



SPRING BREAK

Not the best week to have a late start, but the infinite wisdom of the man behind the curtain (ignore the man behind the curtain) trumps all logic. Please plan accordingly and manage your time well.

If you are taking off early for vacation, please keep in mind that anything due on Friday (or before you leave) needs to be **completed and submitted prior to departure**. I have been warned several times by the authorities at PDX that my running along the tarmac and hollering at planes taking off is a violation of several local, regional, national, and FAA laws.

Have a great break. When school resumes it is a long push to the end with only Memorial Day to break up the journey.



ASHLAND UPDATES

We are confirmed for **April 28-30th**. We will attend "Much Ado About Nothing," "Guys and Dolls," and "Secret Love in Peach Blossom Land."

Families unable to afford the full cost would be subsidized. It is very important that all students have this wonderful opportunity. We would ask you to let us know confidentially how much of the cost, if any, your family can afford.

Not surprisingly, we'll need your help to make this trip work! We would need several adult chaperones (men & women) driving down in separate vehicles. We would also need MANY volunteers to help us get ready for the trip. To make this exciting trip happen, we need a team of dedicated parents. Please let us know as soon as possible if you can help; we need to make the decision and get the ball rolling!

Fees will cover:

- Transportation to and from Ashland via coach bus (includes bus drivers' room and board)
- Room and Board at the Southern Oregon College Campus (all meals provided except during travel)
- Tickets to three plays: *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Secret Love in Peach Blossom Land*



- One workshop produced by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (with the actors!)
- Two workshops at Southern Oregon University
- Snacks & other travel goodies

"Ashland 2015"

packet--contains the following:

- updated financial form
- cover with listing of contents
- important contact numbers and addresses
- itinerary
- self-medication letter
- what to bring and expectations
- behavior contract
- "PPS Permission for Student Travel" Ashland 2015
- "Authorization for Medication & Self Medication" forms
 - accidentally not included in the packet provided to the students
- "PPS Student Medical Information" form 2015 [PDF]
 - only needed if something has changed since the student was registered in fall of 2014



Students should have submitted by **Friday, March 6:**

- financial form with remaining balance due
- behavior contract
- PPS Permission for Student Travel
- Authorization for Medication and/or Self Medication forms (if and as needed)
- PPS Student Medical Information ***only needed if something has changed since the student was registered in fall of 2014



ASHLAND CHAPERONE & VOLUNTEER MEETING



Hello Ashland point people!

Hope this finds you well and ready for our rapidly approaching Ashland trip.

There is a meeting scheduled for all chaperones and volunteers in the library on Monday, March 16th at 6:30PM. At the meeting the teachers will cover the itinerary, responsibilities, designate jobs and answer questions.

Background paperwork for the chaperones and insurance paperwork for the drivers need to be handed into the office as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding the up coming meeting please let me know.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Regards
Sharne



READING DISCUSSION GROUPS



Students prepare for participation in a discussion by completing an assignment. Each discussion focuses on a certain number of pages or chapters as delineated in the "bookmarks" for each discussion group.

Before participating in the discussions, students will complete a job and submit the assignment for the job the day before the discussion. Novel discussions will be held at the end of every other week. The remaining meeting schedule is: 3/20 for the 3rd quarter. During the 4th quarter the meetings will be 4/17, 5/1, 5/15, and 5/29.

3rd QUARTER JOBS:

- **Riddler**—asks thought provoking questions & leads the discussion
- **Summarizer**—summarizes the assigned section of reading and presents a plot line
- **Story Elements II**—keeps track of 2 major characters and how they change through the assigned reading
- **Illustrator**—provides a cover and teaser for the assigned section of reading
- **Illustrator II**—creates 3 drawings with captions for the assigned section of reading

- **Story Elements**—draws and describes the effects of the setting on the assigned section of reading
- **Literary Luminary**—provides examples of 4 quotes with different literary techniques from the assigned section of reading



Please read and follow directions for the response and reflection sections. If there are any questions, students will have two weeks to clarify assignment expectations. Each assignment and each discussion are worth 25 points.

DISCUSSION #4

Thank you again to the fantastic adults who volunteered their time to help facilitate discussion #3. Discussions are going very well. Thank you.



