

AP European History: Summer Reading Assignment

Your summer reading assignment is the book *Year of Wonders* by Geraldine Brooks, ISBN 0142001430.

Review from *The New Yorker*:

In 1665, the intense young pastor of a plague-stricken Derbyshire village persuades his parish to quarantine itself from the outside world. This selfless decision leads to the deaths of two-thirds of the inhabitants but saves the surrounding towns, as it did in the case of the historical village that inspired the tale. The novel glitters with careful research into such arcana as seventeenth-century lead-mining, sheep-farming, and, of course, medicine, but its true strength is a deep imaginative engagement with how people are changed by catastrophe. Fear and despair fan the usual petty rivalries of village life into murderous hatreds, and the community fragments just when it should be pulling together. A rare few—including the narrator, a young widow who is a servant of the pastor—discover new strengths and abilities. When the epidemic is over, a year later, the survivors are too weary, damaged, and numb to rejoice. Copyright © 2005 *The New Yorker*.

All students will have a writing assignment based on this book due the second week of school. Exact instructions for writing will be given on the first day of school. **For now, just read it and enjoy it.**

Best,
Dr. Hall

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me and I will get back to you as soon as you can. bhall@episcopalcollegiate.org