

Dear Seventh Grade Parent,

We hope the summer is finding you well. In May, we met with next year's seventh grade classes to discuss summer reading. As you may be aware, children are given summer reading assignments from the elementary level through the high school level. Each student is required to complete a novel organizer sheet and an accompanying project for the novel that they read. The list of projects can be found on the summer reading packet that your child was given in May. These projects will be counted in the first marking period.

This year's book selections are intended to be fun, engaging novels that your child will enjoy reading. The novels deal with themes and ideas that will be presented in the seventh grade English classes through the use of short stories, novels, poems and other forms of media.

If your child was selected to be in Honors English, he/she will be required to read Theodore Taylor's The Cay and one additional book. This should not be viewed as punishment for your child. The Cay helps to set up the year nicely, as we will be discussing dependence on others, optimism in the face of tragedy, and survival under difficult circumstances. This piece of literature is only 105 pages. Additionally, one of the other novels will serve as a companion for The Cay. Honors English students need only complete one project for **either** book they read, and one novel organizer sheet for **each** novel.

A common misconception about the Honors class is that during the course of the school year, there will be additional work. This is not the case. The difference between the two classes is not the workload, but the novels that we read and the final project at the end of the year. The classes share most of the same stories and assignments. The Honors class reads two different novels and will complete a literature circle project as their final assessment this June. The themes of these novels may be different from the English 7 curriculum. The novels for the Honors section may be a bit more challenging and focus more on higher-level thinking skills.

We anticipate a successful year in ELA. If you have any questions at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us through email at: [jcena@depew.wnyric.org](mailto:jcena@depew.wnyric.org) or [svanetten@depew.wnyric.org](mailto:svanetten@depew.wnyric.org). You may also call the school and leave a message with one of the secretaries. The school phone number is 686-2442. We look forward to meeting each of you at open house. Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Sincerely,

Mr. Joseph Cena

Mrs. Stacy Van Etten

Depew Middle School  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading  
Mr. Cena/Mrs. Van Etten  
2009-2010

**7th regular:** Choose **one** of the following five (5) books to read:

- \*The House on Mango Street - Cisneros
- \*No More Dead Dogs – Korman
- \*Stargirl – Spinelli
- \*Loser – Spinelli
- \*The House on Mango Street - Cisneros
- \**One book in the Alex Rider Series* - Horowitz

**7th Grade Honors:** Must read The Cay – Theodore Taylor

**\*and read one of the following:**

- \*No More Dead Dogs – Korman
- \**One book in the Alex Rider Series* - Horowitz
- \*Loser – Spinelli
- \*The House on Mango Street - Cisneros

**Directions: 7<sup>th</sup> grade:** After you have read one of the books, complete:

- \*the attached Novel organizer sheet **and**
- \*one of the following assignments.

**Directions 7<sup>th</sup> grade Honors:** After you have finished both of your books, complete:

- \*one of the following assignments for **one** of the books you read.
- \*a novel organizer sheet for **each** book you read  
(You will do two of these sheets, one for each book read.)

***Altogether:** One project on either book  
Two novel organizer sheets.*

**Any questions about the projects: e-mail us! [jcena@depew.wnyric.org](mailto:jcena@depew.wnyric.org)  
[svanetten@depew.wnyric.org](mailto:svanetten@depew.wnyric.org)**

**Please have assignments completed by Friday, September 11, 2009.**

**Summer Reading Choices  
2009-2010**

All descriptions © [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com) & [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**The Cay** – Theodore Taylor – (ONLY 7 HONORS)

Philip is shipwrecked and blind, and he must depend on a West Indian named Timothy to help him. "Innocence vs. wisdom, black vs. white, growing up and surviving...forcefully portrayed."-Library Journal.

**The House on Mango Street** – Sandra Cisneros

A girl coming of age in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago uses poems and stories to express her oppressive environment.

**No More Dead Dogs** – Gordon Korman

Wallace does not understand it -- why do dogs die at the end of every classic story? When Wallace gives his book report, he can't bring himself to lie about his feelings - the book stank! The teacher feels the opposite and forces Wallace to attend and participate in the town's play based on the book. Find out what happens when Wallace's creativity gets out of hand.

**Stargirl** – Jerry Spinelli

Leo Borlock follows the unspoken rule at Mica Area High School: don't stand out — under any circumstances! Then Stargirl arrives at Mica High and everything changes — for Leo and for the entire school. After 15 years of home schooling, Stargirl bursts into tenth grade in an explosion of color and a clatter of ukulele music, enchanting the Mica student body.

