

Dear Eleventh Grade Students and Parents:

Welcome to Eleventh Grade English! This summer you will be required to read two books to fulfill your summer reading obligation. **Students entering 11<sup>th</sup> grade must complete by the first day of school, August 12, 2019, the required books.** The specific guidelines for students entering eleventh grade are outlined below:

1. Read the required 10<sup>th</sup> grade book, *The Scarlett Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The written assignment will accompany this reading and the book will be discussed in the fall.
2. ***In addition to this book***, students must also read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Complete reading it by the first day of school, August 12, 2019.
3. Students must complete the attached written assignment for *The Scarlett Letter* and turn it in on the first day of school, August 12, 2019. Students intending to enroll in the honors section of the course must also complete the assignment for *The Great Gatsby*. This assignment will also be due on the first day of school.
4. **Turn in the written assignment(s) on the first day of school, August 12, 2019.** The written assignment will be graded for neatness and accuracy. **There will be a 10% grade reduction in the grade for each day the assignment is late.** A major test covering both novels will be given the first week of school; therefore, we suggest that you wait until closer to the start of the year to read the required book and complete the written assignment.

If you have any questions, please email Ms. Dillon at [kdillon@ccgvca.org](mailto:kdillon@ccgvca.org) during the summer. Have a safe and happy summer, and enjoy your summer reading.

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Dillon

High School English Department

## American Literature Summer Reading Assignment

Ms. Dillon

[kdillon@ccgyca.org](mailto:kdillon@ccgyca.org)

Welcome to American Literature! For your summer reading assignment, you will need to read Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. As you read, answer the questions included in this packet. Some of the questions pertain to the plot; others are more involved and will require you to make connections between the text and your life, the world, current events, other academic subjects, or other works of literature. You may attach separate sheets of paper if necessary. Make sure you write your name on every piece of paper attached to this packet.

You may not work with other students. You may not use Spark Notes, Pink Monkey, or any similar aid in completing this packet. Each element of this packet is to be completed on your own, and to be your own, original work.

### Analysis and Plot

1. How did the majority of the women feel about Hester's punishment? How can you tell?
2. What three punishments did Hester have to endure? (Be specific).
3. What was Hester thinking about while she stood on the scaffold?
4. What information did the church leaders want from Hester? Why?
5. How is the wild rosebush relevant? What might it symbolize?
6. Why might it be so important to the town officials that Hester be publicly punished?
7. What adjective does Hawthorne use to describe Hester's physical appearance? How might these adjective also apply to her character?
8. What does the scarlet letter signify? How does its appearance represent shame in the Puritan community? What is remarkable about it?
9. Why does Hawthorne metaphorically compare Hester to a Madonna?
10. How does Hawthorne describe Rev. Dimmesdale? What adjectives are used? What is implied about the Reverend's character?
11. What does Dimmesdale want Hester to do? How does he react to her refusal to do so?
12. What does Dimmesdale say Hester can do to atone for the sins of her anonymous lover?
13. Why does Hester remain silent as to the identity of the father?
14. Who visits Hester in jail? What name has he taken? Where has he been?
15. How does Hawthorne evoke sympathy for Chillingworth?

16. How does Hester dress Pearl? In what way are her clothes symbolic and/or significant?
17. Why do the people want to take Pearl away from Hester?
18. How does Dimmesdale respond to Hester's request? Why is the sinful mother happier than the sinful father?
19. How does Pearl respond to Dimmesdale? Why is that significant?
20. Several years after Hester stood on the scaffold with baby Pearl in her arms and a scarlet letter of shame on her bosom, the people come up with a new meaning for the "A." What is this new meaning? What might this imply about human nature according to Hawthorne?
21. In what way does Chillingworth feel he has power over Dimmesdale and Hester?
22. Who is blamed for Hester and Dimmesdale's guilt when the scarlet letter is referred to as "the symbol which ye have caused to burn upon her bosom"? (around page 205)
23. What might be meaningful about the statement "we are sinners all alike" around page 235? How does the book as a whole seem to convey this message, even if it were never stated?
24. Does Chillingworth feel he got his revenge? Explain.
25. This novel has been categorized as a psychological tale, a romance, a moral tale, and a religious commentary. Make a case for each genre.

### **Making Connections**

#### **Complete one of these connections**

1. Connect to World: Find a news article/current event that relates to the text. Print or cut out the article to include in this packet. Then, explain in a well-supported, detailed paragraph how the news article/current event connects to The Scarlet Letter.
2. Connect to Self: Write a well-developed paragraph about how The Scarlet Letter can relate to your own life. What situations or characters can you relate to? Why? Have you had any similar experiences? How so?

#### **Complete this connection also**

3. Connect to Literature I: Write a well-developed, well-supported paragraph explaining how The Scarlet Letter connects to another piece of literature you have read. You could connect the novel to another novel, a poem, a song, an essay, a memoir, etc.

## **THE GREAT GATSBY – Honors Summer Assignment**

DUE DATE: August 12, 2019

A. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Peruse the questions BELOW (letter “B”).

1. Choose a question – only one group of questions - on which you will focus.

2. As you read, keep the question in mind – begin to think of how you will respond to it.

B. Questions from which to choose:

1. Metaphor and imagery contribute largely to Fitzgerald’s distinctive style in *The Great Gatsby*. Write an essay analyzing three or more important metaphors and explaining their contribution to the novel’s overall effect.
2. Write an essay analyzing how race is represented in *The Great Gatsby*, paying particular attention to Fitzgerald’s portrayal of Jewish and African American characters and to Tom’s fascination with early-twentieth-century theories of white superiority.
3. Write an essay analyzing the role of women in *The Great Gatsby*, as represented by Daisy, Jordan, and Myrtle. What kind of influence or power do they wield? Consider their social positions and interactions.
4. *The Great Gatsby* has been called “the great American novel.” In what sense is the novel about a uniquely American experience? Why does Fitzgerald compare Gatsby’s experience to that of the Dutch sailors who encountered the “new world”?
5. Social class plays a predominant role in *The Great Gatsby*. To what extent does the novel critique class divisions, and to what extent does it endorse them? Specifically, consider Nick’s comments about “a sense of the fundamental decencies” ... “parceled out unequally at birth” and what Gatsby’s rise and fall say about the pursuit of wealth and status in the world of the novel.
6. What hierarchy of values does Fitzgerald establish in *The Great Gatsby*? Based on your reading of the novel, which personal qualities does Fitzgerald value most highly? Which does he condemn most strongly?

- Note Taking
- Take notes as you read.
- Record page numbers. (You might want to use Post-its ®.)
- These notes will be used in support of your working thesis.

- The Essay
- Create a strong thesis statement essay.
- Use your notes, quotations and page numbers (citations) as supports.
- Use examples from the novel for supports.
- Introduce and elaborate on each example.

- Essay - continued
- Do I hear you ask: how long should it be?
- **If so, I answer this way – as long as you need in order to do a thorough job –**
- **OR – at least three typed pages: 800-1,000 words.**