

May 14, 2008

Dear Accelerated English student,

On behalf of the Wheaton Warrenville South English department, we would like to welcome you to the accelerated sophomore English program for the 2008-2009 school year. The English department hopes you will enjoy a restful and renewing summer. It is important for all of us to take a step back from the pace and rigors of the academic year and pause for an enjoyable respite over the summer.

One of the characteristics that we assume advanced-level English students share is a love of language and literature. To continue to enhance and direct that interest and to keep sharp the critical thinking and reading skills that research tells us so often fall off over the summer, we are asking you to read the following two works:

1. *Life of Pi* (Yann Martel), Harcourt Books

This book will be the subject of an analytical in-class essay that will be written by all accelerated sophomore English students on the first full day of classes.

Note: Review the concepts associated with Magical Realism.

2. *Old Man and the Sea* (Ernest Hemingway), Scribner Publishing

This will be the subject of an objective exam given within the first two weeks of the school year.

The first semester sophomore curriculum has been designed to incorporate major units that examine the relationship between classic and contemporary literature. We urge you to keep in mind how the summer reading novels address this connection and apply to your first unit concept, **codes for honorable living**. Below are the specific unit questions you should be reflecting on and answering in order to complete your in-class essay.

Unit Question:

What codes govern an individual's choice for honorable living?

- What are the differences and relationships between rules and codes?
- What happens when a person is confronted with a situation that challenges his/her codes?
- What are your individual codes?
- Have codes of honor, along with the characters depicting them, changed over the centuries?
- What happens when individuals must choose to uphold codes that clash?
- How do modern codes of honor reflect or allude to those of the past?

We suggest you keep notes on the following: the unit question and sub-questions, recurrent elements or symbols, personal reactions, larger ideas and themes, character analysis, and important quotes. The format of the journal and/or notes is up to you. They will *not* be collected and graded as a separate assignment, but make certain you bring your books and these notes to the first *full* day of class for use during the in-class essay.

Copies of these works are available at any bookstore or library. Extra copies have been ordered from Barnes and Noble in Town Square and Borders at Rice Lake.

We hope you enjoy reading these books as much as all of us in the English department will enjoy our own summer reading. We encourage you to find a quiet place and escape into these fine works.

Sincerely,

Mr. Craig Lawrence
Sophomore A English Instructors

Mrs. Sharla Lakstigala