

Summer 2017

Dear Incoming 9th Grade Students,

Summer vacation is a time to relax, rest, and rejuvenate. It is critical, however, to maintain the sharp reading and writing skills that you have acquired in your middle school years so that your return to high school in the fall won't be too much of a shock. Our summer reading assignments are designed to expose you to the central themes of freshman English, *Leadership and Responsibility*, through one work of fiction and one work of non-fiction. **You will also be required to complete a writing assignment for each work.**

The required fiction work for incoming freshmen at YUHSB is *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card. *Ender's Game* is an exciting book about a young boy in the distant future, training to save the world from an alien invasion. *Please note that while Gavin Hood's film adaptation of the novel is an interesting exercise, he has made some significant changes to the plot and has left out some important storylines. Watching the film is not a substitute for reading the book.* Please be sure to purchase the book (any edition will do) and read it before the first day of school. You will need to bring the book with you to class for the first several weeks, so make sure you have a copy you can keep. A library copy is not a good option. You can easily get a used copy on Amazon.com. **You are also required to write an analytical essay on the work.** This essay will be the basis for the first major piece of writing you do in ninth grade.

Essay Prompt: After reading Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*, write a persuasive essay in which you argue whether or not the book's protagonist, Ender, is actually a hero. You may want to consider to what extent Ender controls his own actions and to what extent he is controlled by others. If you argue that Ender is not a hero, you might choose to argue that someone else is. It is important to position in this essay, not argue both sides.

Essay Guidelines: 2 pages, double-spaced, typed. Include at least four well-integrated quotations from the book in your response. A strong essay, however, is not just a series of extended quotes strung together, so choose your quotes carefully. Make sure your quotes are precise and support your argument. Be sure to provide page numbers for your quotes. Because this is a formal, analytical essay, do not use first person ("I," "me," "my," "in my opinion").

Please bring this essay assignment to class on the first day of school. Make sure you save your essay on your computer because you will revise this work and be uploading this essay to your Writing Portfolio.

Non-Fiction: In addition, incoming Freshman are also required to **read one** of the following four non-fiction works. The works highlight specific leaders in very different areas. The question to consider is what makes each individual an effective leader.

Choose one of the following:

- **A military genius:** Jack Weatherford's *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*. ISBN: 978-0609809648. http://www.amazon.com/Genghis-Khan-Making-Modern-World/dp/0609809644/ref=tmm_pap_title_0
- **A religious leader:** Rabbi Israel Meir Lau's *Out of the Depths: The Story of a Child of Buchenwald Who Returned Home at Last*. ISBN: 978-1402786310. http://www.amazon.com/Out-Depths-Story-Buchenwald-Returned/dp/140278631X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1402076526&sr=1-1&keywords=out+of+the+depths+rabbi+lau
- **An Explorer:** Alfred Lansing's *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*. ISBN: 978-0786706211. http://www.amazon.com/Endurance-Shackletons-Incredible-Alfred-Lansing/dp/078670621X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1402076643&sr=1-1&keywords=endurance+shackleton%27s+incredible+voyage
- **A Coach / Educator:** John Wooden's *They Call Me Coach*. ISBN: 978-0071424912. http://www.amazon.com/They-Call-Coach-John-Wooden/dp/0071424911/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1402076761&sr=1-1&keywords=they+call+me+coach

We will discuss each of these works in small groups at the beginning of the year. In addition, for your non-fiction choice, you are to **write a brief (1 paragraph) book review**. Your review must answer the following questions:

- In what way did the subject of your work demonstrate leadership?
- What qualities did he possess that made him a good leader?
 - Give a specific example.
- What qualities did he possess, if any, that made him a less effective leader than he might have been?
 - Give specific examples.
- Would you recommend this book to your peers?
 - Why or why not? You must be specific.

Review Guidelines: one paragraph (no more than 12 sentences), double-spaced, typed.

Please bring this review to class on the first day of school along with your analytical essay on *Ender's Game*.

Both assignments are required. The analytical essay on *Ender's Game*, however, will be worth more points. You should spend more effort on the analytical essay.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Hadassah Siegfried
Freshman English
hsiegfried@yuhsb.org

Mrs. Harriet Levitt
Chair, Department of English
hlevitt@yuhsb.org