



WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL

4600 FALLS ROAD
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21209

May 2008

Dear Families:

Research has shown how important it is for students to read and read often. The following points are from *Reading In and Out of Schools*, a publication prepared by the Educational Testing Service for the US Department of Education, and *Patterns of Reading Practice*, a 1996 publication of The Institute for Academic Excellence:

- **The amount of reading that students do for school, and do out of school are both positively related to their reading achievement.**
- **Students who reported discussing their reading had higher average reading achievement than students who reported never having this opportunity.**
- **When ranked according to the amount of reading they do, students in the top 5 percent read 144 times more than students in the bottom 5 percent.**
- **Students in private schools practice reading 67 percent more than public school students.**

Because you have chosen Western as the institution to prepare your daughter for college, we take this responsibility seriously. In an effort to help her become truly learned and to increase her standing among the many students with whom she will compete for college placement, Western's English Department requires that she continue to read and think over the summer. As an eleventh-grade student as of August 2008, your daughter will be expected to have read, responded to in writing, and to have copies of the following works:

***The Crucible* by Arthur Miller**

(ISBN 978 - 0142437339)

***Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

(ISBN 978 - 0060838676)

Students will present their Summer Reading Assignments upon returning to school and should be ready for both **oral and written assessment** of their reading and their journal responses. The assigned literature may be purchased at most local bookstores; Greetings and Readings and Barnes and Noble are the best sources. It is extremely important that all students have the same books (same ISBN publications) so that they can work together and with the teacher more efficiently.

Because the works listed above will be used throughout the 11th grade course (including the research paper), it is imperative that your daughter has ***her own paperback copy of each title***. We are also requiring that each junior have her own copy of the most recent edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. This is a resource that will help her with not only successful completion of her 11th grade research paper, but will also be of great use senior year and in college. This book is available in the reference section of most bookstores.

Please ensure that your daughter has the **summer reading texts as soon as possible** so that reading and response can be completed before her return to school in August. Because this preparatory assignment will be time-consuming, we encourage your daughter to begin no later than early July. As a junior who has learned how to read and respond to literature, and who has been notified in advance of what is required (unlike students new to Western), she is expected to have her work on the first day of class.

We hope that the summer vacation will be exciting, refreshing, and productive. We applaud your daughter's successful completion of her course work thus far, work that has enabled her to continue as a member of the Western family. Additionally, we appreciate your support of this summer reading program, a must for students planning to go to college. You may call Celia Rocca, our English Department Head (410-396-7040), if you have any questions or concerns.