



CSS Summer Reading 2010 – 6th Grade

Welcome to CSS! We are so excited to work with you next year and welcome you to the CSS community. This handout outlines summer reading books for each grade level and course, and the accompanying assignment for each novel. (Most teachers have assigned Chapter Reading Notes, the directions for which you can find below.) If you have questions about your summer reading assignment please contact the teacher who assigned that novel or you can email me, Professor Swan at megswan@columbiasecondary.org. You can also call me at 917.833.1705. I will do my best to be timely with my responses, and thank you in advance for your patience!

I. Chapter Reading Notes:

- Your chapter notes should be about 2-3 pages in total length MAXIMUM. Note that we are not requiring 2-3 pages per chapter, but in total.
- Take brief notes for every chapter.
 - Record the chapter number and title, and underline them.
 - Write your notes after each Ch. # and title.
 - Write about 2-3 lines of notes per chapter. This, however, will vary depending on the number of chapters in a given novel.
- Your notes should:
 - Make predictions. (Prediction Questions: What do you think is going to happen to a given character or group in the next chapter? by the end of the book?)
 - Observe changes in characters, setting or plot/conflict. (Observation Questions: How would you describe or characterize this change? Is it good or bad? Why?)
 - Make connections. (Connection Questions: Can you relate to a setting or character or event? Is like something in a book you have read? How is a setting/character/event like something or someone from your life? From another book?)
- General tip: **First**, As you are reading the novel and finish each chapter, pause to write brief chapter notes. Definitely do *not* wait to complete these notes after you have finished the novel. (Then your prediction won't be genuine!) **Second**, try to make predictions, observations and connections *throughout* the book. You do not have to have one prediction, one observation and one connection per chapter, but if that format works for you, go for it! Do try to have all three in over the course of a few chapters.
- Please note: Some teachers may grade these chapter notes by evaluating your effort and the degree to which you completed the task. Other teachers may grade both your effort and completion AND grade the quality of your predictions, observations and connections. In this case, teachers will evaluate the extent to which you answered the Prediction Questions, Observation Questions and Connection Questions listed above in parentheses.

II. 6th Grade Summer Reading Novels

This summer please read the following novels for your 6th Grade classes. You can take these books out from your local library, purchase them, or ask an older student (if you know any) to borrow their copy.

- English Language Arts (ELA): *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (ISBN: 1415924104)
 - Professor Hill: meredithhill@columbiasecondary.org
- Social Studies: *Call of the Wild* by Jack London (ISBN: 0689856741; 978-0689856747)
 - Professor Swan: megswan@columbiasecondary.org
- Science: *Written in Bone* by Sally M. Walker (ISBN: 0822571358)
 - Professor Welch: emilywelch@columbiasecondary.org
- Math: *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster (ISBN: 0394815009; 978-0394815008)
 - Professor Martin: deemartin@columbiasecondary.org



III. 6th Grade Summer Reading Assignments

- For all subjects, take Chapter Reading Notes WHILE reading the novels. See instructions for Chapter Reading Notes on page 1 of this packet.
- For Social Studies take Chapter Reading Notes and also write one paragraph for Social Studies (SS) and two paragraphs for ELA. Please see the directions below. Professor Hill (ELA) and Professor Swan (SS) will grade your paragraphs the first week of school.
- Please note that while all summer reading books are important, it is most important to complete ELA and Social Studies novels and assignments because the first unit of your ELA and Social Studies courses will each use the summer reading novels.

6th Grade ELA Paragraph Question 1: How does Esperanza feel about Mango Street? Write a paragraph in which you tell how Esperanza feels about Mango Street and describe why she feels this way. Use details from the book to show how she feels.

6th Grade ELA Paragraph Question 2: A *symbol* is something that represents, or stands for, something else. In literature, symbols are often used to prove a point or illustrate something deeper about the story. In Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*, for example, the Once-ler (who cuts down all the Truffula Trees and uses them to manufacture "Thneeds" that "everyone needs") could be said to *symbolize* how factory owners cut down forests to build factories. In *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, by Crockett Johnson, Harold's crayon could be said to *symbolize* Harold's wild imagination.

Now, think about *The House on Mango Street*. What does Mango Street (the street itself!) represent, or symbolize? Write a paragraph in which you identify and describe what Mango Street symbolizes. (Please note: This question is supposed to be difficult... don't give up! Do your best and try it out! Talk out your ideas with parents or other students.)

6th Grade Social Studies Paragraph Question: Throughout the novel, Buck becomes wild. In the process of becoming wild, did Buck become more evil, or more wise and intelligent? Write a paragraph that explains whether you think Buck became more evil as he became wild, or whether he became more intelligent and wise as he became wild. Your paragraph should -

- Start with a topic sentence that states your answer to the paragraph question.
- Include details from the book as evidence that proves your topic sentence.
- Be 10 - 15 sentences long. (This is an extended paragraph, which is longer than an average paragraph.)

