

**Brentwood Academy**  
***Summer Reading List 2008***  
**9th Grade Honors English**

**A Rationale for Summer Reading:**

- To generate interest and pleasure in reading that enriches literary and philosophical experience
- To use time not available during the school year to read classics that expand cultural literacy
- To prepare for thoughtful discussion and writing beginning the first day of class
- To encourage a lifelong love of reading

<b>Texts:</b>	<i>The Alchemist</i>	Paulo Coelho ISBN 0061122416 (HarperCollins)
	<i>Ellen Foster</i>	Kaye Gibbons ISBN 0-375-70305-5 (Vintage)
	<i>A Separate Peace</i>	John Knowles ISBN 0-7432-5397-3 (Scribner's)

**General Instructions:**

- Write generous margin notes as you read; also underline or highlight important passages. Interaction with these texts is crucial to your success in both seminars and writing assignments early in first quarter.
- Prepare for recurring and protracted discussions and/or writing on all three texts at the beginning of first quarter.
- Expect a multiple-choice test over each of the works the first day of class.
- Turn in your written responses (see below) the first day of class.

**Specific Reading Instructions for *The Alchemist*:**

Examine the student/teacher relationships in the novel. Look at all of Santiago's "teachers"—human, divine, animal, and natural—and note what the boy learns from these teachers. Also, pay close attention to any examples of signs or omens in the story. Indicate these examples in your margin notes.

**Specific Reading Instructions for *Ellen Foster*:**

The author, Kay Gibbons, deliberately shifts the tense and tone of this novel without any warning to the reader. Make margin notes indicating sudden shifts from present to past and changes in tone from serious to humorous. Also note the main character's concern with order. Mark passages where lists are made, items are lined up, and things are counted.

**Specific Reading Instructions for *A Separate Peace*:**

In your margin notes, write character traits, attitudes, and crucial actions. Also note passages that are especially interesting because of metaphors and powerful descriptions or passages that explain strategic ideas, problems, relationships, or themes. In addition, mark passages about the weather, Devon, the two rivers, the tree, and the stairs that seem important or relevant.

*Remember, your margin notes on both texts will be extremely important to seminars, class discussion, and writing during the first weeks of school.*

## Writing Instructions:

The main characters in these three novels are faced with extremely difficult circumstances that shape the kinds of people they grow up to become. *Write a one-page, well-developed composition on the main character from **each** work stating what his/her obstacle is and how he/she copes with and/or overcomes the situation. Use quotes or brief examples from the story to support your position. Your writings should **not** exceed **one page for each novel**.*

Type (double-space) each of the essays on a separate sheet of paper. At the top of each page, type the title and author of the work you are discussing.

Finally, type an official title page (or cover page) that you staple to the top of your essays. That title should be a creative one connected to the content of your writings. This official title page should also include your name, the name of this class, the date, and the BA pledge that you have signed.

This assignment is due the first day of class in August.

*Please remember the B.A. English policy: do not consult Cliff Notes, Spark Notes, internet novel guides, or any other electronic or printed summaries; work with the texts themselves.*