8th Grade GT

Summer Reading Assignment

What? We have to do an assignment during summer? Doesn't she know that summer is our break from school?

The answer to your questions is a resounding yes. I'm sure that this assignment will not hinder any of your summer plans. You will have approximately three months to complete this assignment and enjoy your summer break! Throughout the duration of the GT class, we will analyze numerous works and novels. Within each composition exists numerous literary elements that we will observe and discuss in class. In order to be fully prepared to read and understand these compositions, you must complete this summer reading assignment and learn more about how literature relates to society.

So, why aren't we doing this during the school year?

That is a good question! In a perfect world, we would have time to prepare for the STAAR, read lots of short stories and poems, read lots of novels, cover grammar, perfect your writing skills, and still have lots of time left over. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Completing this assignment over the summer will make the transition into this GT class go more smoothly. You are entering an advanced level class next year. This assignment will assist you in retaining some of the skills you will need for the class. Please remember that this assignment was not created to be completed within a day, or even a week. If you work on it sporadically over the summer, this should not seem overwhelming.

Directions: You will read *The Hobbit* and answer all of the questions in complete sentences.

- The completed project will be collected from you on the second day of school (Tuesday, August 23, 2016).
- On the second day of school, you will complete an open ended test pertaining to the novel. These questions will not be the same as the questions you answer for the project.
- Please keep the completed assignment in a 1-inch binder labeled, *The Hobbit* Novel Analysis.
- Questions and answers should be typed in Arial, 12 font. (However, I know that not all of you have a computer, so if you must write your answers by hand, please do so neatly and clearly.

Inquiry Questions Guide

Please answer the following questions on a separate word document. Note that each question asks for multiple answers. Make sure you answer all the questions in complete sentences and in paragraph form.

1. Given his development throughout the book, does Bilbo belong in Hobbiton at the end of the novel? He is not completely accepted by the hobbit community, but he seems to be perfectly happy there. How do you think Tolkien views the relationship between heroism and the simple life?

2. Where do humans fit in among the other races of Middle-Earth? Are humans a "good" race? Use evidence from the novel to justify your answers.

3. What factors define a person's identity in The Hobbit? Do individuals have any power over who they become, or are their characters entirely determined by static factors such as family and race?

4. Explain why Bilbo is an unlikely choice as a participant in an adventure.

5. Choose a controversial issue from the novel and take a stand on one side of the issue. Discuss your reasons for disagreeing or agreeing with a decision a character made in the novel. Kindly remember to use evidence from the novel to support your answer.

6. Describe the landscape and the fantastical elements of Tolkien's world.

7. Why does Tolkien include songs in *The Hobbit*? How do they contribute to the overall mood of the novel?

8. Discuss the novel's different characters and races. What values do each represent, and how does Tolkien convey these ideas in the story?

9. In Chapter 5, how does Tolkien portray the goblins as purely evil? In contrast, how does he evoke pity for Gollum in Chapter 6?

10. Why are there no female characters in The Hobbit? Do you think the book appeals equally to readers of both genders? Why or why not?

The Hobbit Project:

Choose ONE of following three projects. All components of the project are due on the second day of school.

Project One: *Children's Picture Storybook*

This project choice allows you the opportunity to rewrite the novel as a picture storybook. After completing the novel, you will rewrite and illustrate your story so that younger children can enjoy it. You must include the following elements in your children's book:

- A cover with a title and illustration
- Clear, easy to read text with no spelling or grammatical errors
- A fully developed plot, including setting, conflict, and theme
- At least 25 illustrated pages (not including cover nor glossary pages)
- A glossary of at least 10 vocabulary words and their definitions

Project Two: *Interviews*

Imagine that you are a famous reporter and have been given an opportunity to interview three different characters from *The Hobbit*. What juicy information would your readers want to know? What questions would you want to ask? How and where would this interview take place? You will write a TV script and record a video of yourself conducting the interview.

Project Three: *Brochure and Commercial*

Imagine that you are a travel agent and want to promote tours of Hobbiton or any other location in the story.

- Make a colorful travel guide of the locale. How would you sell it as a good place to visit? Who and what would your visitors want to see? This can be done in a slideshow or a booklet. Using a timeline of 8-10 major events in the story, explain who and what visitors would want to see.
- Create a commercial advertising your tour. Using a multimedia program prepare a travel guide to Middle Earth. Include a general description of Middle-Earth's geography, a list of places to visit and avoid, tips for travel, and warnings about possible dangers.

Note: You must do this assignment on your own. Your answers should not sound like any other student's answers. You will be tested on your knowledge of the book through an open ended test given on the second day of school.

My email address is stutt@lufkinisd.org. I check my email frequently, yes, even in the summer. Please feel free to email me with questions.