

## For Students ENTERING the Tenth Grade Honors English Program

In addition to the Community Reading book each student was assigned, all students entering the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Honors Program will read the following non-fiction text and maintain a reading journal.

### *Into the Wild* by John Krakauer

In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given 25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all of the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself...

**ALL sophomores must keep a reading journal for *Into the Wild*. The journals will be graded. Also, in the first week of school, there will be an in-class project related to the summer reading. You will be allowed to use your reading journals when completing the project. You will not be allowed to use the texts on the day of the project.**

### **Reading Journal Guidelines**

*What is it? A reading journal is a journal that records a dialogue, or conversation, between the ideas in the text (the words that you are reading) and the ideas of the reader. In other words, your task is keep record of a dialogue with yourself as you read. Write down your thoughts, questions, insights and ideas while you read. A reading journal can and should include a mixture of things (for example, making connections to the text, interpreting the text, making predictions, asking questions, challenging the text, extending the meaning). There are no "right" and "wrong" answers. The important factor is that you read something and honestly, thoughtfully and articulately respond to it with your feelings and ideas. Your "writer's voice" should be heard in the journal.*

*Note: The following are guidelines, not commandments. You don't have to answer every question in every journal. You do have to follow the format described in (1-2), below. Do not retell the story – a reading journal should not be plot summary - react to it, and develop each reaction as it merits development. **An entire page of one-liners does not make a journal.** Don't rely on or even refer to Spark Notes, Cliffs Notes, or any other stale, safe, canned analysis: they cheat you out of thinking and they cheat your classmates out of their ideas. We are interested in your response, uncontaminated by the committees who produce these "study aids."*

- 1. It is preferred that you type your entries. Use loose-leaf paper if you are handwriting your entries. Put the page number outside the margin. Write your quote and your comment inside the margin.**
- 2. Your journal entries must begin with the quotation you are commenting on. The quotation can be shortened by use of an ellipsis.**
3. Comment when an idea or character interests you and be sure to tell why.
4. Notice repeated patterns in the text. Why might they be there? What do they contribute to the work? Explain your response.
5. Comment on striking or meaningful images in the text. Explain your response.
6. If you notice any literary devices, comment on their function in the text.
7. If something about the text confuses you—plot, language, or so forth—use the journal to explore why and what it might mean. It is expected that most of these texts will contain passages and ideas that may challenge and confuse you.
8. How are individual characters developed in the text? Explain your response.
9. Explain the choice of narrator (e.g., first person limited, third person omniscient, etc.).
10. Comment on the tone of the text. How does it support the content? What specific words contribute to the tone? Explain your response.

11. Note strange or unusual **diction**. Keep track of **any** unfamiliar words.
12. Explore the relationship between setting and plot. Explain your response.
13. Comment on connections between the text and other texts (or movies, shows, and so forth) that you have experienced in the past. This connection could refer to theme, plot, setting, or character. Explain your response.
14. Challenge the text. For example, if a six-year-old narrator is using an advanced vocabulary, make a note of that and speculate why the author made that choice.

### CRITERIA FOR A SUCCESSFUL READING JOURNAL (i.e. "How to earn an A!")

- Quotations utilized are detailed, meaningful and attributed to a page number
- Interpretations of the text are thoughtful, in-depth, and avoid clichés
- Personal and cultural connections are insightful and thought-provoking
- The text is thoroughly covered (entries are not front or end-loaded)
- The journal discusses the **theme** of the text (themes must be expressed as a message about a topic)
- The journal discusses how literary elements such as imagery, diction, symbolism, setting, characterization and figurative language contribute to the theme
- The journal is neat, organized, looks professional and follows all of the directions above

## **For your Community Text:**

In the final week of the 2018-19 school year, each student was assigned a community text from a list of possibilities. Students should:

- 1) Read the book you were assigned;
- 2) Take reading notes to bring with you at the start of the school year. The notes need not be in any formal format. Just have observations, questions, and insights to participate in a discussion about the book; and
- 3) During a LEGO the first week of school, you will meet with the staff member who selected the book and other students who read it. You will engage in a lively discussion about the book.

If you bring in notes to turn in (in physical form) and participate in the discussion, you have completed the assignment! If not, your English teacher and the English Department Head will assign you a mandatory alternate assignment to make up for your failure to do the summer reading. That assignment will be in addition to your assignments for all your classes that will have started. Please do not let that happen.

You may NOT decide to read a different book other than the one you were assigned. You will receive credit ONLY for the text you were assigned.