

## **Grade 8 Literature**

### **2010-2011 Summer Reading**

All incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders are required to read two books this summer: George Orwell's *Animal Farm* for literature and Esther Forbes' *Johnny Tremain* for US history. Students will be tested on both books during the first full week of classes in the fall. Additionally, both literature classes will read John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* in October and it is strongly recommended that students have their own personal copy of this book (a limited number of copies will be available to borrow from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers).

Students are encouraged to take notes as they read both *Animal Farm* and *Johnny Tremain* during the summer. Study guide questions for *Animal Farm* are attached. For *Johnny Tremain*, we have provided three active reading charts, a map of 18<sup>th</sup> century Boston and some additional study guide questions. Students will be permitted to use their completed study guides or active reading charts and any additional notes on the tests on the two books.

## Study Guide Questions for Animal Farm

1. Describe how the Rebellion takes place. How does the animals' behavior during the Rebellion suggest both human and animal characteristics?
2. The major characters in Animal Farm are introduced in the first four chapters. Complete the chart by noting details that describe each character or by listing key actions.

<b>Character</b>	<b>Characteristics/Actions/Purpose</b>
<i>Old Major</i>	<i>Gets the revolution started; inspires hope for real change; teaches the animals the song "Beasts of England"</i>
Snowball	
Napoleon	
Squealer	
Boxer	
Clover	
Benjamin	
The Sheep	

3. According to Snowball, what is the essential principle of Animalism?
4. What methods does Napoleon use to persuade the other animals to follow his rules?

5. Each time the animals question Napoleon's interpretation of the farm rules, Squealer suggests they've misunderstood those rules. Trace some of the changes Napoleon makes to the rules, and the animals' reactions to those changes.
  
6. What changes are made to the Fifth and Sixth Commandments? By the end of the book, how is the entire list of Commandments ultimately changed?
  
7. Compare the living conditions of the pigs with those of other animals.
  
8. What major change in the pigs occurs in Chapter 10? Is this change a sign of progress? Explain.
  
9. Read the description of the animals' lives in Chapter 10. Do you think the animals' lives have changed significantly from the beginning of the book to the end?
  
10. A *fable* is a brief story, usually with animal characters, that teaches a lesson or moral. What is the lesson or moral in *Animal Farm*?