



Language Arts-Incoming 8th grade

Summer Assignment

Students are required to read **two** books-one mandatory and one book of choice from the list below- and complete the writing assignment for each book.

Mandatory: *They Cage the Animals at Night* by Jennings Michael Burch

Assignment:

On a Google document, answer the following questions in complete sentences. Each question has multiple parts so be sure to answer all parts. Remember to provide text evidence to support your answers. These questions will be discussed in class when we return in August. (In question #1, the words “voice” and “perspective” are linked to a website that provides an explanation of both, for your reference.)

1. Why does Burch write the story in the **voice** of a child, instead of explaining the events from his **perspective** as an adult looking back? Is this approach effective? Why, or why not?
2. Why is Doggie an important figure to Jennings? Is Doggie more significant to Jennings than other figures, such as his brothers or Sal?
3. What defines a home, and how is this concept reflected in Jennings’ story? How is the idea of home connected to family and friendship? Cite examples from the book in your answer.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the American foster care system based on the events in the book. How might children in foster care develop differently compared to children with stable families, and why?
5. What does Sal represent to Jennings, and why do they form such a strong bond? Is Sal an effective father figure to Jennings? Explain your answer using specific examples from the book.
6. Compare and contrast the children’s homes in the book to prisons. What symbols and mechanisms does Burch use to draw parallels between homes and prisons? What do you think about this comparison?
7. Consider the title of the book. How does it relate to the relationship between the children and the “system?”

Book of Choice:

Choose one of the books from the list below and complete the assignment.

Assignment:

At the end of EVERY chapter, students should record the following information on a Google document:

- 3-4 sentence summary of each chapter
- 2 vocabulary words that are unfamiliar to you and the definition of both words (2 words/definitions from each chapter)
- 1-2 specific questions you may have about each chapter

Choose ONE of the following **titles:**

I Will Always Write Back - Caitlin Alifirenka

The Alchemyst: The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel - Michael Scott

The Book Thief - Marcus Zusak

Chains (if you have already read *Chains*, you may proceed and read the next in the Trilogy-*Forge* or *Ashes*) by Laurie Halse Anderson

The Crossover - Kwame Alexander

The Hate U Give- Angie Thomas

The Hobbit- J.R.R. Tolkein

The Maze Runner- James Dashner

I Am Malala- Malala Yousefzai

Young Fu- Elizabeth Foreman Lewis

The Storyteller's Beads- Jane Kurtz

Fierce- Aly Raisman