

Summer Reading Assignment for English 4 Honors
Due August 21, 2009

Choose **TWO** of the following writing assignments and answer each in 1-2 pages based on your **required** reading novel, *Snow Falling on Cedars*.

Please send this to your teacher at dladinski@bhpsnj.org or jcrane@bhpsnj.org by August 21, 2009.

Your second novel (the reading of your choice) will be assessed in class.

1. Choose two passages from the novel that clearly illustrate the **characterization** of one of the main characters. Using specific details and events from the novel, explain how these passages help the development of a particular character.
**Be sure to specify page numbers and passages used as evidence.*
2. Choose two passages from the novel that clearly convey one of the major **themes** of the novel. Using specific details and events from the novel, explain how these passages evidently aid in the development of a major theme.
**Be sure to specify page numbers and passages used as evidence*
3. Choose two passages from the novel that clearly demonstrate the **style** used by the author. Using specific details and examples, explain the style of the author and how his/her writing is crucial to the development of the novel.
**Be sure to specify page numbers and passages used as evidence*
4. Choose two passages from the novel that clearly exemplify the importance of the **setting and/or atmosphere** of the novel. Using specific details and events from the novel, explain how these passages illustrate the significance of the setting/atmosphere and how this helps contribute to the development of the story.
**Be sure to specify page numbers and passages used as evidence*
5. Choose two passages from the novel that reveal the major **conflict** of the novel. Using specific details and events from the novel, explain how the conflict helps drive the plot and develop the story.
**Be sure to specify page numbers and passages used as evidence*

Choices for Second Novel

***A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini** Whereas *The Kite Runner* focuses on fathers and sons, and friendships between men, his latest novel, “A Thousand Splendid Suns,” focuses on mothers and daughters, and friendships between women. Like its predecessor, the new novel features a very villainous villain and an almost saintly best friend who commits an act of enormous self-sacrifice to aid the hero/heroine. Like its predecessor, it attempts to show the fallout that Afghanistan’s violent history has had on a handful of individuals, ending in death at the hands of the [Taliban](#) for one character, and the promise of a new life for another. --*The New York Times Book Review*

***In the time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez** They were the four Mirabal sisters—symbols of defiant hope in a country shadowed by dictatorship and despair. They sacrificed their safe and comfortable lives in the name of freedom. Their codename in the revolution was Las Mariposas, “The Butterflies,” and in this extraordinary novel, Patria, Minerva, Maria Teresa, and Dedé speak across the decades to tell their own stories. From tales of hair ribbons and secret crushes to gunrunning and prison torture, they describe the everyday horrors—and the unbelievable joy—of life in the Dominican Republic under the dictator Trujillo. Through the art and magic, the martyred Butterflies come to vibrant and dramatic life in a warm, brilliant, and heartbreaking story that makes a haunting statement about the human cost of political oppression. --*Penguin group reading guides*

***The Road* by Cormac McCarthy** Cormac McCarthy sets his new novel, THE ROAD, in a post-apocalyptic blight of gray skies that drizzle ash, a world in which all matter of wildlife is extinct, starvation is not only prevalent but nearly all-encompassing, and marauding bands of cannibals roam the environment with pieces of human flesh stuck between their teeth. If this sounds oppressive and dispiriting, it is. McCarthy may have just set to paper the definitive vision of the world after nuclear war, and in this recent age of relentless saber-rattling by the global powers, it’s not much of a leap to feel his vision could be not far off the mark nor, sadly, right around the corner. Stealing across this horrific (and that’s the only word for it) landscape are an unnamed man and his emaciated son, a boy probably around the age of ten. It is the love the father feels for his son, a love as deep and acute as his grief, the love of a desperate father for his sickly son that transcends all else. McCarthy has always written about the battle between light and darkness; the darkness usually comprises 99.9% of the world, while any illumination is the weak shaft thrown by a penlight running low on batteries. In THE ROAD, those batteries are almost out--the entire world is, quite literally, dying--so the final affirmation of hope in the novel’s closing pages is all the more shocking and maybe all the more enduring as the boy takes all of his father’s (and McCarthy’s) rage at the hopeless folly of man and lays it down, lifting up, in its place, the oddest of all things: faith. --*Dennis Lehane writing on Amazon.com*

***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini** “This powerful first novel...tells the story of fierce cruelty and fierce yet redeeming love. Both transform the life of Amir, Khaled Hosseini’s privileged young narrator, who comes of age during the last peaceful days of the monarchy [in

Afghanistan], just before his country's revolution and its invasion by Russian forces. But political events, even as dramatic as the ones presented in *THE KITE RUNNER*, are only a part of this story. In *THE KITE RUNNER*, Khaled Hosseini gives us a vivid and engaging story that reminds us how long his people have been struggling to triumph over the forces of violence—forces that continue to threaten them even today.” --*The New York Times Book Review*

***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon** This bitterly funny debut novel is a murder mystery of sorts--one told by an autistic narrator. Fifteen-year-old Christopher John Francis Boone is mathematically gifted and socially hopeless, raised in a working-class home by parents who can barely cope with their child's quirks. He takes everything that he sees (or is told) at face value, and is unable to sort out the strange behavior of his elders and peers.

Late one night, Christopher comes across his neighbor's poodle, Wellington, impaled on a garden fork. Wellington's owner finds him cradling her dead dog in his arms, and has him arrested. After spending a night in jail, Christopher resolves--against the objection of his father and neighbors--to discover just who has murdered Wellington. He is encouraged by Siobhan, a social worker at his school, to write a book about his investigations, and the result--quirkily illustrated, with each chapter given its own prime number--is *THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME*. --*Amazon.com*

***A Long Way Gone, Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah** **THIS IS HOW WARS ARE FOUGHT NOW:** by children, traumatized, hopped up on drugs, and wielding AK-47s. Children have become the soldiers of choice. In the more than fifty violent conflicts going on world wide, it is estimated that there are some 300,000 child soldiers. Ishmael Beah used to be one of them. What does war look like through the eyes of a child soldier? How does one become a killer? How does one stop? Child soldiers have been profiled by journalists, and novelists have struggled to imagine their lives. But it is rare to find a first person account from someone who endured this hell and survived. In *A LONG WAY GONE, MEMOIRS OF A BOY SOLDIER*, Ishmael Beah, now twenty six years old, tells a powerfully gripping story: At the age of twelve, he fled attacking rebels and wandered a land rendered unrecognizable by violence. By thirteen, he'd been picked up by the government army, and Beah, at heart a gentle boy, found that he was capable of truly terrible acts. At sixteen, he was removed from fighting by UNICEF, and through the help of the staff at his rehabilitation center, he learned how to forgive himself, to regain his humanity, and, finally, to heal. This is an extraordinary and mesmerizing account, told with real literary force and heartbreaking honesty.

***Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin**

James Baldwin's stunning first novel is now an American classic that brings Harlem and the black experience vividly to life.

***Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte**

In early nineteenth-century England, an orphaned young woman accepts employment as a governess at Thornfield Hall, a country estate owned by the mysteriously remote Mr. Rochester.

Out of Africa by Isak Dinesen

Out of Africa is Isak Dinesen's memoir of her years in Africa, from 1914 to 1931, on a four-thousand-acre coffee plantation in the hills near Nairobi.