

CHELMSFORD HIGH SCHOOL  
SUMMER READING - GRADE 9  
2009 - 2010



Over the summer we would like to encourage you to read as many books as you have the time and interest to read. Reading will improve your comprehension skills and keep you mentally “in shape” for next fall’s English class. “Guiding Questions” and “Guidelines for Annotating Texts”\* are provided. Follow the recommendations for taking notes, and record the answers to the guiding questions as you read. These notes will help you recall ideas to share in class discussions and when you answer your in-class graded writing assignment. \* see below

**English 9, 9H1, 9H2 are required to read:**

- **Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie by David Lubar**

**Assignment:**

In class students will create an advice pamphlet for incoming freshmen, and it will be graded.

**Guiding Questions:**

What are your own expectations about what freshmen year will be like? How are these expectations similar/different from the narrator’s actual freshman year experience? How are your actual experiences as a freshman (1<sup>st</sup> week of school) the same or different from the narrator’s? What important advice does the narrator provide to his unborn sibling? What is your opinion of his advice?

**English 9H1 students are also required to read:**

- **Dracula by Bram Stoker**
- **Cat’s Cradle by Kurt Vonnegut**

**Assignment:**

A short written assignment will be given and graded.

**Guiding Question for Dracula:**

How effective is the epistolary technique in developing both plot and character?

**Guiding Question for Cat’s Cradle:**

How does Vonnegut use the exaggerated and the absurd to critique modern society?

## Guidelines for Annotating Texts

**There is not one “right” way to annotate as you read, but there are some general principles for good annotating that you should keep in mind. You should write marginal notes in the text that consist of questions and comments, essentially your dialogue with the text itself.**

**Review this guide frequently as you are completing your assigned reading. Close reading takes more time than quick, superficial reading, but doing so will save you time and anxiety later as you prepare to discuss and write about the literature.**

1. **Always read with a pen or pencil in hand.** Doing so helps you to focus and to stay alert.
2. Always **take your time** as you begin a new text. Ask yourself many questions as you begin: Who is telling the story? What is the setting? What details does the author provide about characters when they are first introduced?
3. **Abbreviate** as you take notes. Use **initials** for characters. Try to develop your own set of **symbols** for important ideas. For example, you might place a **star** next to key passages.
4. Keep a **list of characters** and their **key traits**. A good place for this is the inside cover of the book. You can add brief notes to your lists as you read.  
  
\***Front and back covers** as well as the first and last “blank” pages are also good places to jot notes about important settings, key ideas, and key page numbers.
5. Look for **patterns** as you read. What ideas do you see repeated? What **connections** can you draw between different characters and different events?
6. Try to make a **quick note at the end of each chapter**, indicating the most important points it contained.
7. Think of a **memorable title for each chapter** and write it down at the beginning. (You can still make your own title even if the author has provided one.)
8. On the first or last page of a chapter, **bullet-point the key events** as a summary of that section.
9. **Use question marks.** Be alert to what puzzles you. Good readers do not zip along without stopping to monitor their comprehension. They stop to think and to note what they don’t understand. You should also write down questions you would like to discuss.
10. Of course, you should always pay attention to **vocabulary**. A strong vocabulary comes from *reading*, not from memorizing lists. Your text includes many words that will be new to you. Circle or star these words. Try to determine meaning from the context. If you are really puzzled by a word, look it up.

**We suggest that you use sticky notes in addition to writing marginal notes in order to give you enough space for your thoughts.**