

# Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Required Summer Reading 2009

## Bellaire High School

### **Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academic & Advanced Academic English**

(total required reading: 1 book)

\* All Academic and Advanced Academic students must read one of the following books:

*Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card

*The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

*Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson

*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. *Students and parents should be aware this book contains some mature themes and situations.*

*Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* by C.S. Lewis

\*See attached list to find out more about these books.

#### **ASSIGNMENT**

On the first or second day of school, students will complete an in-class creative assignment—rewrite the final chapter, rewrite a passage of the novel from a different character's point of view, creatively rewrite a portion of the story in an alternative format, or create a print ad for the novel with text and art. As you read, consider what portions of the novel you might like to re-write or from what character's point of view you might like to re-tell parts of the story. Perhaps you would like to re-write part of the story as another genre, such as drama or science fiction, or perhaps you have an idea about how to visually advertise the novel and its contents.

### **Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-AP English** (total required reading: 2 books)

\* All students **must read** *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens. *See assignment below.*

\* Additionally, students must read **ONE of the following:**

*Cold Sassy Tree* by Olive Ann Burns

*Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan

*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. *Students and parents should be aware this book contains some mature themes and situations.*

*Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card

*The Life of Pi* by Yann Martell

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson

(An assignment covering the second novel will be given during the first six weeks.)

### **Great Expectations Summer Reading Assignment**

\* Firstly, students should decide which version of the book is best for them. For most students, the Puffin Classics abridged version (ISBN-10: 0140366814) is recommended. It is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com) for \$4.95. For audiocasts with more information about the various versions and background information to *Great Expectations*, go to the 9th grade English class website homepage, <http://spotlight.digication.com/English9>

Barnes and Noble, 3003 West Holcombe Boulevard @ Buffalo Speedway (713 349-0050), has agreed to stock sufficient copies of both the unabridged version and the abridged versions.

Borders, 570 Meyerland Plaza (713 661- 2888), has agreed to stock sufficient copies of the abridged version.

\*Read the novel *Great Expectations* (first published in serialized format in England from 1860-1861). As you read, keep a log of significant quotations. On the left side of the log, copy a quotation that you think is significant. On the right side, write why you think the quotation is significant.

\*When explaining the quotation's significance, you should consider how it contributes to the plot (sequence of events), to the theme (truth about humanity), to revelation of conflicts (struggles of the characters), or to character development (disclosures and changes in various characters).

\*Be prepared to explain your answers in a class discussion the first week of school.

\*You should have at least one quotation for every ten chapters of the novel. You must have at least one quotation for Chapters 1-10, one for Chapters 11-20, one for Chapters 21-30, one for Chapters 41-50, and one for Chapters 51-59.

\*Fill in the "further significance" column after you have read the entire book or after you have read enough to find further significance.

\*Before each entry, write the number of the entry, the chapter of the quotation, and the page number.

\*HELPFUL HINT: You can go to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade English website and download a blank, ready-made reading log which you can type directly onto and then print out. You may also print out the blank reading log and handwrite your responses. The web address is: <http://spotlight.digication.com/English9>

**Example:**

**#1: Chapter 9, Page 56**

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE
"That was a memorable day to me, for it made great changes in me. But, it is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it, and think how different its course would have been. Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day."	Pip's first day at Miss Havisham's causes him to see his life with Joe as inferior.	This sets into motion Pip's desire to become a "gentleman", causing him to change the way he treats and thinks of such characters as Joe and Biddy. His desire to act and look like a gentleman above all else also eventually leads to his going broke and ironically being bailed out of jail by the very people from whom he has been trying to differentiate himself.

## **ABOUT the ACADEMIC and ADVANCED ACADEMIC BOOKS:**

### ***Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card**

Once again, the Earth is under attack. Alien "buggers" are poised for a final assault. The survival of the human species depends on a military genius who can defeat the buggers. But who? Ender Wiggin. Brilliant. Ruthless. Cunning. A tactical and strategic master. And a child. Recruited for military training by the world government, Ender's childhood ends the moment he enters his new home: Battleschool. Among the elite recruits Ender proves himself to be a genius among geniuses. In simulated war games he excels. But is the pressure and loneliness taking its toll on Ender? Simulations are one thing. How will Ender perform in real combat conditions? After all, Battleschool is just a game. Right? [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)]

### ***The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien**

Whisked away from his comfortable, unambitious life in his hobbit-hole by Gandalf the wizard and a company of dwarves, Bilbo Baggins finds himself caught up in a plot to raid the treasure hoard of Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)]

### ***Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson**

Speaking out at the "wrong" time-calling 911 from a teen drinking party-has made Melinda a social outcast; now she barely speaks at all. A conversation with her father about their failed Thanksgiving dinner goes as follows: "Dad: 'It's supposed to be soup.' / Me: / Dad: 'It tasted a bit watery, so I kept adding thickener....' / Me: ." While Melinda's smart and savvy interior narrative slowly reveals the searing pain of that 911 night, it also nails the high-school experience cold-from "The First Ten Lies They Tell You" (number eight: "Your schedule was created with your needs in mind") to cliques and clans and the worst and best in teachers. The book is structurally divided into four marking periods, over which Melinda's grades decline severely and she loses the only friend she has left, a perky new girl she doesn't even like. Melinda's nightmare discloses itself in bits throughout the story: a frightening encounter at school ("I see IT in the hallway....IT sees me. IT smiles and winks"), an artwork that speaks pain.

