



ASHLAND

UPDATES [repeated]

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

I still need, however, over half of the **permission slips** and down payments of **\$30** to secure spots. Please submit the necessary paperwork and payments if you have not. Copies of the permission forms are available via my website (<http://733257565503770808.weebly.com/>).

We are in the process of working on a budget, but a similar trip last year (including travel, food, lodging for two nights, three play tickets, several workshops, and educational materials) was approximately \$325 per person.

Now, we all know that this is a substantial "chunk of change." Nevertheless, we are hopeful that the majority of you will be able to pay most, if not all, of the trip's cost. To assist in this task we need parent volunteers (you!) to organize fundraising events and activities.

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



2ND QUARTER WORK

Any and all work students want and need to submit towards midterms needs to be submitted by **Friday, December 12th**. I cannot and will not promise that work submitted after that will be evaluated in time to affect midterm grades. Be forewarned and plan accordingly.

Secondly, all work from 2nd quarter prior to Winter Break is due by **Friday, December 19th**. I want the break to be a break—not a massive academic undertaking to supplant weeks of mental sloth. If you are leaving early, work must be submitted prior to your departure. If you are ill or prone to illness, use the planner and communicate. Again, be forewarned and plan accordingly.



READING

BOOKMARKS [repeated]

Students are still required to read at least ten pages per day (on average). The project for the second quarter will be bookmarks for their current reading, or recently finished novel. It cannot be the same novel used for the cereal box project.

Students will have to create several bookmarks for each novel. Bookmarks will focus on characters, setting, plot, vocabulary, literary devices, and theme. Each bookmark needs to contain the author, title, and number of pages read in the novel.

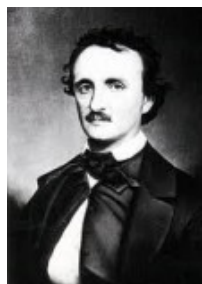
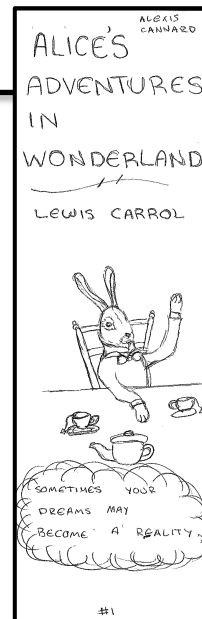
Students will be provided time in class to complete and submit drafts, and the overall project is due January 16.

I will review and practice the new assignment with the students in the upcoming weeks, as well as provide handouts and upload items to the website.

SHORT STORIES

This week students will be reading another Edgar Allan Poe short story, "The Cask of Amontillado." "The Cask of Amontillado" (sometimes spelled "The Casque of Amontillado") is a short story by Edgar Allan Poe, first published in the November, 1846 issue of *Godey's Lady's Book*.

The story is set in a nameless Italian city in an unspecified year (possibly in the 18th century) and is about the narrator's deadly revenge on a friend



whom he believes has insulted him. Like several of Poe's stories, and in keeping with the 19th-century fascination with the subject, the narrative revolves around a person being buried alive—in this case, by immurement.

As in "The Black Cat", and "The Tell-Tale Heart", Poe conveys the story through the murderer's perspective. Montresor tells the story of the day that he took his revenge on Fortunato, a fellow nobleman, to an unspecified person who knows him very well. Angry over some unspecified insult, he plots to murder his friend during Carnival when the man is drunk, dizzy, and wearing a jester's motley.

He baits Fortunato by telling him he has obtained what he believes to be a pipe (about 130 gallons,[1] 492 litres) of a rare vintage of Amontillado. He claims he wants his friend's expert opinion on the subject. Fortunato goes with Montresor to the wine cellars of the latter's palazzo, where they wander in the catacombs. Montresor offers wine (first Medoc, then De Grave) to Fortunato. At one point, Fortunato makes an elaborate, grotesque gesture with an upraised wine bottle. When Montresor appears not to recognize the gesture, Fortunato asks, "You are not of the masons?" Montresor says he is, and when Fortunato, disbelieving, requests a sign, Montresor displays a trowel he had been hiding.

Montresor warns Fortunato, who has a bad cough, of the damp, and suggests they go back; Fortunato insists on continuing, claiming that "[he] shall not die of a cough." During their walk, Montresor mentions his family coat of arms: a golden foot in a blue background crushing a snake whose fangs are embedded in the foot's heel, with the motto *Nemo me impune lacessit* ("No one insults me with impunity"). When they come to a niche, Montresor tells his victim that the Amontillado is within.

Then the real fun begins.



WRITING VOCABULARY #6

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.).

The quiz is Thursday (12/11). There are 4 groupings of 25 stems, equaling 100 stems. Students have to complete the group of 25 stems that are from the current list (the upper-left group), and any **one** of the other 3 groupings reviewing stems from previous lists (#1-5). Additionally, students need to complete all 10 mystery questions.

