

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT
JUNIOR ENGLISH 2010-11

PART ONE:

Everyone must read Text #1:

Text #1: *The Scarlet Letter*, by Nathaniel Hawthorne

“*The Scarlet Letter* is a dark tale of love, crime, and revenge set in colonial New England. It revolves around a single, forbidden act of passion that forever alters the lives of three members of a small Puritan community: Hester Prynne, an ardent and fierce woman who bears the punishment of her sin in humble silence; the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, a respected public figure who is inwardly tormented by long-hidden guilt; and the malevolent Roger Chillingworth, Hester’s husband—a man who seethes with an Ahab-like lust for vengeance.” www.barnesandnoble.com

The landscape of this classic novel is uniquely American, but the themes it explores are universal—the nature of sin, guilt, and penitence, the clash between our private and public selves, and the spiritual and psychological cost of living outside society. Read the novel carefully, keeping track of any questions you might have along the way. As juniors, the expectations will be higher. Instead of just trying to understand plot and comprehend the sequence of events that unfolds in the novel, you will be expected to analyze the literature on a higher level.

PART TWO:

Everyone must choose ONE of the following which can either be obtained at your local library or purchased at a book store (at your discretion and expense):

- #1 *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller
- #2 *The Manchurian Candidate* by Richard Condon
- #3 *Heretics Daughter* by Kathleen Kent
- #4 *Those Who Save Us* by Jenna Blum
- #5 *Susannah Morrow* by Megan Chance
- #6 *Deprivers* by Steven Eliot Altman

ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, you will be responsible for presenting a VISUAL AID (i.e., poster, PowerPoint presentation, pamphlet, etc.) that thoroughly reflects the following:

1. *The Scarlet Letter's* representation of society as a whole.
2. The differences between the Puritan society and today.
3. Valid connections between *The Scarlet Letter* and your second text choice. Make distinct points on the topic of mass hysteria, the effects on a society from the actions of mass hysteria, the conflicts that arise in a culture that promotes hysteria, the undercurrents of hysteria in society, etc. Be sure to expand upon these ideas when presenting as well.
4. Think about what it means to be an American and the struggles and obstacles that have remained the same for Americans even though time has passed and circumstances have changed. Try to develop and identify the definition of an American dream.

Furthermore, upon return to school in August, an essay exam will be given on the summer reading. This exam will rely upon your knowledge of both texts chosen. The exam will be graded according to the MCAS rubric. This same rubric is used for grading English midterm and final exams.