



Summer 2016

Required Reading

English II College Prep and Honors

This summer's reading for rising sophomores is comprised of selections which complement the Ethics and Culture course that you'll take this year. As you read these books, consider the human person's desire for happiness and how it can be attained: *In what does happiness consist? Is happiness ultimately dependent upon our circumstances? How is happiness analogous to a quest? What are some of the obstacles that must be overcome or battles that must be fought in this quest for happiness? What role does forgiveness play in happiness? Are suffering and happiness diametrically opposed to each other? Is there a relationship between happiness, virtue, love, and freedom?*

Task: Read these books and complete the corresponding assignment for each. In the first week of school, you will also take a test on these books.

1. *The Two Towers* by J.R.R. Tolkien

A. Read and annotate. On the first day of school, you'll turn your book in, and grades will be assigned according to the quality of annotations. (75 points possible)

To *annotate* a text means to take notes on the pages of a text while reading. It is a way of engaging with and entering into an author's art and ideas. The goal is to have a rich, satisfying, and thought-provoking reading experience.

To annotate wells means to *thoughtfully* and *frequently* do the following as you read:

- underline and/or star key sentences (thesis statements, important topic sentences of sections, etc.)
- circle and define any words that you do not know yet
- note transitions to help you map out the structure of the book's flow
- ask questions in the margins (example: "Is this true?" "What's his evidence?" "Why is this character angry?" "This symbol seems important; what's it mean?")
- make comments about your own thoughts about / reactions to the text (example: "This character is crazy!" "I should tell Ellen about this study." "This character reminds me of me. Hmmm." "Interesting!!" "Weird." etc.)
- identify key symbols, and speculate on their meaning
- speculate on the book's theme as you go
- write bullet summary of what happened at end of each chapter.

As readers annotate, they often develop an annotating system of their own. You will learn what works for you. For now, the important thing is to read all your summer assignments with pen or pencil in your hand, and take time to "talk back" to the text as you go.

B. After reading *The Two Towers*, watch the 2002 film version directed by Peter Jackson. Then answer the following questions. Answers may be typed or handwritten. (40 points possible)

1. Illustrate an unimportant change made by the film's director. Explain the effect of this change and why that effect is not important. These changes may include an added scene, omitted scene, and/or scenes that were altered.
2. Illustrate an important change made by the film's director and explain why it is significant. Do you agree with this change? In what way does this change alter Tolkien's story?
3. Give two other examples of how the film is different than the book.
4. Overall, which do you prefer: the film or the book and why?

2. *My Brother, Pier Giorgio, His Last Days* by Luciana Frassati

After reading his sister's account of Pier Giorgio's last week on earth, make a timeline of the events in the book. (50 point possible)

Timeline Specifications:

- Use posterboard or some kind of presentation material (You may make it any shape-be creative!)
- Include at least 3 quotes from the book on your timeline.
- Include at least 5 pictures. (Pictures of people, places, things that are significant in the life of Pier Giorgio. These may be computer generated or hand-drawn)
- In addition to the last week of Pier Giorgio's life, your timeline should also include his birthday, his First Communion, high school and college dates, and anything else that you think is important for the timeline. (see page 119-120)

3. (Honors only) *Left To Tell* by Immaculee Ilibagiza

In addition to the two books above, the third required reading selection for Honors English II is a non-fiction book about the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, told through the eyes of Immaculee who miraculously survived to tell her story of love and forgiveness. We will discuss this book the first week of class and take an essay test.