

Community Reading:

1. **All students** must choose one of the following books to read: *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* (note - this text deals with gang culture and contains language) by Gregory Boyle (978-1439153024) or *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover (978-0399590504), and be prepared for Harkness discussions on the first day of school. Students should prepare for Harkness discussion utilizing the following methods:
 - Maintain a dialectical journal as you read (see attached information).
 - Be prepared to discuss your reaction to the book, specific questions raised, Biblical connections, writing style, logic employed, ideas, etc.
 - Be prepared to address the key ideas raised by the authors in the book.
 - Prepare three discussion questions for consideration.
 - Students are strongly encouraged to participate in active reading – making notes in the text, highlighting, asking questions in the margins, looking up scriptures, summarizing each chapter, etc.

Students are required to bring the book and dialectical journal to class for the discussions.

2. **Additionally, all seniors must read** *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis (978-0060652920). This non-fiction selection is strongly encouraged for all students, but only required for the senior class. This text will be heavily utilized in Senior Thesis. For all others that choose to participate in reading this book, it will provide many connections to Logic, Rhetoric, Theology, Worldview, and most importantly, it will challenge readers to go deeper in their walk with Christ.

In addition to the above, students should read the appropriate book below and complete the corresponding assignment.

Ancient Literature (Grade 9): Students will first read over the summarized version of the Greek myth “The Twelve Labors of Hercules” at <https://www.crystalinks.com/12laborshercules.html>

Students must then read *The Labors of Hercules* by Agatha Christie (ISBN: 978-0062073983) and keep a dialectical journal on the book. They must have a minimum of two entries per short story.

They will choose three of the short stories and write an 5-8 paragraph expository essay on the book. The first paragraph should include an introduction to the book and an explanation of how it is connected to the ancient myths. The next 3-6 paragraphs should compare and contrast the three short stories to the three ancient labors that the student chose. The last paragraph is the conclusion and should also contain an opinion statement about whether the author did a good job connecting her story to the ancient myths.

All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Please use Times New Roman or Arial font in size 11. Do not use personal pronouns (e.g. I, you).

Helpful resources:

An introduction to expository essays can be found: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/expository_essays.html

The dialectical journal can be kept in a notebook or this template can be printed out and used: <https://www.murrieta.k12.ca.us/cms/lib5/CA01000508/Centricity/Domain/1758/Form%205%20Dialectical%20Journals.doc>

Medieval Literature (Grade 10): Students will read J.R.R Tolkien's *The Return of the King* (ISBN: 978-0547928197). They will then watch the movie *The Return of the King* directed by Peter Jackson and write a five paragraph compare and contrast essay between the movie and the book. For guidance on how to write a compare and contrast essay please refer to: http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/docs/handouts/Organization_CompareContrast.pdf
Students need to bring a printed copy of their essay on the first day of school.

*Because the movie is rated PG-13 for violence we understand that this might not be an appropriate choice for all students. Please check commonsensemedia.org to make sure that this movie meets the standards of your family. If it does not, please contact me at lbirkofer@providencechristian.com or 615-424-0315 for an alternate essay assignment on *The Return of the King*.

Here is a brief synopsis of *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers*, the books preceding *The Return of the King*.

The future of civilization rests in the fate of the One Ring, which has been lost for centuries. Powerful forces are unrelenting in their search for it. But fate has placed it in the hands of a young Hobbit named Frodo Baggins, who inherits the Ring and steps into legend. A daunting task lies ahead for Frodo when he becomes the Ringbearer - to destroy the One Ring in the fires of Mount Doom where it was forged. He is joined on his journey by three loyal hobbit friends: Sam, Merry, and Pippin, a dwarf named Gimli, an elf named Legolas, and the mysterious ranger Aragorn. This fellowship is guided by the wise and good wizard Gandalf. They are in constant danger from the evil Lord Sauron who desires to obtain the ring and rule the world. In the previous two books, they have many dangers at the hands of Sauron's evil henchmen, most notably the dark wizard Saruman and armies of evil orcs under his control.

At the beginning of this book, Frodo and Sam have been separated from the rest of the fellowship and are making their way towards Mount Doom. Amongst other dangers, they must travel in the company of Gollum (the ring's previous owner who has been withered and driven mad by a lust to get it back) into the heart of Sauron's lair. Meanwhile, the rest of the fellowship

must first battle to save the viking-esque land of Rohan and then to reclaim Aragorn's kingdom Minas Tirith.

British Literature (Grade 11): Students will read *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman (ISBN-10: 0062255657). They will write a paper and prepare a speech to delivered to the class.

Paper topic: Examine the novel as an archetypal hero journey. Explain each of the steps in the narrator's monomyth cycle. In what ways does he fit the archetype of the hero? In what ways does he differ from an archetypal hero?

All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Please use Times New Roman or Arial font in size 11. Do not use personal pronouns (e.g. I, you).

Speech: On page 112, Lettie tells the narrator, "Sometimes monsters are things people should be scared of, but they aren't." What is something that you think people should be more afraid of than they are? Compose a persuasive speech to convince your classmates that something or someone is more dangerous than they believe it to be. Using the flapping creature/Ursula Monkton as your guide, include a description of what the thing you are describing would look like if it were an actual monster.

American Literature (Grade 12): Students must read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (ISBN: 978-0743273565). It has been said that the theme of the novel is "the withering of the American Dream." After reading, the students must write a five paragraph essay explaining how the novel does or does not demonstrate the death of the American Dream. What does the novel offer about American identity? (Reference the characteristics of the American Dream within the body of your paper.) Students need to bring a copy of their essay on the first day of school.