Students have twenty minutes each day to read their discussion novel. Additionally, students should use whatever time **at home** necessary to fulfill the number of pages or chapters required for each discussion. Each student has a bookmark listing the dates of each discussion and the assigned pages. The bookmarks are also available via the "Reading" page of my web page.

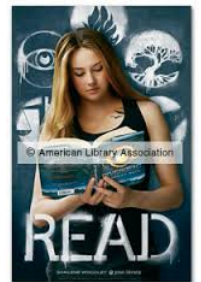
The assignment sheets for the discussions are also available via the "READING" page of my web page. You will have to access the bookmarks (or ask the student) to determine what assignment the student must complete. Students are given the new assignment sheet two weeks (ish) ahead of time. I recommend using the assignment sheet as a second bookmark and completing the assignment as the novel is read. Directions are on each sheet, but the "post discussion" part is completed after the discussion.

The assignment for discussion #4 is due Thursday (3/19) and the discussion is on Friday (3/20).

4TH QUARTER DISCUSSION GROUPS

The second semester will focus on reading and discussing novels within small groups. Students need to start gathering ideas for discussion novels for the fourth quarter. The more variety the group has the better the choice they can make. The only rule is that you cannot use a novel for your discussion that you have already read. You can recommend the novel for other groups, but no rereads.

Start with input from peers. What are they reading and what would they recommend for a good discussion book? There is a critical distinction between good literature and what makes a good discussion novel. Not all literature creates



dynamic conversations. Conversations and differing opinions are, however, essential to a good discussion. The book might be a “page turner,” but if it does not prompt conversation then it is a dud as a discussion choice.



Seek input from parents, relatives, librarians, teachers, and members of the canine species—if a dog cannot sink his teeth into the novel then it might not be worth reading. You might want to do an internet search on recommended literature as well. Once you have a list—research.

Many online sites have a synopsis, ratings, and level recommendations for novels. I often use Amazon’s site to gather additional information on novels, but theirs is not the only source. The key is to be prepared...much like the goat in Hoodwinked.

We will gather and go through the recommendations in class on Monday and Tuesday (3/9-10). Students (and parental units) will have a little time and wiggle room to alter choices and groupings, but by Monday, March 16th students need to have a copy of the novel they will be reading. Students who cannot obtain a copy or reserve a copy for check-out or purchase will be corralled into a group and select a novel from available novel sets.

The choice of a novel is often a contentious and touchy issue. I do not wish to step on any toes or push a student into reading a subject matter they are not ready for or comfortable with. Your help, respect, communication, and diligence are appreciated.

The assignment for the discussion, #5, is due Thursday (4/16) and the discussion is Friday (4/17). The assignment is due a day **before** the discussion so that I have time to evaluate and provide feedback on the assignment. It is something that I have learned over the years and it has generated better discussions. The post-discussion reflection is due **after** the discussion.



WRITING

VOCABULARY #11

Students should be reviewing the lists for **five minutes each day**. Repeated exposure to the words or stems will help in the long-term retention of the meaning and lead to greater success. Students should also be organizing the stems into antonyms, synonyms, and similar groupings (body parts, numbers, etc.).

Students will work on the sentences and list (flashcards) for vocabulary #11 Monday and Tuesday (3/9-10). As usual,



the class will review several of the trickier sentences prior to the assignments being due at the beginning of class on Friday (3/13). The quiz is the following Thursday (3/19).

CREATE-A-BOARD-GAME

[mostly repeated]

Students will research, design, and create a game board. The board game can be a card game, but the cards cannot be a standard 52 card (54 with Jokers) deck.



- Design and make a board game.
 - Use cardboard, tag board, construction paper, legal sized file folders, augment an older board game, etc.
 - Decorate the board and box with art that relates to the game.
 - There should be a START and FINISH box connected by at least a 50-space path (or at least 50 cards [depending on the game] if it is a card-based game_.
 - Create playing pieces that relate to the game (a minimum of 4).
- Make up and write the rules for the game.
- Playtest the game in various draft forms. Adjust (correct) parts of your game as needed.
- Exchange and play the games of other students.
- Complete an evaluation form for each game played.

Students will research board games and submitted a premise of their idea for their board game projects over the next several weeks. We will have time after that to draft rulebooks. However, students should be prepared to work on rulebook rough drafts and all other aspects of the project at home if they don't use their class time wisely.



