

June 2018

**Dear Student/Parents –**

Welcome to the Advanced Placement Language & Composition/Honors American History program for the upcoming school year. Students will learn to analyze, discuss, and critically think about a wide variety of texts in preparation for the AP exam in May (*all students are required to take this exam*) and college. To help start the year on solid footing, you will find requirements below for the summer reading assignment and a list of books and supplies for the school year. *All the books are required reading for the class.*

1. Students need to get copies of the following books for the school year:

- a) *Welcome to the Monkey House*, Kurt Vonnegut
- b) *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald
- c) *Song of Solomon*, Toni Morrison
- d) *The Bean Trees*, Barbara Kingsolver
- e) *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien
- f) *Salvage the Bones*, Jesmyn Ward
- g) *Into the Wild*, Jon Krakauer

2. Students will need to get the following supplies

- 1 composition notebook
- Black and blue pens
- Highlighters 3 different colors
- a flash/jump drive
- Post-it notes and tabs of various sizes and colors
- 1 three ring binder for keeping a portfolio of your classroom work with a minimum 5 dividers

3. Students will read all of *Welcome to the Monkey House* over the summer and complete the attached homework (questions and Dialectical Journals)

Students need to familiarize themselves with the Dialectical Journal model, which I have attached. Please complete 3 Dialectical Journals (DJ) for *Welcome to the Monkey House*. One DJ focused on tone, one on syntax, and one on diction. You will find instructions and an example of a Dialectical Journal later in this document.

If you have a question, please find (room D208) or contact ([rojones@lwsd.org](mailto:rojones@lwsd.org)) me before the end of the school year. Bring summer reading assignments with you on the first day of school. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

**Ms. Emma Nelson**

**Ms. Christina deVidal NBCT**

**Mr. Rob Jones NBCT**



Throughout the year you will use the following terms in essays and written responses. The following words will be particularly useful when writing any kind of **Literary Analysis** (which you will do often). You will also concentrate on these words when working on **Dialectical Journals**...

- Diction – Word choice; viewed on scales of
  - Formality/ informality
  - Concreteness/abstraction
  - Denotative value/connotative value
- Syntax – The arrangement—ordering, grouping, and placement—of words within a sentence.
- Tone – Attitude of the author toward the reader or the subject matter of a literary work.
  - Examples: serious, playful, mocking, angry, commanding ... so forth
- Atmosphere – The general feeling created in the reader or audience by a literary work. Closely linked to ‘mood.’
- Audience – The person or persons who listen to a spoken text or read a written one and are capable of responding to it.

## **The Dialectical Journal**

**Dialectical Journal:** A way for students to interact with the text as they are reading it. Dialectical Journals provide continual commentary on an author’s diction, syntax, and tone throughout pieces of literature (novels, plays...) DJs often supply the brainstorming, or the ideas that will then be used in formal essays. They push students to focus on the text and their own commentary, while keeping them above a mere plot synopsis. Appearing similar to a T-chart, DJs are easy to keep in a notebook or on a computer.

*"I wasn't from the town, not originally, so I would always be an outsider" (181).*

*This quotation shows Alexie's blend of a tragic and humorous tone. He uses this tone frequently in the novel. It often deals with very heady and messy emotional situations.*

*"How often do you hear the words "Indian" and "college" in the same sentence? Especially in my family. Especially in my tribe" (180).*

*Alexie uses a rhetorical question here for effect. The tone is almost ominous and forebidding. His use of non-standard syntax adds to his effective simulation of adolescent thoughts and speech patterns.*

*"Rowdy and I pretended that we weren't looking at each other. But, man, oh, man, we were sending some serious hate signals across the gym" (190).*

*Alexie uses a non-standard syntax here again. His continual use of this form reinforces the narrative voice of a young boy. His tone is matter-of-fact in this quote. The speaker is attempting to be ok with the uncomfortable situation.*

These quotations are from Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. There are 3 quotes above, but **you will need 5 quotes for each Dialectical Journal**. Please note: quotes go on the left and *your* commentary goes on the right.