



## WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL

4600 FALLS ROAD  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21209

May 2007

Dear Families:

Research has shown how important it is for students to read and read often. The following points are from *Reading In and Out of Schools*, a publication prepared by the Educational Testing Service for the US Department of Education, and *Patterns of Reading Practice*, a 1996 publication of The Institute for Academic Excellence:

- **The amount of reading that students do for school, and do out of school are both positively related to their reading achievement.**
- **Students who reported discussing their reading had higher average reading achievement than students who reported never having this opportunity.**
- **When ranked according to the amount of reading they do, students in the top 5 percent read 144 times more than students in the bottom 5 percent.**
- **Students in private schools practice reading 67 percent more than public school students.**

Because you have chosen Western as the institution to prepare your daughter for college, we take this responsibility seriously. In an effort to help her become truly learned and to increase her standing among the many students with whom she will compete for college placement, Western's English Department requires that she continue to read and think over the summer. As an eleventh-grade student as of August 2006, your daughter will be expected to have read, responded to in writing, and to have copies of the following works:

***The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* by Carson McCullers**

**(ISBN 978 - 0618526413)**

***A Raisin In the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry**

**(ISBN 978 - 0679755333)**

***Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

**(ISBN 978 - 0061120060)**

N.B. Students anticipating enrollment in Honors English should also read and respond to the following title:

***Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow**

**(ISBN 045-227907-0)**

Students will present their Summer Reading Assignments upon returning to school and should be ready for both **oral and written assessment** of their reading and their journal responses. The assigned literature may be purchased at most local bookstores; Greetings and Readings and Barnes and Noble are the best sources. It is extremely important that all students have the same books (same ISBN publications) so that they can work together and with the teacher more efficiently.

Because the works listed above will be used throughout the 11<sup>th</sup> grade course (including the research paper), it is imperative that your daughter has **her own paperback copy of each title**. We are also requiring that each junior have her own copy of the most recent edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. This is a resource that will help her with not only successful completion of her 11<sup>th</sup> grade research paper, but which will also be of great use senior year and in college. This book is available in the reference section of most bookstores.

In addition to working on reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, your daughter will continue extensive vocabulary development in preparation for the PSAT and SAT. We are hoping to procure a specific text, *Vocabulary for the College Bound Student*, a book that we will provide for purchase here at school if it is available.

Please ensure that your daughter has the **summer reading texts as soon as possible** so that reading and response can be completed before her return to school in August. Because this preparatory assignment will be time-consuming, we encourage your daughter to begin no later than early July. As a junior who has learned how to read and respond to literature, and who has been notified in advance of what is required (unlike students new to Western), she is expected to have her work on the first day of class.

We hope that the summer vacation will be exciting, refreshing, and productive. We applaud your daughter's successful completion of her course work thus far, work that has enabled her to continue as a member of the Western family. Additionally, we appreciate your support of this summer reading program, a must for students planning to go to college. You may call Celia Rocca, our English Department Head (410-396-7040), if you have any questions or concerns.

**Western Senior High School Grade 11 English Summer Reading Assignment**

Students should purchase copies of the works listed on the reverse side and below, read them thoroughly, and complete the written responses required for each title. These responses, which may be hand-written or typed, are to be kept in a Summer Reading Journal (marble-covered theme/journal) for submission to 11<sup>th</sup> grade English Instructors upon return to Western in August.

**NOTE:** Students will be required to complete **Response Charts** as noted for the required texts. Models of these charts can be found at [www.westernhighschool.org](http://www.westernhighschool.org). Go to the homepage, click "Academics," then click "English," and then click "Charts." If you do not already have copies, print out the charts and use them to model your own.

**English III College Preparatory (and AP)**

The summer reading assignment applies to EACH of the following titles:

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* – Zora Neale Hurston

*The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*— Carson McCullers

*A Raisin in the Sun*—Lorraine Hansberry

- As you read, think about the **characters** and the conflicts they undergo as well as the possible theme(s) that they help the author create. Use **colored pencils** (different colors for different characters) to **underline** significant words and/or phrases that would help you understand and remember information about how characters act, what they say, how they look, what they think, what other characters say about them, and what the author may say about them. Also note words/phrases, etc. that show how each author uses literary elements other than characterization--**setting, point of view** (not in drama), **conflict/plot structure, stylistic elements** (imagery, figurative language, personification, irony, etc.) to create effects and ideas. Also be sure to "carry on a conversation" with the text as you read by making **marginal notes** that clarify your marking. This will help you better understand each work and prepare for discussion and assessment. An added bonus to close reading and detailed response will be your ability to move easily to research paper projects based on these works. **DO NOT USE HIGHLIGHTERS AS THEY WILL BLEED FROM ONE PAGE TO ANOTHER.**
- When you have finished reading **each title**, complete:  
**Full-out double-column responses** in your journal for **two** chapters, segments, or scenes (for the drama), each from a different area/section in the work. If you have marked your book well, this will be easy to do. You may hand-write or type each response, but be sure to draw lines to separate each column and each area neatly. **DO EACH RESPONSE ON A SEPARATE PAGE** and make certain any pasted work does not exceed the size of a journal page.
- Also complete:  
**At least two character charts**  
**a conflict chart,**  
**and a theme chart** for each work.  
Again, if you have marked your book well, this will be easy for you.

Remember also what you have learned about using the "**xyZ**" method when examining a text and recording reactions--no chart helps you if you do not have numerous citations and explanations. Put your charts in your journal and be certain to **leave space between each double-column entry and each chart** you complete; also remember to **complete each chart/entry on separate sheets** and to clearly **label** your work. Additionally, leave at least **6-8 pages** between the work/response for each reading selection.

**English III Honors**

You are also to read *Ragtime* by **E. L. Doctorow**.

In addition to the response work noted before, you are to complete a **setting chart** and a **style chart** for each of the four titles you read and study.

**ALL JUNIOR STUDENTS! REMEMBER:**

**Put all of your work in an approved journal (no spirals) and have it and your copies of the texts with you when you report to school in August. Also, don't forget to locate a copy of the MLA Handbook.**