

Wildwood Catholic High School
Summer Reading Supplement
Mr. William Waters

Grade 10: All students must read Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Album. In early September, they will take an essay test on this book. Honors students are required to read an additional work, Hiroshima by John Hersey. By mid-September they will take a separate essay test on this book.

As students read Tuesdays with Morrie, they should be certain that their critical reading addresses the following questions/concerns:

1. Trace fully Mitch Album's relationship with his mentor, Morrie Schwartz.
2. Explain with specific detail why this book is a series of lessons on how to live and how to die.
3. In what definitive ways is this work "an extraordinary contribution to the literature of death"?
4. Elaborate on how this book teaches that "wisdom and compassion are one."

Honors students, in their critical reading of Hiroshima, should focus on the following points of emphasis:

1. Discuss in very specific detail why the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima was such a profound human tragedy.
2. What distinct horrors, both long range and short range, were unleashed by the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima?
3. React to the following statement: "Hiroshima is a work that should rock the conscience of humanity."
4. What practical lessons should 21st. Century governments learn from this classic nonfiction work?
5. Attempt to sense connections between Hersey's classic and the following famous quote from Albert Einstein: "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

Grade 12–Advanced Placement English Language and Composition

All students will read Nathaniel Philbrick's In the Heart of the Sea and Herman Melville's Moby Dick. The copy of Moby Dick must be the Norton Critical Edition (Second Edition), ISBN #0-393-097283-6 (pbk.).

Early in the first marking period, students will write a major literary paper on In the Heart of the Sea. Therefore, their reading of this work should critically address the following issues and/or questions:

1. What is the role of the book's "Preface," and how effectively does it fulfill that role?

2. Owen Chase felt that the whaleship had been sunk by “anything but chance,” by some “unaccountable destiny or design” (ch. 5; 89). Fully discuss the role of fate in the tale of the Essex and its crew.
3. Give a detailed analysis of the psychological aspects of the crew’s ordeal.
4. Elaborate on Chase’s short-term reaction to the whale’s savage attack (ch. 7).
5. First Mate Chase refers to “distressing nights” and their “whole catalogue of sufferings” (ch. 8; 133). In your view, what were the most despicable facets of that distress and suffering?
6. Cite and offer comment on the most revealing and astounding things you learned from this nonfiction work.
7. Characterize the role of religion and prayer in the lives of several specific crew members.
8. What are the most ironic aspects of this tragic tale?
9. Which chapter did you find the most engrossing and why?
10. In what specific ways did reading this nonfiction work prepare you for a more perceptive reading of Melville’s classic novel?
11. Compare Philbrick’s accounts of the gargantuan task of readying a whaling vessel with provisions for its voyage with ch. 20 (“All Astir”) of Moby Dick.
12. Contrast Philbrick’s treatment of the reputation of both the business of whaling and whalemen with ch. 24 (“The Advocate”) of Moby Dick.

During the first full week of school, students will take a 100- question objective test on Moby Dick. Later in the quarter they will submit a major literary essay on the novel. This essay will count as a double-grade. Their critical reading of Moby Dick should especially focus on the topics listed below:_____

Moby Dick essay: Mode--Expository

Method of Development--Comparison/Contrast

- Topics:
1. Ahab compared or contrasted to Jonah
 2. Ahab compared with Father Mapple
 3. Ahab compared with Lucifer
 4. Ahab on the Pequod compared and/or contrasted to Adam and Eve in Eden
 5. Ishmael compared or contrasted with Queequeg

6. Melville's actual whaling experiences compared with details of the novel
7. Melville's factual details about whales and whaling contrasted with what we know today about whales and current whaling practices
8. Moby Dick compared or contrasted with another epic
9. Some aspects of the novel compared or contrasted with their counterparts in the John Houston movie
10. Melville's portrayal of the whaling industry compared or contrasted with Nathaniel Philbrick's in In the Heart of the Sea (Viking, 2000)
11. Melville's descriptions of the awesome magnificence of the sea compared with Nathaniel Philbrick's in In the Heart of the Sea
12. Any two movie versions of the novel contrasted on a number of points

Note: With prior approval, one may write on an original comparison/contrast topic.

Near the end of the second quarter, students will be required to submit a major literary term paper. Students are free to choose a term paper topic from a list of various and sundry topics supplied by the teacher, or, with prior approval, they may write on an original topic. The vast majority of suggested topics on the approved list are totally unrelated to Moby Dick. Some students, however, might want to write on Melville's classic, so those students might wish to read the novel with the following general topics (not theses) in mind:

1. Ahab: an individualist gone mad?
2. The theme of revenge
3. Good versus Evil
4. Isolation
5. Moby Dick as epic
6. Funereal imagery
7. Religious imagery
8. Satanism and Moby Dick
9. Black and White in the novel
10. The prophet motif

11. Religious ritual and Moby Dick
12. Moby Dick and overtones of Zoroastrianism
13. Humor in the novel
14. Satire and farce in Moby Dick
15. The role of the games
16. Aspects of theatre in Moby Dick
17. Comparison: "The Town-Ho's Story" with the novel on the whole
18. Melville as the first major Naturalist in American fiction
19. The possibility of Ahab, as opposed to Ishmael, being a persona for Melville