Here are a couple of due dates to keep in mind:

- Playable draft: due Monday, March 16
- Playtest drafts: Monday-Thursday, March 16-19
- Playable 2nd draft: due Monday, April 6
- Playtest 2nd draft: Monday-Thursday, April 6-9
- Final project due: Wednesday, April 15



HISTORY

MIDDLE AGES (7th)

In European history, the Middle Ages, or Medieval period, lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the **collapse** of the Western Roman Empire and merged into the Renaissance and the Age



of Discovery. The Medieval period is subdivided into the **Early**, the High, and the Late Middle Ages.

Depopulation, deurbanization, invasion, and movement of peoples, which had begun at the end of the Roman Empire, continued in the Early Middle Ages. The barbarian invaders, including various Germanic peoples, formed new kingdoms in what remained of the Western Roman Empire.

Although there were substantial changes in society and political structures, the break with antiquity was not complete. The still-sizeable Byzantine Empire survived in the east and remained a major power. In the West, most kingdoms incorporated the few extant Roman institutions. Monasteries were founded as campaigns to Christianize pagan Europe continued.

The Franks, under the Carolingian dynasty, briefly established an empire covering much of Western Europe; the Carolingian Empire during the later 8th and early 9th century, but it later succumbed to the pressures of internal civil wars combined with external invasions—Vikings from the north, Magyars from the east, and Saracens from the south.

During the High Middle Ages, which began after AD 1000, the population of Europe increased greatly as technological and agricultural innovations allowed trade to flourish and the climate change allowed crop yields to increase. Manorialism, the organization of peasants into villages that owed rent and labor services to the nobles, and feudalism, the political structure whereby knights and lower-status nobles owed military service to their overlords in return for the right to rent from lands and manors, were two of the ways society was organized in the Middle Ages.

The Crusades, first preached in 1095, were military attempts by Western European Christians to regain control of the Holy Land from the Muslims. Kings became the heads of centralized nation states, reducing crime and violence but making the ideal of a unified Christendom more distant. Intellectual life was marked by scholasticism, a philosophy that emphasized joining faith to reason, and by the founding of universities. The theology of Thomas Aquinas, the paintings of Giotto, the poetry of Dante and Chaucer, the travels of Marco Polo, and the architecture of Gothic cathedrals such as Chartres are among the outstanding achievements of this period.

The Late Middle Ages was marked by difficulties and calamities including famine, plague, and war, which much diminished the population of Western Europe; between 1347 and 1350, the Black Death killed about a third of Europeans.



Controversy, heresy, and schism within the Church paralleled the interstate conflict, civil strife, and peasant revolts that occurred in the kingdoms. Cultural and technological developments transformed European society, concluding the Late Middle Ages and beginning the early modern period.

MANIFEST DESTINY (8TH)

Expansion westward seemed perfectly natural to many Americans in the mid-nineteenth century. Like the Massachusetts Puritans who hoped to build a "city upon a hill," courageous pioneers believed that America had a divine obligation to stretch the boundaries of their noble republic to the Pacific Ocean. Independence had been won in the Revolution and reaffirmed in the War of 1812. The spirit of nationalism that swept the nation in the next two decades demanded more territory. The "every man is equal" mentality of the Jacksonian Era fueled this optimism. Now, with territory up to the Mississippi River claimed and settled and the Louisiana Purchase explored, Americans headed west in droves. Newspaper editor John O'Sullivan coined the term "manifest destiny" in 1845 to describe the essence of this mindset.

The religious fervor spawned by the Second Great Awakening created another incentive for the drive west. Indeed, many settlers believed that God himself blessed the growth of the American nation. The Native Americans were considered heathens. By Christianizing the tribes, American missionaries believed they could save souls and they became among the first to cross the Mississippi River.

Economic motives were paramount for others. The fur trade had been dominated by European trading companies since colonial times. German immigrant John Jacob Astor was one of the first American entrepreneurs to challenge the Europeans. He became a millionaire in the process. The desire for more land brought aspiring homesteaders to the frontier. When gold was discovered in California in 1848, the number of migrants increased even more.