Melinda aches to tell her story, and well after readers have deduced the sexual assault, we feel her choking on her untold secret. By springtime, while Melinda studies germination in Biology and Hawthorne's symbolism in English, and seeds are becoming "restless" underground, her nightmare pushes itself inexorably to the surface.

When her ex-best-friend starts dating the "Beast," Melinda can no longer remain silent. A physical confrontation with her attacker is dramatically charged and not entirely in keeping with the tone of the rest of the novel, but is satisfying nonetheless, as Melinda wields a shard of broken glass and finds her voice at last to scream, "No!" Melinda's distinctive narrative employs imagery that is as unexpected as it is acute: "April is humid....A warm, moldy washcloth of a month." Though her character is her own and not entirely mute like the protagonist of John Marsden's *So Much to Tell You*, readers familiar with both books will be impelled to compare the two girls made silent by a tragic incident. The final words of Marsden's books are echoed in those of *Speak*, as Melinda prepares to share her experience with a father-figure art teacher: "Me: 'Let me tell you about it.'" An uncannily funny book even as it plumbs the darkness, *Speak* will hold readers from first word to last. [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)]

### ***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini**

"His passionate story of betrayal and redemption is framed by Afghanistan's tragic recent past . . . Rather than settle for a coming-of-age or travails-of-immigrants story, Hosseini has folded them both into this searing spectacle of hard-won personal salvation. All this, and a rich slice of Afghan culture too: irresistible." [from *Kirkus Reviews*] **Contains some mature themes and situations.**

### ***Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* by C.S. Lewis**

This tale of two princesses - one beautiful and one unattractive - and of the struggle between sacred and profane love is Lewis's reworking of the myth of Cupid and Psyche and one of his most enduring works. [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)]

## ABOUT the PRE-AP BOOKS:

### ***Cold Sassy Tree* by Olive Ann Burns**

The one thing you can depend on in Cold Sassy, Georgia, is that word gets around - fast. When Grandpa E. Rucker Blakeslee announces one July morning in 1906 that he's aiming to marry the young and freckled milliner, Miss Love Simpson - a bare three weeks after Granny Blakeslee has gone to her reward - the news is served up all over town with that afternoon's dinner. And young Will Tweedy suddenly finds himself eyewitness to a major scandal. Boggled by the sheer audacity of it all, and not a little jealous of his grandpa's new wife, Will nevertheless approves of this May-December match and follows its progress with just a smidgen of youthful prurience. As the newlyweds' chaperone, conspirator, and confidant, Will is privy to his one-armed, renegade grandfather's second adolescence; meanwhile, he does some growing up of his own. He gets run over by a train and lives to tell about it; he kisses his first girl, and survives that too. Olive Ann Burns has given us a timeless, funny, resplendent novel - about a romance that rocks an entire town, about a boy's passage through the momentous but elusive year when childhood melts into adolescence, and about just how people lived and died in a small Southern town at the turn of the century. Inhabited by characters who are wise and loony, unimpeachably pious and deliciously irreverent, Cold Sassy, Georgia, is the perfect setting for the debut of a storyteller of rare brio, exuberance, and style. [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)]

### ***The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan**

In 1949 four Chinese women-drawn together by the shadow of their past-begin meeting in San Francisco to play mah jong, invest in stocks, eat dim sum, and "say" stories. They call their gathering the Joy Luck Club. Nearly forty years later, one of the members has died, and her daughter has come to take her place, only to learn of her mother's lifelong wish-and the tragic way in which it has come true. The revelation of this secret unleashes an urgent need among the women to reach back and remember... In this extraordinary first work of fiction, Amy Tan writes about what is lost-over the years, between generations, among friends-and what is saved. [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)]

### ***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini**

*"I sat on a bench near a willow tree and watched a pair of kites soaring in the sky. I thought about something Rahim Khan said just before he hung up, almost as an afterthought, 'There is a way to be good again.'"*

Now in paperback, one of the year's international literary sensations -- a shattering story of betrayal and redemption set in war-torn Afghanistan.

Amir and Hassan are childhood friends in the alleys and orchards of Kabul in the sunny days before the invasion of the Soviet army and Afghanistan's descent into fanaticism. Both motherless, they grow up as close as brothers, but their fates, they know, are to be different. Amir's father is a wealthy merchant; Hassan's father is his manservant. Amir belongs to the ruling caste of Pashtuns, Hassan to the despised Hazaras.

This fragile idyll is broken by the mounting ethnic, religious, and political tensions that begin to tear Afghanistan apart. An unspeakable assault on Hassan by a gang of local boys tears the friends apart; Amir has witnessed his friend's torment, but is too afraid to intercede. Plunged into self-loathing, Amir conspires to have Hassan and his father turned out of the household.

