

8th Grade Pre-AP English/Language Arts Acknowledgement Form

RETURN THIS FORM TO MS. HEERSSEN

Student Name (please print)

Course Name: 8th Grade Pre-AP ELA

I completely understand that this course is part of a rigorous program designed to prepare students for high school level instruction at the junior high level. For students to be fully successful, it is important they possess good time management skills and exceptional study habits.

I am fully aware that because of the intense nature of the Pre-AP program, coursework will be more demanding, and students will be challenged to think at a higher and more complex level; because of this, it is likely there will be more homework and outside reading.

I know that failure to complete the summer homework by the first day of school next year or failure to return this form before the end of the school year could not only affect a student's grades, but could seriously jeopardize a student's enrollment in this program.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student Signature

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the Stockdale Junior High School Pre-AP English/Language Arts program. The Pre-AP English/Language Arts program is designed to prepare a student for the high school Pre-AP/AP English program while still in junior high.

One skill necessary to the Pre-AP program is reading outside of class. This summer incoming 8th graders need to read The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins and a choice novel from the options below before school starts in August. Students need to acquire their own copy of these books. I am also requesting that parents sign their name next to the books that their child has read on the parent signature form, and that students return their signed list to me during the first week of school.

As you read both novels, you need to answer the attached questions on separate paper. Be sure to answer all questions with COMPLETE SENTENCES. Be specific and detailed. Use examples from the book to explain your answers. The questions will be due the second day of school. If you turn in these questions on the first day of school you will receive extra credit. When you return to school you will be required to complete an additional project over the books.

Please read below for the novel choices.

ALL STUDENTS WILL READ:

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she steps forward to take her sister's place in the Games. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.

IN ADDITION, STUDENTS WILL PICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOOKS TO READ:

The Hound of the Baskervilles by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The ancient Baskerville family is cursed: "A great, black beast, shaped like a hound, yet larger than any hound that ever mortal eye has rested upon" terrorizes and kills any

family member who comes to live at the Baskerville estate. And now, the hound seems to have claimed his latest victim, Sir Charles Baskerville. The coroner may have ruled death by natural causes, but Sherlock Holmes knows there's something more sinister behind Sir Charles Baskerville's death. The question is, could he really have fallen victim to the legendary phantom hound, the curse said to have haunted his ancestors for generations? Or is this the work of a very real and calculating murderer?

Anne of Green Gables by L.M Montgomery

When eleven-year-old Anne Shirley arrives at Green Gables with nothing but a carpetbag and an overactive imagination, she knows that she has found her home. But first she must convince the Cuthberts to let her stay, even though she isn't the boy they'd hoped for. Highly spirited Anne charms her way into the Cuthberts' affection with her vivid imagination and constant chatter, and soon it's impossible to imagine life without her. Considered a classic, Anne of Green Gables has found its way into the hearts of generations of readers. It is a story filled with charm, clever adventures in Avonlea, colorful characters and tender escapades. It's impossible not to like Anne Shirley.

REMEMBER – ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS ON SEPARATE PAPER AND WRITE IN COMPLETE SENTENCES. THE PROJECT WILL BE DONE WHEN YOU RETURN TO SCHOOL IN AUGUST.

If you have any questions I can be reached by e-mail all summer long. Feel free to drop me a line at jennifer.heerssen@stockdaleisd.org. Have a wonderful summer, and I look forward to seeing you in August!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Heerssen

Summer Novel Project Study Questions

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Answer each question in complete sentences and on a separate sheet of paper.

1. How does Katniss feel about the country of Panem? Why does she need to make her face "an indifferent mask" and be careful what she says in public?
2. Describe the relationships of Katniss with Gale, with Prim, with her mother. How do those relationships define her personality? Why does she say about Peeta, "*I feel like I owe him something, and I hate owing people.*" How does her early encounter with Peeta affect their relationship after they are chosen as tributes?
3. How does the fact that the tributes are always on camera affect their behavior from the time they are chosen? Does it make it easier or harder for them to accept their fate? How are the "career tributes" different from the others?
4. Why are the "tributes" given stylists and dressed so elaborately for the opening ceremony? Does this ceremony remind you of events in our world, either past or present? Compare those ceremonies in real life to the one in the story.
5. When Peeta declares his love for Katniss in the interview, does he really mean it or did Haymitch create the "star-crossed lovers" story? What does Haymitch mean when he says, "*It's all a big show. It's all how you're perceived.*" Why do they need to impress sponsors and what are those sponsors looking for when they are watching the Games?
6. Before the Games start, Peeta tells Katniss, "*. . . I want to die as myself. . . I don't want them to change me in there. Turn me into some kind of monster that I'm not.*" What does this tell you about Peeta? What does he fear more than death? Is he able to stay true to himself during the Games?
7. Why does Katniss ignore Haymitch's advice to head directly away from the Cornucopia? Did she do the right thing to fight for equipment? Explain.
8. What are the most important skills Katniss has for staying alive - her knowledge of nature? - her skill with bow and arrow? - her trapping ability? What qualities of her personality keep her going - her capacity for love? - her intelligence? - her self-control? Explain.
9. Why does Peeta join with the Career Tributes in the beginning of the Games? What does he hope to gain? Why do they accept him when they start hunting as a group? Why do groups form in the beginning when they know only one of them will be able to survive?

