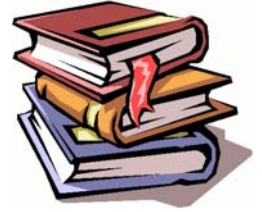


Junior Honors American Literature
Summer Reading
2008
Donna Lanza



America is nothing if not vast and diverse, and its writers have always drawn a good deal of inspiration from that expansive diversity. The richness and number of the images they create, their individual and distinct visions of America, reflect the different relationships they had with their particular times and places. From the diaries and sermons of the early Puritans to the defiant poetry of Allen Ginsberg, next year you will explore how cultural, historical and political issues impacted American themes and styles. By June you will appreciate our rich American literary heritage.

Your introduction to American Literature begins this summer with The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Required:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain (1885) is the unforgettable, idyllic, heartwarming, and satirical story of Huck's trip down the Mississippi River with Jim, an escaped slave. Despite what Huck had always been taught about race, he discovers Jim's humanity.

All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn . . . American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."

—Ernest Hemingway

Choose One:

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote (1965) reconstructs the brutal slaying of a Kansas family by two would-be robbers and the investigation that led to the capture, trial of its killers and its aftermath; it is "a true masterpiece of creative nonfiction."

"A remarkable, tensely exciting, moving, superbly written "true account."

—The New York Times

"The best documentary account of an American crime ever written . . . The book chills the bones and exercises the intelligence . . . harrowing."

—The New York Review of Books

The Color Purple by Alice Walker is a winner of the National Book Award as well as the Pulitzer Prize. The unforgettable portrait of Celie, an African American woman, her friends, family, and lovers is rich with passion, pain, inspiration and an indomitable love of life.

"Intense emotional impact . . . indelibly affecting . . . Alice Walker is a lavishly gifted writer"

—The New York Times Book Review

"Superb . . . a work to stand beside literature of any time and place."

—San Francisco Chronicle

You will be writing about both works during the first week back to school. I suggest purchasing your own copies so that you can mark passages which

- ✓ contribute to characterization
- ✓ reflect author's literary style and techniques
- ✓ shape the authors' themes
- ✓ pose social, moral or ethical questions that relate to present day

Enjoy your summer. See you in August. ~ ~ Mrs. Lanza