When the Soviets invade Afghanistan, Amir and his father flee to San Francisco, leaving Hassan and his father to a pitiless fate. Only years later will Amir have an opportunity to redeem himself by returning to Afghanistan to begin to repay the debt long owed to the man who should have been his brother.

Compelling, heartrending, and etched with details of a history never before told in fiction, **The Kite Runner** is a story of the ways in which we're damned by our moral failures, and of the extravagant cost of redemption. [from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)] **Contains some mature themes and situations.**

### ***Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card**

Once again, the Earth is under attack. Alien "buggers" are poised for a final assault. The survival of the human species depends on a military genius who can defeat the buggers. But who? Ender Wiggin. Brilliant.

Ruthless. Cunning. A tactical and strategic master. And a child. Recruited for military training by the world government, Ender's childhood ends the moment he enters his new home: Battleschool. Among the elite recruits Ender proves himself to be a genius among geniuses. In simulated war games he excels. But is the pressure and loneliness taking its toll on Ender? Simulations are one thing. How will Ender perform in real combat conditions? After all, Battleschool is just a game. Right? [from www.bn.com]

## ***The Life of Pi* by Yann Martell**

*Life of Pi* is a masterful and utterly original novel that is at once the story of a young castaway who faces immeasurable hardships on the high seas, and a meditation on religion, faith, art and life that is as witty as it is profound. Using the threads of all of our best stories, Yann Martel has woven a glorious spiritual adventure that makes us question what it means to be alive, and to believe.

Growing up in Pondicherry, India, Piscine Molitor Patel -- known as Pi -- has a rich life. Bookish by nature, young Pi acquires a broad knowledge of not only the great religious texts but of all literature, and has a great curiosity about how the world works. His family runs the local zoo, and he spends many of his days among goats, hippos, swans, and bears, developing his own theories about the nature of animals and how human nature conforms to it. Pi's family life is quite happy, even though his brother picks on him and his parents aren't quite sure how to accept his decision to simultaneously embrace and practice three religions -- Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam.

But despite the lush and nurturing variety of Pi's world, there are broad political changes afoot in India, and when Pi is sixteen his parents decide that the family needs to escape to a better life. Choosing to move to Canada, they close the zoo, pack their belongings, and board a Japanese cargo ship called the *Tsimtsum*. Travelling with them are many of their animals, bound for zoos in North America. However, they have only just begun their journey when the ship sinks, taking the dreams of the Patel family down with it. Only Pi survives, cast adrift in a lifeboat with the unlikeliest of travelling companions: a zebra, an orangutan, a hyena, and a 450-pound Royal Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.

Thus begins Pi Patel's epic, 227-day voyage across the Pacific, and the powerful story of faith and survival at the heart of *Life of Pi*. Worn and scared, oscillating between hope and despair, Pi is witness to the playing out of the food chain, quite aware of his new position within it. When only the tiger is left of the seafaring menagerie, Pi realizes that his survival depends on his ability to assert his own will, and sets upon a grand and ordered scheme to keep from being Richard Parker's next meal.

As the days pass, Pi fights both boredom and terror by throwing himself into the practical details of surviving on the open sea -- catching fish, collecting rain water, protecting himself from the sun -- all the while ensuring that the tiger is also kept alive, and knows that Pi is the key to his survival. The castaways face grueling pain in their brushes with starvation, illness, and the storms that lash the small boat, but there is also the solace of beauty: the rainbow hues of a dorado's death-throes, the peaceful eye of a looming whale, the shimmering blues of the ocean's swells. Hope is fleeting, however, and despite adapting his religious practices to his daily routine, Pi feels the constant, pressing weight of despair. It is during the most hopeless and grueling days of his voyage that Pi whittles to the core of his beliefs, casts off his own assumptions, and faces his underlying terrors head-on. [from www.bn.com]

## ***Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson**

Robert Louis Stevenson originally wrote *Dr. Jekyll And Mr Hyde* as a "chilling shocker." He then burned the draft and, upon his wife's advice, rewrote it as the darkly complex tale it is today. Stark, skillfully woven, this fascinating novel explores the curious turnings of human character through the strange case of Dr. Jekyll, a kindly scientist who by night takes on his stunted evil self, Mr. Hyde. Anticipating modern psychology, *Jekyll And Hyde* is a brilliantly original study of man's dual nature -- as well as an immortal tale of suspense and terror. Published in 1866, *Jekyll And Hyde* was an instant success and brought Stevenson his first taste of fame. Though sometimes dismissed as a mere mystery story, the book has evoked much literary admirations. Vladimir Nabokov likened it to *Madame Bovary* and *Dead Souls* as "a fable that lies nearer to poetry than to ordinary prose fiction." [from www.bn.com]

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## READING LOG FOR *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

#1: Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE

#2: Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE

#3: Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE

#4: Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE

#5: Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE

#6: Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_

QUOTATION	SIGNIFICANCE	FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE