

Summer Instructions for Senior Thesis Writers:

Hello, seniors. Eastwood has asked me to oversee the Senior Thesis Project next year. Like you, I am a little fearful of the workload; however, the topics and books are usually very interesting, and I like interesting thoughts.

My first bit of advice is this: **Find something you really want to write about.** If you really want to make your point or prove your claim, the writing will be so much easier. This is your chance to control the message. You get to decide what you will spend your time thinking about. The more time you spend selecting a topic that interests you, the better off you will be as you begin to write.

Now, in order to make sure your thoughts are interesting as well as organized and worthy of our time, I have some specific instructions for your summer reading.

#1 - Collect 10 thesis ideas: Before reading the book again, I am going to ask you to collect at least 10 great ideas for essays/ writing projects on this book. These are not your ideas; these are someone else's ideas. Just google "essay ideas for *the title of your book*." You will find sources like Gradesaver, Sparknotes, cummingsstudyguides, etc. Choose your 10 favorite themes/motifs/essay prompts. Create a document and record the ten ideas and the websites where you found them. You should state each idea in your own words and cite the source of the idea. To be perfectly clear, I will collect this type-written, properly formatted document of ideas on the first day of class. You must include the source of each idea. **This is a graded assignment.**

#2 - Prioritize your interests: Of the 10 ideas you selected, choose 3 that seem most interesting to you. Eventually, you will be formulating your own thesis, but for now let's see what others think your book is about. You may end up refuting one of these ideas, or blending a couple of them, or you may present your own slant on one of the ones you found. However, you must first collect 10 and then choose your top 3 thesis ideas.

Finally,

#3 - Read the book: Everyone must read the book you have selected for your summer thesis. It does not matter when you read it last; you still have to re-read it this summer. This time you are reading it with those 3 favorite essay topics in mind. You will also keep in mind the other 7 ideas you chose. Take notes. Notice supporting evidence for these ideas as you read. Again, so no one is confused . . . you will be asked if you re-read the novel on the first day of class and I will ask to see your note-taking system. **This, too, is a graded assignment.**

When we return in August, we will look at your 10 ideas as a class as well as your 3 favorites. Together we will move toward your developing a thesis statement of your own.

You may certainly email me this summer if you have any questions:
dgeiger@eastwoodschool.org. Have a great summer and I'll see you in August,

Dawn Geiger