

## Rising 8th Grade Language Arts Summer Reading and Essay Assignment

Welcome to 8th Grade Language Arts. I'm looking forward to a great school year with you! Below you will find your Summer Reading Assignments. This work is due the first day of the new school year. Late work will not be accepted. Please follow all instructions and be mindful of presentation; each page should be typed or neatly written in blue or black ink. This assignment will be a significant grade. Make sure your name and the title of the text is clearly printed on each sheet. Hard copies only will be accepted.

Texts (You must read both texts. We will be discussing them during the first week of school):

- The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
- The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

### **Assignment 1 (You must complete this assignment for both texts):**

Character List: For each text, you will keep a list of major characters including a thorough description and a quote from the text that you feel represents them. For each text, you should have a **MINIMUM of six characters**. Be sure to explain **WHY** the quote is representative of the character. Include the page number where you found the quote. Follow the format below to complete this portion of the assignment:

Character	Description	Quote
Atticus Finch	Atticus Finch is the father of Scout and Jem Finch. Atticus is a lawyer in a small town in Alabama called Maycomb. Atticus believes in treating everyone with the utmost respect. He believes it's important to defend a Black man because the courts are the one place where all men are treated equally. He wishes to cure the town of its disease: racism.	"First of all," he said, "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view [...] until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." Pg. 85 This quote represents Atticus because he makes an effort to really understand where other people are coming from. For example, when Walter Cunningham comes over, he engages him in a conversation about farming.

**Assignment 2 (You must choose one text with which to complete this assignment):**

Theme Essay: A theme is a lesson or message that the reader takes away from the story, like loyalty or good vs. evil. It is never stated in the text, but the reader can infer themes by reading between the lines of a story. There are many different themes in every story. Pick **three themes** found in *The Outsiders* or *The Secret Life of Bees*. Write a 5-paragraph essay explaining themes you picked and use examples to prove that your themes are in the story along with short, 1-2 sentence quotes (examples taken word-for-word from the story, like the ones you chose in Assignment 1). Be sure to use the standard format for a 5-paragraph essay. You will need a 3-4 sentence introductory paragraph, three 4-6 sentence body paragraphs (one to explain each theme you chose), and a 3-4 sentence conclusion paragraph. This essay should be typed, double-spaced, and in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Follow MLA conventions for this assignment, including headers and titles.

Final Notes: Please put forth your best effort on this assignment. It is very important that I get an authentic representation of your writing abilities at the start of the school year.

It is obvious when a student copies and pastes character descriptions or theme analyses from online sources. Copying any content will result in a grade of zero and a discipline referral.

Happy Reading!