**Loser** – Jerry Spinelli

Donald Zinkoff is one of the greatest kids you could ever hope to meet. He laughs easily, he likes people, he loves school, he tries to rescue lost girls in blizzards, he talks to old ladies. The only problem is, he's a loser. Until fourth grade, Zinkoff's uncontrollable giggling in class, sloppy handwriting, horrible flute playing, bad grades, clumsiness, and ineptitude at sports go largely unnoticed. When he blows a race for his team, however, his transition to *loserdom* is complete.

**Alex Rider (Series)** – Anthony Horowitz

When his guardian and uncle, Ian, is mysteriously killed, Alex discovers that his uncle was not the bank vice-president he purported to be, but rather a spy for the British government. Now the government wants Alex to take over his uncle's mission.

## **Assignment 1: Accordion books**

Accordion books are a fun way to illustrate your book's plot. First, identify the introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion in your book. Figure out which five scenes in the book best illustrate these plot elements. Then, create your accordion book.

### **What you'll need:**

\*Six pieces of poster board, or some other comparable heavy paper

\*Tape

\*Markers/colored pencils/crayons/paint

### **How to do it:**

1. Cut six pieces of the poster board so that they are the same size and shape. (Size should be about the size of a regular sheet of computer paper.) These don't have to be rectangles! Feel free to experiment with different shapes.
2. Tape the six pieces of cardboard together at the sides.
3. Draw the cover for your accordion book on the piece of cardboard to the far left.
4. Draw the five scenes that illustrate your book's introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion.
5. Write a brief summary of each scene on the back side of each piece of poster board.
6. You can add excitement to your pages with glitter, stickers, rubber stamps, and other crafts if you wish.

**Please have this completed by Friday, September 11, 2009.**

## **Assignment 2: Make a photo album.**

What would a character in your book take pictures of? What would his or her photo album look like? Using a camera, take photos from the perspective of your character. Perhaps he would photograph his family members and pets. Maybe she would take pictures of flowers or trees.

You can use your family and friends as characters from the novel. Pretend that mom is one of the main characters, and photograph her doing something that the character would do in the novel.

People using a digital camera can print out their photos. Those using any other type of camera can take their photos to the store to have them processed.

### **What to do:**

With your pictures, create your character's photo album. You may choose to purchase an album at the store and arrange the photos under plastic. Or you may want to create a photo album by taping the photos in a small notebook.

Make sure to write the date on which the photos were taken. (This should align with the novel. If the setting of the book is summer in the 1960's, put a date down from summer in the 60's.)

Make sure that write a brief description of what is happening in each photograph. One paragraph will be fine.

Please have at least 10 pictures, and be sure to decorate the cover!

**Please have this completed by Friday, September 11, 2009.**

### **Assignment 3: Comic Book**

#### **What you need:**

**\*Pencil/Pen**

**\*Construction paper**

**\*ruler**

Turn your favorite book into a comic book. Fold at least two sheets of paper, (construction paper) in half and staple them so they make a book. With a ruler and a pencil draw boxes across each page to look like blank comic strips. Then, draw the story of your book as if it were a comic.

Draw pictures of your characters and have words coming out of their mouths – just as in a real comic strip.

Challenge yourself to make your comic book as funny as possible while staying true to the original story and characters. You should trace over your penciled drawings with black ink and color in your pictures.

Don't forget to design a book cover, complete with your name.

**Please have this completed by Friday, September 11, 2009.**

#### **Assignment 4: Interview a Character**

Journalists often interview people before writing a magazine or newspaper article. They know that in order to find out interesting details about their subject, they need to ask the “Five W’s” These are questions that begin with “Who,” “What,” “Where,” “When,” or “Why.” They also ask questions beginning with “How.”

Pretend you are a journalist writing a story. Choose a character from your book. Write out an interview, including your questions and the character’s answers.

Then, write an article about the character, based on his or her answers to your questions.

Here are some questions you might ask:

- Why do you feel the way you do about \_\_\_\_\_ ? (fill in the blank)
- How did you get to where you are at the end of the book?
- When did you change during this book?
- How do you see yourself as changed in the book?
- What do you want the most out of life?
- Who is important to you?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
- What are some of your favorite hobbies?

The interview and the article should both be typed. The answers to the interview questions should be more than simple, one-word answers.

The interview and the article should be typed and double-spaced with 12 pt. font (Times New Roman). I’m looking for about 2-3 pages.

**Please have this completed by Friday, September 11, 2009**

Good Luck and Have fun! Any questions, please let us know!

-Mr. Cena  
-Mrs. Van Etten