscious of anything uncommon in his manner. He had arrived home at noon, kissed his mother, readily replied to questions his father put concerning his supposed overnight trip to Fort Scott, and sat down to eat, seeming quite his ordinary self” (Capote 73).	As Foster points out, “communion doesn’t need to be holy. Or even decent” (10). It is clear in the text that Capote is pointing out the dichotomy between the quiet family dinner Dick is having with his parents and the murder he had helped commit. The juxtaposition of the extreme violence of murder and the sedate tone of the family meal make the scene that more chilling and cement the fact that the family has no idea the violence Dick is capable of committing. And while they do not see Dick for who he truly is, there is a solidifying of Dick as just a regular person – a notion that is quite unsettling.

Note that each entry, save my explanation, has the proper MLA citation. This is mandatory. An assignment that does not have the proper MLA citations will not be eligible for the highest score.

Also - an assignment that is not typed will not be eligible to be scored.

You will be required to submit this assignment to Turnitin.com during the first week of school once our class account has been established on that site. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

*For detailed MLA format directions, please consult the Online Writing Lab (OWL) associated with Purdue University.