English 10 / 11

**Personal Inquiry Project**

In English 8 and 9, you (at the beginning of the year) selected a book from a set list of titles, and—throughout the year—kept a reading journal and participated (hopefully) in class discussions at the end of the school. In English 10-12, the book selection process will remain the same (though *how* books are selected may vary from teacher to teacher); however, in an effort to combine the personal enrichment project with the new English Language Arts curriculum, the type of work you do with your book—and how much of your final mark it is worth—will change.

First, as you did in English 8 and 9, you will select your book near the beginning of the year (usually end of September or early October). Next, you must begin to decide *how* you will demonstrate what you have learned from reading the book. While there will still be class discussions (a total of two or three, spread throughout the year), the majority of your mark will come from your own independent inquiry into your book. There are several areas which you may choose to focus on for your inquiry: **Composition (C), Creative Writing (CW), Focused Literary Studies (FLS), New Media (NM),** and **Spoken Communication (SC).** The following is a list of suggestions for you to consider as you start thinking about how you might want to direct your independent inquiry (please keep in mind that these are *suggestions* only):

* **Literary Ess**ay – compose a formal analysis of some aspect (e.g. theme, character) of your book. (**C / FLS)**
* **Literary Synthesis** – in either essay or presentation format, analyze a common theme found in your book and one other literary text (novel, short story, poem, play, essay).

**(C / FLS)**

* **Movie Synthesis** – in either essay or presentation format, analyze a common theme found in your book and a film **(C / FLS; FLS / NM)**
* **Creative Literary Response** – write an original, creative work of literature (book chapter, short story, poem, etc.) in which you “respond” to some aspect of your book; for example, you may write a chapter of a novel from the perspective of a minor character, or a chapter that extends the storyline of the original work (i.e. picks up where the original story ended). **(CW)**
* **Blog** – create a blog in which you update your thoughts, analysis and connections while reading your book. **(C / FLS / NM)**
* **Podcast** – create a podcast in which you create an on-going audio journal of your thoughts, analysis and connection while reading your book; you may also choose to do an on-going podcast from the perspective of a character in your book. **(NM / SC)**
* **Seminar Presentation** – give a detailed seminar/lecture on your book; you may opt to include a Power Point presentation with your seminar. **(FLS / SC)**
* **Debate** – with one other student in class, present a debate about your respective books; this would only make sense if your books presented differing perspectives on a common theme. **(FLS / SC)**
* **Other –** if you think you may have an independent inquiry idea that first into one of the five categories, but is not listed in the suggestions above, you are encouraged to meet with the teacher to discuss your idea(s) as soon as possible

**Timeline –** below is a tentative timeline for the Personal Enrichment Inquiry Project; all dates and formats are subject to change, but students will be notified of changes well in advance of due dates. Note: Students can discuss their project with the teacher at any time throughout the year, even if it is not a designated “spot check” (see below).

**Mid-September:** Book lists will be distributed; brief summaries of each title will be provided by the teacher. Students will have approximately 1-2 weeks to investigate the titles that are of interest to them, and formulate a list of at least their top ten preferences.

**Late September:** Book selection. Names will be drawn at random.

**October and November:** Acquire, and begin reading, your book and keep track of your analysis; you are not required to keep a formal reader response journal, but it is advisable that you keep track of your thoughts while you are reading, and not wait until the book is done.

**Mid-December:** First small group discussion and first individual oral presentations. You will not be required to have read your entire book by this point, but you should have read enough to explain both the content of your book, as well as the current focus of your inquiry (this may change as you continue reading, so you are not required to stick with your original focus of inquiry).

**Early January:** Spot Check #1 **--** Inquiry Proposals due for teacher approval. Students must submit a brief proposal (in writing) describing their independent inquiry project, as well as meet with the teacher one-on-one to discuss any concerns or possible complications with their chosen method of inquiry; it is expected that everyone will have read at least half of their book by this point.

**Mid-March (i.e before Spring Break)** – Spot Check #2 – Students will meet with the teacher to finalize their inquiry project choice and go over the criteria for their choice. Students will be expected to have their books finished by this point.

**Early April (i.e. after Spring Break) –** Second small group discussion.

**Early-to-Mid-June** – Submission of inquiry project. Second individual oral presentation (reflection on inquiry). Final full-class class discussions.

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**Some reminders….**

* For longer/denser works, you are not required to read the *entire* text; select only the ideas that (i.) you can understand, and (ii.) are of interest to you.
* You are **required** to do outside research on your text to help you with your understanding, regardless of the format of your inquiry project
* Choose wisely. We will be starting our work on this project just before Winter Break, so last-minute changes to your selection are unadvisable.