

Dear parents, guardians, and students:

Let me be among the first to welcome you to the high school experience! You are about to begin a time in your life you will never forget. This time is going to be challenging, exciting, moving, and something never experienced before and never to be experienced again.

You'll get out of it what you put into it.

Many of you are taking on multiple Advanced Placement or Pre-Advanced Placement classes. This is the best way to prepare you for college, so you are making the right choice. You must remember these classes are preparing you for college, so the work is going to be difficult. It is better to be prepared now than not to be prepared later. Being able to do all the things your classes demand of you is what will one day make you powerful, successful, and allow you to change the world.

We read because reading allows you to see the world you cannot experience. One of the most effective ways to learning about who we are is to study *those who we are not*. You will take from this class that there is more to life than ever imagined. It's bigger, sweeter, more tragic, and more alive with meaning than ever imagined. **So we write.**

We write because if you don't find your own voice, *someone will speak for you*. You never know how you feel or what you want in life because the words at your disposal are someone else's and don't represent your wants or needs. In order to write, you must learn the intricacies in the rules of language because if you don't learn to use it, it will use you.

All in all, take what you learn from this class and carry it with you when it's time to tackle the biggest questions, the biggest changes, and to find your place in a noisy world. You'll learn that the questions of life are never closed. There's always another plot twist; there's always another perspective. You'll learn to take tips from the wise that you'll confront in the books you read, the peers sitting next to you, and the people reading this letter with you now. Then, you'll measure the tips, sift through them, and bring them to the court of your own experience.

Remember: You'll get out of it what you put into it.
So, here's your blank canvas. What will you
create?

Best,

Mrs. Gaskin
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2019 Summer Reading Assignment for Pre-AP English I

Mesquite ISD

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Note to parents and students: Please read the entire assignment before you begin working. Please do not wait until the last minute to complete your summer reading assignment. We know you are excited about summer and you are ready to enjoy your break from school, but don't procrastinate and cause yourself stress by putting these assignments off until the day or week before school begins. Remember this assignment will be our first impression of you, so put in your best effort. We are looking forward to seeing all that you are capable of.

Finally, **DO NOT LET THIS SCARE YOU!** You have a lot of information coming your way right now. Take a deep breath, read this again, and email either of us with any questions.

PART 1 – SELF-SELECT NOVEL

A. Read the following novel:

- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

B. While you are reading this novel, you will need to create a **chart** that contains at least **5** quotes from the novel revealing how the protagonist of the story *is* or *is not* a **hero**.

As you read the novel, split the novel into three equal sections: **beginning**, *middle*, and **end**. Pull 1-2 quotes from each section that you feel best show the protagonist of the story's heroic nature. You will need a total of **5** quotes from your novel. You will make a chart using the **5** quotes.

We suggest annotating, or making notes about all important quotes showing heroic traits as you are reading in a journal or in the margin of your book. **Then** go back and choose **5** BEST quotes which show how your protagonist is a hero to include in your chart.

Follow these directions and use this format to complete your chart:

1. Choose a passage from the book that is significant because it shows a characteristic of the **hero** that is in your book and copy it word for word under the "evidence" column. Be sure to put it in quotation marks. Also include the page number.
2. In the next column titled "**Context**," give a brief description of what is happening in that exact moment in the text.
3. For the final column titled "Character Insight," consider the following questions:
 1. How does the hero in your book fit or not fit the mold of a hero?

2. How is the hero in your book different from other heroes?
3. **Does he/she always do the right thing?**
4. Is he/she flawed?
5. What lessons do they learn?
6. How does he/she change through the challenges he/she faces?
7. Does your hero always succeed, or does he/she sometimes face defeat?

3. Your “character insight” should be **longer** than your quote.

4. Repeat the above process until you have 5 quotes and responses.

5. CAUTION: Do not choose a quote just because it’s short!

6. REMINDER: A quote is anything taken from the book—not just when a character is speaking. (You do not have to see quotation marks in the book for it to be a quote!)

Some specifics for your chart:

- Please read the directions carefully and look at the example.
- Please type your responses if possible.
- The “CHARACTER INSIGHT” column should reflect a close reading of the book.
- Your chart will be checked for a grade. **Please bring it on the first day of class OR share or email it to either of us (wqaskin@mesquiteisd.org or tculberson@mesquiteisd.org) before the first class day.** Please do **not** put your assignment in a spiral, journal, or folder.
- You need to complete your chart soon after reading the book while the story is fresh in your mind.

EXAMPLE of chart ENTRIES

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Hero Chart *The Odyssey*

Evidence	Context	Character Insight
“Now, by the gods, I drove my big hand spike deep in the embers, charring it again, and cheered my men along with battle talk to keep their courage up: no quitting now” (1218).	Odysseus is about to face a giant Cyclops that has already killed several of his men, yet he gathers the courage to face him anyway.	The use of the word “drove” makes Odysseus powerful and in control. This makes Odysseus sound god-like at this point in the story. Not only does he set his mind to killing the Cyclops (putting his own life at risk), but he also cheers his men on “with battle talk” to act courageously as well. He sets his mind to defeating the cyclopes and decides he, nor his men, will quit. He is willing to risk his life to defeat this enemy, something only an epic hero would do.

PART 2 – 250 Word Writing Sample

A. Using your chart, complete a 250 - 300 word writing sample that determines if your character is a hero or not.

1. Start a new document in Google Docs. You may neatly write your response using blue or black ink if typing is not possible.
2. Make sure your complete heading is on the document:

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3. To count the number of words used in your entry using Google Docs:
 1. Go to “tools”
 2. Click “Word Count”

Finally, once you have completed your Summer Reading Assignments (the document with your chart and the document with your 250-300 word writing sample), you may print them and bring in paper copies on the FIRST day of class or share them with one of us by the first day of class. You may also email these to one of us as attachments.

If you have any questions or concerns about the summer reading assignment, please feel free to email either of us (wgaskin@mesquiteisd.org or tculberson@mesquiteisd.org).