At the heart of manifest destiny was the pervasive belief in American cultural and racial superiority. Native Americans had long been perceived as inferior, and efforts to "civilize" them had been widespread since the days of John Smith and Miles Standish. The Hispanics who ruled Texas and the



lucrative ports of California were also seen as "backward." In 1840, the entire southwestern corner of the United States was controlled by foreign powers (shown in orange), and the territorial dispute over the Oregon Territory (light green) had not been settled. By 1850 the U.S. had control of lands from the Atlantic to the Pacific, covering almost all of today's continental United States.

Expanding the boundaries of the United States was in many ways a cultural war as well. The desire of southerners to find more lands suitable for cotton cultivation would eventually spread slavery to these regions. North of the Mason-Dixon line, many citizens were deeply concerned about adding any more slave states. Manifest destiny touched on issues of religion, money, race, patriotism, and morality. These clashed in the 1840s as a truly great drama of regional conflict began to unfold. (<http://www.ushistory.org/us/29.asp>)

STORYLINE (7TH & 8TH)

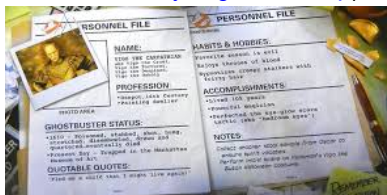
Students will randomly select a role for our medieval village—chandler, cobbler, peasant, knight, squire, etc.—or wagon train—lawyer, farmer, carpenter, etc. Students are supposed to research the role and create a [character biography/sketch](#) for the role. What is the role (what does the character do as his/her job), what do they wear, eat, etc. It should be a fairly comprehensive picture of the character.

I will be introducing the requirements and guidelines for the village structures later next week. Each student is responsible for creating an accurate two-dimensional representation of his/her character's residence and/or shop. I asked students to start gathering supplies (cardboard, dry grass/straw, objects to represent their character, etc.). Construction will begin after Spring Break.

Students should research the types of homes available to their role and the materials that would have been used to construct the homes. I fully realize that an animal dung and straw mixture was used as "plaster", but we can simply use clay or mud to simulate the dung. No one wants a room fully of poop-plaster homes and shops. Other items should be accurate or simulate the materials and layout in a realistic way. Lego constructed homes and shops, sorry, are not permitted on this project—except the Lego people. They are cool.

I have been and will continue to add links in the "History" page of my website to assist with the research. Please let me know if you stumble across any gems.

Character biographies (background, physical attributes, personality, etc.) and visual representations are due Wednesday, March 18 at the beginning of class. We will be working on the biographies and visual representation during



class for the next ten days. We do need cloth scraps, fine tip markers, colored construction paper, ribbons, buttons, etc. to help us construct our visuals. If you can lend any materials, please send them into the classroom.

CURRENT EVENT #12

Current event #11 focuses on articles and news items from South America. In addition to the group news quiz on Friday (3/13), students will take an individual quiz on the nations and significant bodies of water of South America. Make-up and missing presentations occur Monday (3/9), and we will update and review the most interesting and significant on Tuesday (3/10).

The current events for the rest of the semester are by continent/world region. There are specific assignments sheets for each current event region already posted to the [CURRENT EVENT](#) website.



90 SECOND FILMS

The 90-Second Newbery Film Project is a task in which students make movies that tell the entire story of a Newbery award-winning book in 90 seconds or less.



Ever since 1922, the Newbery Medal has been recognized as the most prestigious award in children's literature. But it turns out that any book, no matter how worthy and somber, becomes pleasingly ludicrous when compressed into 90 seconds.

If we have time, we will provide work time to wrap up the projects **after** Spring Break.

The rules:

1. Your video should be 90 seconds or less. (Okay, okay: if it's two minutes long but absolute genius, we'll bend the rules for you. But let's try to keep them short.)
2. No book trailers! No video book reports! We're looking for full-on dramatizations, with mostly child actors, which manage to tell the entire story of the book in 90 seconds.
3. Upload your videos to YouTube or Vimeo or whatever and send Binder the link at pbinder@pps.net. Make the subject line be "90 SECOND NEWBERY" and please tell me the names of everyone in the group.

Intimidated? Don't know where to start? I recommend checking out this handy guide of tips, tricks, and strategies for making a 90-Second Newbery.

[http://houston.kidsoutandabout.com/sites/default/files/images/Curriculum for Creating a 90-Second Newbery Film.pdf](http://houston.kidsoutandabout.com/sites/default/files/images/Curriculum%20for%20Creating%20a%2090-Second%20Newbery%20Film.pdf)