FAIRYTALE NEWSPAPER

Students are in the midst of their "Fairytale Newspaper" project. In small groups, students are taking on the roles and responsibilities to complete a newspaper.

At minimum each student will be responsible for one article and one visual. Beyond that, the tasks and complexity will vary.

There are several smaller tasks due throughout the project (as noted in the planner). The overall project is due before winter break (12/17). If you are planning on vacationing early please plan accordingly. The groups, and I, need the articles, images, and other aspects before the vacation is taken. As always, if a student is absent or "forgets" about an assignment, please use the planner to see what s/he has missed or what needs to be submitted for the project.

This week, students will be submitting a finalized version of their article, visual, and accompanying caption on Tuesday(12/9). Additionally, they will be working on and submitting draft copies of the "other" portions of the newspaper for Wednesday (12/10).

The next week will be a whirlwind of editing, revising, adding, deleting, reworking, manipulating, and finalizing the articles and other portions into a newspaper. It will take some time, perseverance, and patience.



HISTORY READING TEXT

A lot of our focus will be how to read and take good, but brief notes from textbooks. Many students know the SQRR (Survey, Question, Read, & Review) strategy for reading informational text, but most do not apply it. They simply read the chapter to be done with it.

Students should **survey** the chapter before reading. Look at the chapter and section titles. Look at the pictures and graphic images. Scan for bold words. This "survey" of the chapter activates the centers of the brain that focus on anticipation. If a student is "aware" of what s/he will be reading then their brain can process and store the information more readily and easily. It also activates any prior knowledge with which the students can make connections to other text/sources.

Students should then make **questions** out of the titles, images, and bold words. By turning the title, "Prophet Muhammad," into a question—Who was Muhammad?—students should be able to focus on reading to answer the question. This helps to eliminate the extraneous, but interesting, information. Students can concentrate on finding the information that answers the questions.

The third part of the strategy is the



easiest...**read**. Students need to actually read the information.

The fourth and final step is to **review**. I tell the students not to wait to the end to complete this step. The chapters are divided into numbered sections. Each section begins with the number of the chapter and then has the number of the section. Chapter 8 has sections 8.1 through 8.9. Thus, there are nine different sections in chapter eight.

After each section students should **pause** and review. Chapter 8 section 2 is titled, "Arabia During Muhammad's Time." Students should be able to locate and define "Arabia". Students should be able to relate who Muhammad was and why he was important (besides being one of the Super Best Friends from South Park). After reviewing the information students might need to reread the section if they cannot answer the questions.

After all questions have been answered for the section students should write a few brief notes to help them remember the most important information—but only after completing the SQRR for the section. If students take notes as they read then their notes resemble a Xerox—almost everything that is in the textbook is in the notes. Organized notes are effective notes. Symbols, drawings, spacing, "marking", etc. all help to create meaningful notes. It is a skill that I endeavor to teach and we will work on it all year.

CURRENT EVENT #6

Make-up and missing presentations proceed on Monday (12/8). We will review the 15 most significant and interesting current events on Tuesday (12/9), and students will complete an individual quiz on Friday (12/12).

The two issues of continued concern are putting the "what" of the article in one's words and the proper format for citation. We have reviewed the expectations, help has been offered, and examples for the citation are on the assignment sheet.

ISLAM (7th)

History returns to the book.

For the past several weeks we have been exploring Islam. We continue with an examination of the contributions of Muslims to world civilization and the development of Islamic empires after the Crusades. Students will be reading chapters 10-11 in their history books as well as completing chapter notes.

Next week, we will finish chapter 11 and focus on the map of the Arabian Peninsula. Eventually, students will take a test on Thursday, December 18th. It will have multiple-choice questions, a map, and an essay.

Students who are leaving early for break need to take the test prior to vacation.



COLONIAL LIFE (8th)

History returns to the book.

For the past several weeks we have been exploring Colonial America. We continue with a chapter in Zinn's book on the reality of who the colonists were. Students will be reading chapter 3 in Zinn and completing a chapter assignment—due at the beginning of class on Thursday (12/11).

Next week, we will focus on the map and geographic features of the colonies. Eventually, students will take a test on Thursday, December 18th. It will have multiple-choice questions, a map, and an essay.

Students who are leaving early for break need to take the test prior to vacation.



2ND SEMESTER NOVELS

The second semester will focus on reading and discussing novels within small groups. Students will read a novel for 3rd quarter with one group, and then a different novel during 4th quarter with a different group. Third quarter novels need to be [Newbery Medal winners](#) owing to the fact that the novel project is a "90 Second Newbery Film." 4th quarter novels have no requirement other than good literature.

Students need to start gathering ideas for discussion novels. Ask peers, parents, librarians, use web site recommendations, etc. 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, and teachers. 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 after winter break. Students will list their top choices and I will organize groups based on choices. Students (and parental units) will have a little time and wiggle room to alter choices and groupings, but by Tuesday, January 20th 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 West Sylvan's library.

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.

