

SUMMER READING—FIVE QUESTIONS & FIVE ANSWERS

1. Why do I have to read during the summer? Isn't it my summer "break" from school?

The value of summer reading is well known. In Summer Learning and the Effects of Schooling, Barbara Heyns states reading is the single most effective summer activity with respect to summer learning. Heyns concludes that children who read as few as six books during the summer months gain or maintain reading skills achieved during the preceding school year, while students who do not read during the summer may fall back as much as a grade level in their skills.

2. What do I need to read during the summer?

Students are required to read selections from the attached list. College prep students must read two books; tech prep students must read one book.

3. Where do I get the books?

The Jefferson Public Library should carry many of the books on the attached list. Barnes & Noble in Athens has asked for the JHS Summer Reading List so it can stock books for student purchase.

4. What do I do while I'm reading the book(s)?

The English Department offers the following suggestions for taking notes while you are reading. *Please understand that these are guidelines.* You may decide to use some, many, all, or none of these suggestions. How you decide to take notes is up to you. Just remember that during the first month of the term your English teacher will require a series of writing assignments based on summer reading.

- a. Write down each character's name as he or she is introduced and describe each one. As you read, indicate the importance of each character in this book.
- b. Summarize what happens in the book. What are the important conflicts? What are some examples of conflicts?
- c. Put down a few statements or ideas from the books that are especially noteworthy or meaningful. Include the page numbers.
- d. Is the ending of the book satisfactory? What are the implications of the ending and its effect on the main character? Was the main character successful in overcoming a difficulty? Why or why not? How much do you sympathize with him or her?
- e. To what extent do you think that the book is worthwhile? Did it help you to gain some insight or to come to a greater understanding in any way?

5. What happens if I don't do this assignment?

Reading (and writing on) your summer reading constitutes a major test grade. Failure to read may mean the student begins the term with a test grade of zero.