



April 29, 2011

Dear Upper School Parents:

The English Department is embarking on an exciting summer reading project that is designed to encourage students to read across the curriculum, develop a familiarity with contemporary nonfiction works, and practice reading strategies that allow for successful navigation of texts focused on specialized and interesting subjects that lie outside the traditional realm of literature. Each year, the Upper School English teachers will select one stimulating, accessible, and well-constructed book as a Department-wide summer reading work and assign the text to a range of grades in the Upper School. Teaching nonfiction works will also allow us to enhance students' comprehension of the kinds of general texts that are included in the reading comprehension sections of the PSAT and SAT examinations.

In the inaugural year of this project, we have selected Neil Shubin's *Your Inner Fish* for Grades Ten through Twelve. Neil Shubin's study of the biological history of humans is a fascinating and gripping survey, not only of cutting edge developments in the fields of biology and paleontology, but also of dedicated scientists who work in concert with one another to explore the elegant and complex biology of the human body as well as the magnificent and meaningful patterns of the natural world.

Because this is a work assigned in English classes, students will not be expected to become experts in the subject matter. Rather, our hope is that students will practice reading the work of an expert in a specialized field to extract the main ideas and to appreciate the challenge of writing for an educated general audience. In our writing assignments we will ask students to respond to the book as sophisticated readers, not as experts in biology. We also hope that the book will provide students with a memorable and enjoyable reading experience.

Students in Grade Nine will once again read *Into the Wild*, Jon Krakauer's beautifully written study of a young man who casts off the restrictions of modern life to attempt to live a life close to nature. The journey of the protagonist of this work sets up the motif of the Journey of the Hero, the thematic focus of the Ninth Grade English.

We look forward to reviewing both *Your Inner Fish* and *Into the Wild* in our Upper School classes next year. If you or your children have any questions about the summer reading work – both the nonfiction selections as well as the works of fiction – please contact me at anowakowski@viewpoint.org.

Thank you for your support of our reading program,

Sincerely yours,

Amanda Nowakowski, PhD
English Department Chair



Middle School Summer Reading: 2011

Grade Six

- ❖ *When You Reach Me*, Rebecca Stead. ISBN: 9780375850868
- ❖ *A Wrinkle in Time*, Madeleine L'Engle. ISBN: 9780312367541

Please read *A Wrinkle in Time* **before** *When You Reach Me*.

Grade Seven

- ❖ *Farewell To Manzanar*, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston. ISBN: 9780553272581
- ❖ *Half Brother*, Kenneth Oppel. ISBN: 9780545229258

Grade Eight

- ❖ *The Secret Life of Bees*, Sue Monk Kidd. ISBN: 0142001740
- ❖ *Lost in Yonkers*, Neil Simon. ISBN: 9780452268838



Upper School Summer Reading: 2011

English I, Grade 9

- ❖ *Into the Wild*, Jon Krakauer. ISBN: 0385486804
- ❖ *The Bean Trees*, Barbara Kingsolver. ISBN: 9780061097317

English II, Grade 10

- ❖ *1984*, George Orwell. ISBN: 9780451524935
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459

English II Honors, Grade 10

- ❖ *1984*, George Orwell. ISBN: 9780451524935
- ❖ *Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens. ISBN: 9780141439563
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459

American Masterworks, Grade 11

- ❖ *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien. ISBN: 9780767902892
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459

AP English Language, Grade 11

- ❖ *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien. ISBN: 9780767902892
- ❖ *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston. ISBN: 9780061120060
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459

World Literature, Grade 12

- ❖ *The Physicists*, Friedrich Dürrenmatt. ISBN: 9780802150882
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459

AP English Literature, Grade 12

- ❖ *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë. ISBN: 9780393975420
- ❖ *Madame Bovary*, Gustave Flaubert. ISBN: 9780140449129
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459

World Literature Honors, Grade 12

- ❖ *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë. ISBN: 9780393975420
- ❖ *Madame Bovary*, Gustave Flaubert. ISBN: 9780140449129
- ❖ *Your Inner Fish*, Neil Shubin. ISBN: 9780307277459