



**Steele High School  
Grade 9  
Pre-AP Summer Reading Assignment**

**Before coming to class in August, you must complete the following reading assignments.**

**Choose **one** book to read from the fiction list and **another** from the nonfiction list.**

**Fiction**

*A Separate Peace -John Knowles*  
*The Chosen -Chaim Potok*  
*The Secret Life of Bees -Sue Monk Kidd*  
*Ender's Game -Orson Scott Card*  
*Of Mice and Men -John Steinbeck*

**Nonfiction**

*The Color of Water -James McBride*  
*Nickel and Dimed: On (not) Getting by in America -Barbara Ehrenreich*  
*Enrique's Journey -Sonia Nazario*  
*Into Thin Air -John Krakauer*  
*Night -Elie Wiesel*

**Fiction Book Assignment**

Your summer reading assignment for the fiction selection will be presented ORALLY to the class and your visual will be in the shape of a cube (no less than 10" square). Include all of the information that is required and then be creative with the product. Once you are done, attach a string or ribbon with which it can be suspended from the ceiling (from a corner is best).

When you come to class in August you will be expected to give an oral presentation that is 5 - 10 minutes in length on your summer reading with the aid of the cube. *Be prepared to answer questions about your book.*

## **CUBE FACES:**

### **1. SETTING**

Where does the story happen?

When does it happen?

Can you draw a map of the setting from the author's presentation of it?

How does the author describe the time and place?

Does the author name the places? Are they real or fictitious? Do the places and/or times of the story have any associations with other significant historic events or literary works?

What "artifacts" from the era (songs, books, catch phrases etc.) does the author include in the story? How are they significant?

How do these elements affect other elements of the work?

### **2. CHARACTER**

What are each main character's name and/or nickname?

Are characters called different names by different people? Why?

Are the character's names symbolic (do they have hidden meanings)? What does the character do? How do they generally act?

What kinds of things do they say?

How is the character described? (You could draw them.)

At what point is the character introduced?

How do other characters react to this character? What do they say about them? Is what they say believable?

Does the author repeatedly use any key words or images to describe this character or their actions? What might they be trying to tell us about the character?

### **3. POINT OF VIEW**

Who is telling the story (who is the narrator)?

Is the narrator inside or outside the story?

How are they related to the story? Main character? Observer? Minor character?

If the narrator is outside the story, are they all-knowing, or do they have limited knowledge (can they read character's thoughts?)

Does the narrator seem to remember the story clearly and fairly? Are they biased? How do you know they aren't being objective?

If different people narrate the story, what is the effect?

### **4. PLOT/ACTION OF STORY**

What happens in the story? (How many big events, and of what type?)

In what order do the events happen? (Make a timeline!)

What is the major conflict that causes the main action to happen?

Do the major events reflect or repeat some older event or pattern of events?

Have you ever seen a plot progression like this in another story?

What is the climax of the story (or the event that has to happen before there can be any resolution)?

Is there anything that happens in the story that is not a direct result of the primary conflict?

Are these "secondary" events significant? What might they show us about the character?

## 5. STYLE

Does the author's choice of words call attention to itself? How?

Is the language appropriate for the story? Is there any time it seems inappropriate? How?

Does the author repeat any words or phrases? What is the intended effect, in your opinion?

Does the author use figurative language (metaphors, similes, allusions, personification)? Present examples

Does the author create strong visual images for the reader? Do they use a series or pattern of images to convey a particular concept?

Does the author make reference to real-life famous people, events, artworks or concepts? How are these allusions significant?

Does the author ever use dialect (improper grammar, spelling and punctuation in character dialogue)? What is the effect?

6. **THEME** (a generalization about life, reality, the Human Condition, etc. that the author illustrates or clarifies in the work. It is always a complete idea or statement. "Love" is not a theme. "Love is hard, and can destroy your life as easily as it can make you happy" would be a theme.)

What is the story really about? What does it show us or attempt to teach us? Why was the story told?

What do you know about humanity, human situations and conditions that you did not know before?

If the story has more than one theme, what is the strongest theme?

Which theme can be supported with the most evidence?

**Remember, this is a creative project. Appearances are important!**

## **Nonfiction Book Assignment**

Answer the following questions in complete sentences on your own paper. You are encouraged to type your responses. You will turn these responses in to your teacher and use them in a discussion with your classmates.

1. What was the author's purpose in writing this book? Why do you think this? Support your answer with evidence from the book.
2. Pick out three quotes from the book that you thought were particularly important. Write or type these including the page number. Explain why you thought each was important.
3. Write a short, one or two paragraph, review of the book. Tell whether you liked it or thought it was effective or not. Make sure you support what you say with evidence from the book.

**Both of these assignments should be completed during summer vacation. Be ready to present and discuss when you come to school in August.**