

April 26, 2010

Dear Gaston Day Parents:

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who has been such a constant source of encouragement and support over the course of the past few years. As a result, the English Department has been recognized by the National Council of Teachers of English “for excellence in its instructional program.” Additionally, over the past five years Gaston Day students and *Blutopia*, our literary and art magazine, have garnered more than 200 writing awards in regional, state, and national contests. It seems like extraordinary things are happening every day at Gaston Day. We are honored you have entrusted us with the education of your child, and we are excited about what the future may hold for each of our students.

The English Department has established a comprehensive summer reading program primarily to engender a love of reading, but also to strengthen reading comprehension, develop critical reading skills, and increase vocabulary proficiency. Obviously, we do not want summer reading to become a trip to the dentist; however, commercial beach reads do little to serve the literary evolution of a student. As such, we have created a required reading selection for each grade.

Students will be held responsible for reading both the required selections. The English Department will actively discuss and test students on summer reading during the opening days of the new academic year. Students will further be asked to sign an honor pledge confirming both books were read in their entirety. (The Honor Code, through which students make a commitment not to lie, cheat, steal, or plagiarize, is an essential part of the Gaston Day community).

Again, the continued growth and success of each student is our highest priority. We hope these novels make a lasting and indelible mark on the lives of each of our students.

Sincerely,

Greg Rainey
Chair of English
Gaston Day School
704.864.7744 ext. 138

GASTON DAY SCHOOL – ENGLISH DEPARTMENT*
GDS Summer Reading List 2010

Rising 5th grade

Required reading: *Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett

Required reading: Age appropriate Newberry Medal or Honor book

Rising 6th grade

Required reading: *Nory Ryan's Song* by Patricia Reilly Giff

Required reading: Age appropriate Newberry Medal or Honor book

Rising 7th grade

Required reading: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice

Rising 8th grade

Required reading: *White Fang* by Jack London

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice

Rising 9th grade

Required reading: *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice

Rising 10th grade

Required reading: *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice

Rising 11th and 12th grades (enrolled in British Literature)

Required reading: *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde.

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice

Rising 11th grade (enrolled in AP Language)

Required reading: *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath

Required reading: *Stiff: The Secret Life of Cadavers* by Mary Roach

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice

Students must purchase: *5 Steps to a 5: AP English Language*

Students must purchase: *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White

Rising 12th grade (enrolled in AP Literature)

Required reading: *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy

Required reading: *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain* by Robert Olen Butler

Required reading: Age appropriate book of choice