10. What makes Katniss and Rue trust each other to become partners? What does Katniss gain from this friendship besides companionship? Is Katniss and Rue's partnership formed for different reasons than the other groups?

11. Discuss the ways in which the Gamemakers control the environment and "entertainment" value of the Games. How does it affect the tributes to know they are being manipulated to make the Games more exciting for the gamblers and viewers? Does knowing that she is on live TV make Katniss behave differently than she would otherwise?

12. When does Katniss first realize that Peeta does care for her and is trying to keep her alive? When does she realize her own feelings for him? Did Haymitch think all along that he could keep them both alive by stressing the love story? Are they actually in love?

13. What do you think is the cruelest part of the Hunger Games? What kind of people would devise this spectacle for the entertainment of their populace? Can you see similarities between these Games and the society that condones them, and other related events and cultures in the history of the world?

14. Reality TV has been a part of the entertainment world since the early days of television (with shows such as *Candid Camera* and the *Miss America Pageant*), but in the 21st century there has been a tremendous growth of competitive shows and survival shows. Discuss how this phenomenon relates to *The Hunger Games*. What other aspects of our popular culture do you see reflected in this story?

Summer Novel Project Study Questions

The Hound of the Baskervilles by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Answer each question in complete sentences and on a separate sheet of paper.

1. *"The world is full of obvious things which nobody by any chance ever observes,"* Sherlock Holmes declares in Chapter Three. Do you agree? Can you find examples of obvious and important things about you or your friends that have been overlooked by others?
2. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is narrated by Dr. Watson. The story unfolds entirely from his perspective. Why is this effective? Why is Dr. Watson the perfect narrator for the novel? How would the story be different if Sherlock Holmes were doing the telling?
3. How does Baskerville Hall support the atmosphere of suspense and mystery already set by the moor?
4. Why are Barrymore, his wife, and the criminal on the moor effective characters in the novel?
5. Why is Barrymore's confession of finding the letter sent to Sir Charles by "L.L." important to the case?
6. Consider the female characters in the novel. What are their strengths? What are their weaknesses? Do they share any traits in common? How are they treated by Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes?
7. Describe the Hound of the Baskervilles. How did it acquire such an appearance?
8. Like most mysteries, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* has a few "red herrings," misleading clues that point to the wrong culprit. Find some examples of "red herrings" sprinkled throughout the book. Did you fall for any of them?
9. Describe the nature of Sherlock Holmes's friendship with Dr. Watson. How highly does Holmes value Watson's opinion? Why is Watson important to Holmes? Why is Holmes important to Watson?
10. Describe Sherlock Holmes's personality. What is appealing about his character? What isn't? Why do you think he is drawn to difficult and dangerous cases? Why do you think that Sherlock Holmes is one of the most famous and admired characters in literature?

Summer Novel Project Study Questions

Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery

Answer each question in complete sentences and on a separate sheet of paper.

1. "Personification" is the author's technique of assigning human qualities to something that is not human. L.M. Montgomery did this with the brook on the very first page. Reread the sentences about the brook. Then find two more examples of personification throughout the book. List the examples and page number you found them, and then explain what the examples are describing.
2. In what ways does Anne conform? In what ways does she remain fiercely independent?
3. How does Marilla's character change as a result of Anne's arrival at Green Gables?
4. In some ways Anne and her friends seem very much like eleven-year-olds today, but there are major differences in attitudes, experiences, and pastimes. Compare the attitudes and activities of Anne and her friends with those of modern day eleven-year-olds.
5. Good behavior is a subject that troubles Anne. Choose two main characters from the novel and discuss the ways each character approaches the problem of being good.
6. Discuss the role of imagination in the novel. How does it drive plot events, and how do characters' imaginations evolve throughout the novel?
7. Discuss the various ways loss and separation appear in the novel. How does Anne's conception of loss change at the end of the novel?
8. How does Anne's character change, and how does her character change those around her?
9. Why are confessions important in *Anne of Green Gables*? Compare Anne's confessions and discuss how each one has a different impact on her.
10. What makes Anne such an enduring character in literature?

**SUMMER READING
PARENT VERIFICATION FORM**

RETURN THIS FORM TO MS. HEERSSEN THE 1st WEEK OF SCHOOL

I confirm that my child, _____, has read the following books and completed both summer reading assignments for Pre-AP English/Language Arts.

Please initial beside the books your child has read this summer.

_____ The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

_____ The Hound of the Baskervilles by Arthur Conan Doyle

_____ Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery

Parent Signature

Student Signature