

HP English II (Brendan Powers)

Reilly's Luck, by Louis L'Amour

As you read, please keep in mind that the literary emphasis during Honors English 2 is heroes. We read about famous characters like Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, and Oedipus, exploring the challenges they face and how they react to them. Each of your major essays next year will address some aspect of this topic. This novel definitely presents an interesting hero for you to consider. As you read, please note a few ideas:

- What are the circumstances of the hero at the beginning of the novel? What is the starting point for his growth as a character?
- How is his character formed by his early struggles? How do these early struggles prepare him for later ones?
- Who is chief mentor? What qualities does this mentor have?
- What is the hero's greatest struggle, in your opinion? His greatest triumph?
- What is one key scene that you think contributes to each man's development?

Don't bother with paragraph responses to each of those questions—bullet-pointed ideas are fine. You will bring these notes to class for our discussion on the first day of school. This is one of my favorite books; I hope you enjoy it.

Do yourself a favor and READ this summer. As I will tell your parents at Back to School Night, if you're not a reader you'll probably never receive an "A" on an essay in my class. The bad news is that there is a direct correlation (and it's not good) between the number of hours you're on your cell phone or playing video games and your writing grade in my class. The good news is that you don't need to read difficult, classic literature to improve. Any reading helps: Harry Potter, *The Hunger Games*, *Holes*, the newspaper, *Sports Illustrated*, you name it. If you liked *Reilly's Luck*, L'Amour wrote 99 other novels, so get busy.

See you on the first day of school!