FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 9 HONORS ENGLISH:

1. Read *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck and answer attached packet of focus questions.

2. Choose one of the following titles:
   a. *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch
      A young father is diagnosed with terminal cancer and writes his advice for life to his young children.
   b. *Freedom Writer’s Diaries* by Erin Gruwell
      A group of at-risk teenagers and their idealistic teacher draw parallels between the challenges of growing up in Long Beach and during various wars.
   c. *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
      Four Chinese-American girls struggle to find their identity as Americans while their mothers struggle to convey the sacrifices they have made for such an opportunity.
   d. *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez
      The Mirabel sisters gain fame as “the Butterflies” as word of their bold resistance against a Dominican Republic dictator spreads.

Read your selection. You are encouraged to take notes while you read; however, this is not required. During the first week of your English class, you will hold a GRADED in-class discussion on characters, setting, plot, and themes present in the novel.
Of Mice and Men, by John Steinbeck

Summer Reading for students entering Grade 9 at Garnet Valley High School

Before Reading

Background Information: John Steinbeck is considered one of the greatest storytellers of the twentieth century. Of Mice and Men is a classic that tells the story of two working class men united by friendship and a common dream. The setting of the novella is the farm country of California’s Salinas Valley just following the Great Depression. Most of the story takes place on a farm and you should know that it was very common for farmers to employ temporary workers to harvest the crop. In order to understand the first chapter, you should know that Lennie is mentally disabled and George has assumed responsibility for caring for him.

Question 1. Many of the characters in this novel are trying to achieve their dreams or goals. Describe in 3 to 5 sentences your short-term goals for this school year.

Question 2. Friendship is an important element in this novel. How does friendship play a role in your life? Explain.

During Reading

Directions: Answer the following reading guide questions in complete sentences.

Ch. 1

1. Describe George Milton in detail.

2. Describe Lennie Small in detail.

3. What is Lennie’s major problem?

4. What dream of the future do Lennie and George have? What do they want to own? List five animals that they want.

Ch. 2

5. Give three reasons why the boss is immediately suspicious of George and Lennie.

6. Who is Curley and what is he like?
7. Describe Curley’s wife.

8. George tells Lennie to stay away from what two people? Why?

Ch. 3
9. Give five facts about Candy. Be sure to include why he becomes important to George and Lennie.

10. What gift does Slim give Lennie? How does Lennie act after getting his present? What problems can you foresee?

11. Give three reasons why Lennie and Curley fight.


Ch. 4
13. Describe Crooks. Include a physical description and facts about his living quarters.

14. Crooks understands the relationship between George and Lennie better than some ranch hands. What is it about his life that enables him to understand?

15. Describe Curley’s wife’s personality and life. Include facts about her home life and how she treats people.

16. Why does Crooks change his mind about going with George, Lennie and Candy?

Ch. 5
17. What happened to Lennie’s puppy?

18. Give two reasons why Curley’s wife wants to talk to Lennie.

19. Describe the incident between Curley’s wife and Lennie and why he panics.

20. What does Candy, the old swamper, discover?
Ch. 6
21. Where does Lennie go?

22. With what two characters does Lennie have an imaginary conversation?

23. What two events cause tension and suspense in this chapter?

24. What are two reasons for George’s actions?

25. Who comforts George at the end of the chapter?

Dream Chart
Next to each character’s name, list at least two dreams that he/she had in the novel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Dreams</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lennie:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Curley:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candy:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crooks:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Curley’s Wife</td>
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After Reading

Write a letter to a friend explaining your personal reaction to the book. You should describe what you liked, what you did not like, and what you would change about the novel. Be sure to include your favorite quote or passage and explain why it means something to you.