

ENGLISH I – Summer Reading Requirement

Dear Incoming Freshmen,

I'm sure I'm not the first person to say this to you, but....Welcome to High School!

I hope you are enjoying your first week of summer freedom and that you have a safe and blessed summer vacation, enjoying family, friends and fun. I am looking forward to meeting and getting to know each of you in the fall. Until then, I will be praying for a successful and God-filled year.

Please remember that you have a summer reading requirement to help you maintain your reading skills. This summer, all freshmen should read *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien. This is an epic fantasy adventure. Since so many are familiar with the *Lord of the Rings*, it should not be difficult to read or understand. We will be discussing the book and using its contents for some writing at the beginning of the year. I'm also attaching a few activities for you to think about and work through as you read the novel. These will be due your first week back to school.

Also, I know that many outside activities and other classes will make for a hectic freshman year. If it will help to read some of our other major course works in advance – while you're soaking up that sun – and then review them again as we discuss them in class, I will list them below for you. You are responsible to pick up your own copy of the novels, if not this summer, then for next year. Both PCA and Half-Price Bookstores have some used copies available for reduced prices. If you'd like, check with Mrs. Boyer to snag one of our copies before heading elsewhere to look, but hurry, we only have a limited number.

2010-2011 English I Novels:

The Screwtape Letters – C. S. Lewis

Romeo & Juliet – William Shakespeare (I recommend the “No Fear Shakespeare” version)

To Kill A Mockingbird – Harper Lee

Until we meet in the fall, make sure you put God first in everything, get plenty of rest, and laugh as much as you can!

With Love in Jesus,

Mrs. Palagi

Incoming English I (On-Level and Pre-AP) Activities for *The Hobbit*

I. CHARACTERIZATION

Characterization is the process by which an author establishes the distinctive traits and personalities of characters in a story. Authors use many techniques to create believable characters, including:

1. Direct Information – telling the reader something specific about the character
2. Dialogue – letting the reader infer something about the character from what the character says and how the character says it
3. Physical Action – showing the character engaged in an activity that reveals something about the character
4. Physical Description – letting the reader infer something about the character from the character's appearance, mannerisms, and so on
5. Physical Surroundings – letting the reader infer something about the character from the places that character chooses to be

Characters may or may not change during a story; readers must pay attention to the above techniques to determine if a character changes and to evaluate any changes that occur.

In the opening pages of *The Hobbit*, as he introduces his story's main character, Tolkien writes:

This is a story of how a Baggins had an adventure, and found himself doing and saying things altogether unexpected. He may have lost the neighbor's respect, but he gained—well you will see whether he gained anything in the end.

Tolkien thus alerts readers to the fact that Bilbo Baggins will change, in some way, over the course of the story. To track the change in Bilbo's character by the book's end, however, we must know what sort of person Bilbo is at the books' beginning.

Think about the techniques of characterization outlined above, then (on the back of this sheet) write a short character sketch (personality description) of Bilbo. How does Tolkien use each technique to establish Bilbo's character at *The Hobbit* begins? Use specific examples in your character sketch.

Characterization of Bilbo Baggins

1. Direct Information:

2. Dialogue:

3. Physical Actions:

4. Physical Description:

5. Physical Surroundings:

II. "RACES"

Throughout your reading of *The Hobbit*, you will be introduced to many "races" that populate Middle-earth: hobbits, dwarves, trolls, elves, goblins, wargs, eagles and humans. Compare and contrast these races. What seem to be the distinguishing characteristics of each? List some of their physical as well as moral traits. Which race do you find most interesting or appealing? Why?

III. THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

At various times throughout *The Hobbit*, you will find Bilbo thinking about the comforts of his hobbit hole, or wishing he could just turn around and go home. Keep a log of these references and see if/how Bilbo's attitude toward his home changes as the story progresses.