

## **Eighth Grade Summer Reading/Assignments 2007**

### **Task One**

Read one of the following two books:

Farewell to Manzanar

James and Jean Houston

or

Never Cry Wolf

Farley Mowat

Compare and contrast Farewell to Manzanar to Thin Wood Walls or compare and contrast Never Cry Wolf to Touching Spirit Bear in a five-paragraph essay.

Your essay should include an introduction that has a thesis statement with three topic sentences that support your thesis. The following three paragraphs should each begin with one of the topic sentences (chronological order). Concluding paragraph should restate your thesis and topic sentences without adding new information.

12 pt. Times New Roman font

1.5 spacing

1.5-3 pages

### ***Sample Essay Format***

**Task:** Compare and contrast T. H. White's classic fantasy The Sword and the Stone with the Disney video of the same name.

*(Sample Introduction with Thesis)*

Damsels in distress, knights jousting and lively court dances paint a picture of the medieval days of old. The central character of "Wart" takes on his new squire tasks with gusto. Sir Kay, his adoptive, athletic and lazy brother, tries to train the inexperienced lad. However, it is with the magic and help of his tutor, Merlin, that Wart is transformed into the wise King Arthur. Merlin's unorthodox methods and mystical magic, shape Wart into the Once and Future King. Similarities in both pieces shape the plot and define characters. The differences found in minor characters add humor and realistic dialogue to this fantasy. The theme "power over might" remains constant in both renditions. **The literature piece Sword and the Stone by T.H. White is a very different piece when compared to the Walt Disney cartoon of the same name.**

The similarities in both pieces shape the plot and define characters...  
(Body Paragraph #1)

The difference found in minor characters adds humor and realistic dialogue...  
(Body Paragraph #2)

The theme “power over might” remains constant in both renditions...  
(Body Paragraph # 3)

(*Sample Conclusion with Thesis*)

Through magic and Merlin, King Arthur becomes a future monarch of Camelot. Arthur’s quest for Knights of the Round Table has lived on throughout history and in our imaginations. With Disney’s colorful illustrations, zany music and creative storyline, The Sword and the Stone comes alive to younger audiences of today. **However, the similarities, differences and theme of the video version paints a much different piece than T.H. White’s classic novel, The Sword and the Stone.**

### Assessment Rubric:

#### Conventions:

Essay demonstrates thorough proofreading. Writing is free of all conventional spelling and mechanical errors

\_\_\_\_\_ / 10

#### Ideas:

Essay demonstrates a strong focus and clear purpose in the thesis statement. The main idea is complex, sustained and fully developed throughout the essay so that each body paragraph is well developed.

\_\_\_\_\_ / 20

#### Organization:

Body paragraphs each contain a strong topic sentence with creative and distinguished supporting details. The final paragraph concludes your essay by stating why your thesis has been proven through the evidence you have provided.

\_\_\_\_\_ / 20

#### Voice:

You thought about your audience. Your writing is honest and shows care.

\_\_\_\_\_/10

Sentence Fluency:

Sentences have power and purpose. The writing flows easily. A variety of sentence length is used.

\_\_\_\_\_/20

Word Choice:

You used powerful, specific and precise words.

\_\_\_\_\_/20

\_\_\_\_\_/100

## **Task Two**

**Read one of the fifty young adult books on the school website.**

(Go to the library and plan ahead for the above.)

1. Imagine that you are a character in the book, and write a diary about your experiences, thoughts, and feelings.
2. Imagine that you are the author of the book, and describe what happened to one of the characters years before or years after the time of the book.
3. Write a short composition on one of the themes for the book. For example, if one of the themes is love, you might write a composition about love, using examples from the book. Interview one of the characters about the story or about anything your imagination comes up with, asking questions in your voice and giving answers in the character's voice.
4. Review the book. Give your opinions about it; cite examples and quotes from the book to support why you think it is an interesting book or not. Would you recommend it to a friend? Why or why not?
5. Write about the main problem or conflict in the book. Who is involved and what is it about?

1.5-3 pages

12 pt. Times New Roman font

1.5 spacing

Mrs. LaRussa-Banton, Mr. Mabbott and Mrs. O'Donnell