

To all Prospective Gifted English Students:

Welcome. If you wish to enroll in Gifted English I, your guardian and you need to sign this contract. By signing it, you commit to completing summer and off semester reading. The contract also signals your comprehension of the rigor of the course.

If you do NOT wish for your child to be enrolled in Gifted English, please complete the Opt Out Form on the opposite side.

Students who have a Gifted ruling (students who were in Spotlight) do NOT need to submit any writing samples to take Gifted English.

Please take the time to read and consider the content of this contract before returning a signed copy with your child's Course Selection Sheet on March 9th.

I will read at least one fiction and one non-fiction book (that has at least 150 pages) this summer.

- I will return my summer reading assignment on August 11th into Schoology or to Mrs. Stefanski in room 214.
- I will complete my off semester reading to Mrs. Stefanski by January 5th.
- I believe I am working at or above grade level in my present English class.
- I believe I can write in a clear style that is easily understood by my readers.
- I am willing to spend up to 5 hours a week reading and working on class projects designed to help build my Gifted/AP English reading and writing skills.
- I am willing to type all of my journals and essays.
- I am willing to get all projects to my teacher on time with no excuses.
- I am willing to bring my "A" game to class each and every day.

_____ I do wish for my child to take Gifted English 9

Sincerely,

Alicia Stefanski

Alicia.stefanski@dcsms.org

Student's name _____

Student's signature _____

Guardian's signature _____

Gifted Opt Out Form

Dear Guardians,

Hernando High School is excited to welcome your child for the 2023-2024 school year. As we prepare for next year, we are working on student's course requests and classes. Your child has a prior Gifted ruling. The middle school programs currently do not offer Gifted English; however, the high school does offer Gifted English (Gifted English I, Gifted English II).

Gifted English is a rigorous course where students will read complicated texts and write extensively. Enclosed is a copy of the Summer Reading and Off Semester reading for the upcoming year for Gifted English. **ALL** students with a prior Gifted ruling will be placed in the Gifted English I class, unless the parent requests for them to opt out.

If you or your child do not feel like this is the English for them, please return this form with your child's Course Selection Sheet on March 9th. If you opt out, your child's grades will make the determination as to whether they will go in to Accelerated English I or English I.

If you DO wish for your child to be enrolled in Gifted English, please complete the Gifted English contract on the opposite side of this form. Please return the requested with your child's Course Selection Sheet on March 9th.

_____ I do NOT wish for my child to take Gifted English 9

Sincerely,

Anne Goss

Counselor

Student's Name _____

Student's Signature _____

Guardian's Signature _____

Gifted English I Summer Reading Due: Friday August 11th.

By August 11th place your typed responses in the box outside room 214 or upload a copy in your Gifted English Schoology course. Responses should be double spaced in 12 Times font in MLA format. Make sure you include the title of the books you read in your responses. If you have any questions regarding the assignment, contact me at Alicia.stefanski@dcsms.org. Do not forget, you also have an off semester reading assignment (on the back of this sheet) that is due Jan. 5th. Pick up another copy of the off semester reading when you drop off your summer reading. Or locate both assignments on my website.

Students are encouraged to read **many** books this summer. There is a strong correlation between reading regularly for pleasure (any reading...really, ANY reading, as long as it's a habit) and academic success, including building vocabulary, an understanding of sentence structure, and an increase in stamina for reading harder texts. It is also clear that the more you read the better you write. So, this summer don't stop reading. Try to read at least 30 minutes a day.

I. Read a fiction book that is at least 150 pages. The book should be of appropriate rigor and subject matter for high school students (For instance, *Hatchet*, *Diary of Wimpy Kid* are not appropriate for this assignment). Students should have not read the book before. Compose a letter of 200 words to a character in the book. Be sure to include the title of the book you read. It should be evident that you read the book in your response-include specific textual evidence either paraphrase or quotes. Students who have the same answer or students who plagiarize will receive a zero for the assignment.

