



## English I Required Summer Reading 8<sup>th</sup> Grade going into 9<sup>th</sup> Grade



Research shows that students who read, score better on verbal tests and write more effectively. Since this is one of our academic goals at ACA, we are requiring all Secondary Students to read two books during the summer. One book has already been selected by your teacher and you are to select an additional book from the list below.

All English I students are required to read *The Count of Monte Cristo (Alexandre Dumas.)* There will be a quiz on the second day of school. This is the book that we will be analyzing during the first grading period; in order to complete this unit successfully, students must have read this book prior to the start of school. Review characters' names, plot, conflicts, setting, author's purpose, and themes prior to testing. Be sure to take study notes as you read! However, notes will not be used on tests! Students are also required to complete a Paper Bag Project (see below).

**You must have a copy of the required book for the first 3 weeks of class.**

For the second book, students are required to choose a book from the list below and complete the attached Major Works Data Sheet. The assignment for the second book is due on the first day of school.

### Required Book:

#### **The Count of Monte Cristo (Alexandre Dumas)**

Life takes an unexpected turn for the nineteen-year-old sailor Edmond Dantes'. Just as he is preparing to assume the role of ship's captain and marry the beautiful Mercedes, he is arrested and thrown into the forbidding Chateau d'If. He is innocent, the victim of a conspiracy. While in prison, Dante's only companions a "crazy" priest who has a plan for escape and knowledge of a secret treasure. The rest of this action-packed book chronicles Dantes' efforts to escape, find the treasure, exact revenge on his enemies, and win back the love of Mercedes. In order to accomplish his goals, he must first reenter society by assuming the identity of the noble, yet mysterious, Count of Monte Cristo.

#### **Paper Bag Project for *The Count of Monte Cristo* (due second day of school)**

Complete a paper bag project that displays your understanding of the novel you read over the summer. The OUTSIDE of your bag must contain:

- Your name and period
- Your book's title and author
- A picture that shows us what the novel is about (you can be creative with this)

The INSIDE of your bag must contain:

- Something that symbolizes the main character (protagonist)
- Something that tells us about the setting
- Something that symbolizes the message
- One page of writing (does not need to be typed, but must be legible) that explains your objects. Write in complete sentences and edit your writing.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Book - Choose one of the following and complete a Data Worksheet to be turned in on the first day of school:**

#### ***The Tale of Two Cities* (Charles Dickens)**

This historical novel, set in London and Paris during the French Revolution, is filled with suspenseful plot twists such as false accusations, look-alike characters, and bitter people thirsting for revenge. At the center of it all is Lucy Menette, whose father wavers between sanity and madness after spending eighteen years in French prison. During the Reign of Terror, a period of bloody purges and power struggles that followed the French Revolution, Lucy's husband is unjustly imprisoned. He is sentenced to die by the guillotine. Only a dramatic turn of events can save Lucy's husband from the swiftly falling blade.

### ***The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Robert Louis Stevenson)***

This is the story of a mild-mannered doctor who explores his dark side – with terrifying results. Fascinated with the idea of evil, the story's main character, Dr. Jekyll, develops a potion that changes him into a violent Mr. Hyde. Mr. Hyde stalks the dimly lit streets of Victorian London, free of the inhibitions that prevent most people from acting out their darkest desires. Before long, Jekyll loses control of the experiment and finds himself transforming into Hyde without the aid of the potion. This leaves him, along with the reader, to wonder which personality will finally win out.

### ***A Pocketful of Rye (Agatha Christie)***

Agatha Christie's character Miss Jane Marple makes an unusual detective. She is an inconspicuous old lady from the countryside who just happens to have a keen insight into the criminal mind. In *A Pocket Full of Rye*, Miss Marple is confronted with a troubling string of murders that begins with the death of a well-to-do businessman. For some mysterious reason, his pocket is stuffed with rye, a grain used in making whiskey and bread. Suspects are rounded up, but the murders continue and the police are baffled. Miss Marple steps in when her acquaintance, a maid, is murdered. A child's nursery rhyme is the unlikely key that enables her to unlock the mystery and identify a murderer that no one else suspected.

### ***The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Tales (Edgar Allan Poe)***

The title story of this book is a wild and fantastic tale told by a man visiting a childhood friend. His friend, Roderick Usher, is suffering from a psychological disorder causes dramatic mood swings and heightens his senses so much that even ordinary sensations are painful. Preoccupied by worries over his dying sister, Usher comes to believe that his gloomy old house is evil and alive. When his sister dies, Usher's condition worsens. The narrator's visit comes to a terrifying conclusion amidst the backdrop of a violent storm.

### ***The Miracle Worker (William Gibson)***

This moving play is based on the true story of Helen Keller, who was led blind, deaf, and unable to speak as a result of an illness she contracted as an infant. The title refers to Helen's teacher, Annie Sullivan, a young woman determined to meet the challenge of helping Helen to communicate. When Sullivan first meets Helen, the young girl is so isolated that no one can reach her. Helen reacts to her isolation with violent outbursts, and her desperation gives her surprising strength. Sullivan, half-blind herself, eventually manages to calm Helen and patiently teaches her to communicate with those around her. This play, Gibson's most famous, inspired an Academy Award winning movie.

Visit [www.aucilla.org](http://www.aucilla.org) for a complete listing of the summer Reading lists and assignments.

#### **Acquiring the books:**

- Books may be borrowed from a public or private library.
- Books may be purchased at bookstores such as Borders and Books-a-Million.
- Books may be purchased online (shipping will take several weeks, so please plan accordingly). Try [amazon.com](http://amazon.com); [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com); [ecampus.com](http://ecampus.com).
- Some books may be out of copyright and available FOR FREE in electronic format (e-readers, .pdf, .txt)