ENJOY YOUR READING! We look forward to seeing you in Fall!

The CSS 6th grade Faculty team.



COLUMBIA SECONDARY SCHOOL for Math, Science & Engineering
a public school, community and university partnership

Dear Incoming members of the Class of 2017, future Junior members of the Houses of Darwin, DaVinci and Newton

First, I want to congratulate you for your academic efforts and for your acceptance to CSS. You are one of 96 students invited to enroll, out of a pool of over 900 students that applied to CSS! By enrolling at CSS you join an elite group of students taking part of a unique and highly enriched academic experiment. As one of the city's most diverse specialized science, math and engineering school, you will join a special group of students – future leaders, committed to the hard work necessary to excel at the world class level.

Secondly, I want to share with you basic information that will prepare you for induction into our school in September of 2010, including your SUMMER READING list!

BASIC INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

This memo highlights the key features of the Columbia Secondary School Middle School. Additional details are found on our website, including a calendar of events, school rules, faculty contact information, reading lists and other useful information.

1. **Classrooms** - The 6th grade class will be taking courses on the 4th and 5th floor . The classrooms include the MS Engineering Lab; and Language Arts, Social Studies and Science classrooms.
2. **Curriculum** – Details of the Middle school offering are on our website under the Curriculum pull-down menus
3. **Enrichment Course Offerings** – please see our website for full details of options. Course preference sheets will be filled out 1st week of school. Approximately 14 Academic Electives will be offered each semester, and an equivalent number of Creative Arts.
4. **Fitness** – Fall offerings will include Swimming, Volleyball, Biking, Basketball, Jogging, Yoga, Street Hockey, Ultimate Frisbee, and Power walking.
5. **Houses** – Houses are the basic unit of grouping at CSS. The class of 2017 will have “Junior” House of Darwin, Da Vinci and Newton. Placement into these Houses will be done during the Bridge to School.
6. **Philosophy** – There will be one section of Argument and two sections of Philosophy for Children.
7. **June-term Mini-semester** – Architecture in the City, Biodiversity of Puerto Rico, and Water. House participation in the course will be done by random draw.
8. **Schedule** – Classes are offered from 8:00 am – 3:40 pm, except for Friday where we end at 2:40 pm.
9. **Community Service** – student are required to complete 100 hours of community service (i.e. roughly 12 days of work). These can be done in the summer, during breaks, or during the school year. Opportunities for Community service will exist within the school (e.g. Lab aides; Tech aides; Garden aides; Website aides; Lunch monitors; Hallway monitors, Tutors for elementary students in our neighboring schools). A sign-up and commitment sheet will be available the first week of school.
10. **Advisors and House brothers/sisters** – 16 students from each House will be assigned to a Hall. Each Hall School advisor, known as the “Housemaster”. Parents and students have access to their Housemasters phone number for emergencies. The Class of 2017 will also have Freshman House Buddies from the Upper School.
11. **Uniform** – Middle schoolers will wear blue jeans and Light blue CSS polo or dress shirt (with CSS logo), a black belt and black sneakers or shoes. For Gym students may wear a Light blue CSS gym shirt and navy blue shorts or sports pants. Students who are Principal’s Scholars may wear the Principal Scholar Navy blue t-shirt for gym. Please check our website for purchasing options *and for more detailed description of our uniform policy.*
12. **Summer Reading List** – is attached. Please note that a Summer Reading List notebook must be purchased and used to take notes and answer questions.
13. **New Students – Bridge to School** - students must participate in a Bridge to School experience that will serve as an orientation to your new school. See below...

DUE to contractual issues and budget reductions we have changed the dates of the Bridge to School to September 7 and 8 (Tuesday and Wednesday) and continue through the first two days of School. We apologize for this late change but we are constrained by forces beyond our control!

*To get involved with the **CSS Parent Association** please contact:

Maria Herrera mariaherrera@columbiasecondary.org, Boyana Konfortu boyanakonforti@columbiasecondary.org
or Victor Acosta victoracosta@columbiasecondary.org

If you need to contact us during summer, you may contact us by phone or email:

Key Contacts:

Dr. Jose Gabriel Maldonado – Principal – principal@columbiasecondary.org – cell 917 329-5463
Prof. Andrew Stillman – Assistant Principal – andrewstillman@columbiasecondary.org – cell 646 283-2521
Prof. Monica Marin – Associate Director of Admissions – monicamarin@columbiasecondary.org – cell 646 573-8255