Things to consider in your letter to a character

Imagine sitting down with a character and sharing your personal thoughts about the book. Your letter should be personal and sincere, more like a private conversation rather than book report or a fan letter. Share specific details both about the book and about your reaction to the book. For instance, what did the book show you about your world that you never noticed before? What did you realize about yourself as a result of reading this book? Why was this work meaningful to you?

Keep in mind that this is a reflective writing and that means you need to think about what you read and the meaning you gleaned from the character. *Do not summarize the book's plot!* Only YOU can explain that unique relationship you experienced while reading the book.

II. For this portion of the summer reading, students should read a nonfiction memoir/autobiography/biography, inspirational, spiritual, motivational, or self-help book of approximately 150 pages that they have not read before.

Searching one of these genres or searching the above genres with the addition of teenager will yield numerous titles. Parents may want to help students select a book that best fits the students' needs/interest. For instance, a student may want to read a biography on a historical figure or musician and think about what he/she can learn from that person's success and mistakes.

After reading the selection, students should write 200 words answering the appropriate questions that follow while incorporating textual evidence. If it is not evident that you read the book, you will not receive credit for the assignment. Evidence that you read the book could be how a quote, situation, or an insight could apply to your audience. Students who have the same answer or students who plagiarize will receive a zero for the assignment.

Think about who is the perfect audience for this book. Be sure to include the title of the book in your response. Write a letter to this fictional entity who would benefit the most from reading this book. How would this book benefit him/her? What could he/she learn from the book? How could he/she apply what you learned in the book to his/her life.

Off Semester Reading Gifted English I Due Friday, January 5th.

Double space and type your assignment in 12 Times; use MLA format. Include the titles of the books you read in your responses. Do not place the assignment in a folder. Turn the assignment in class or on Schoology by Friday, January 5th. Feel free to email any questions or concerns regarding this assignment to Alicia.stefanski@dcsms.org

I. Read John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*. It is available for free online. Or, you can check out a paper copy from me. Parents need to know that *The Pearl* is Nobel Prize-winning author John Steinbeck's interpretation of a Mexican folk story in which a poor pearl diver's life is changed by the discovery of a very large gem. This short novel makes an excellent introduction to literary criticism, as the author's use of symbolism is fairly simple for teen readers to analyze and understand. However, the message put forth by the book -- that man invites evil by trying to better his situation -- invites a lot of questions.

Responses to the following questions should be typed and contain at least **two short quotations** to support each answer. Responses to each question should be 150-200 words. Students who have the same answer or students who plagiarize will receive a zero for the assignment. I want to read students' ideas about the novella.

1. Contrast the setting of the opening scene with the mountain setting at the conclusion of the novella.
2. How do Kino's feelings about the pearl change as the story progresses and how does this convey a theme? (Novels are essentially about people (fictional characters) undergoing experiences (the plot). These experiences - their nature, and the effect they have on the characters - will cause the reader to come to conclusions about some aspect of life. These conclusions are your theme. Possible themes include the struggle against good and evil, greed can be destructive, or humans are never satisfied.)
3. What is the purpose of songs in the novella?

II. Read a choice novel (fiction or non-fiction) of appropriate rigor that you have not read before. Do not complete these questions on what you read for summer reading. The book should be at least 150 pages. The book should not have been made into a movie or television series. You will complete A or B for 1 and 2. Students should incorporate textual evidence. Students who plagiarize will receive a 0.

1. Knowledge: 125 words

A. Authors do not choose a title randomly—usually there is some significance to it. Identify and describe the meaning of your book's title

OR

B. Describe the genre and setting (time and place) of your book. Explain its importance to the narrative.

2. Analysis: 125 words

A. Write an analysis of the main character. Describe him/her and his/her transformation. Then, explain WHY they transformed over the course of the book.

OR

B. Relate the book to human experience. Explain one truth about human nature and find three events from the text that relate to those truths.