

IB ENGLISH II HL SUMMER READING

At the moment, we imagine that all of us have at least one thing in common: **excitement**. You are excited about the end of the school year, the prospects for a memorable summer, and finally becoming a senior; while we too are excited about the end of the school year and the prospects for a memorable summer, we also are especially excited about our wonderful opportunity to be your IB English II HL teacher next year.

As you also might imagine, we continually are busy plotting, planning, and creating a class and a curriculum that we hope you will enjoy, appreciate, and value greatly. One of the many requirements for the second year of this two-year course is a detailed study of one of Shakespeare's works. For any number of reasons, we have chosen *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*.

We ask that you please purchase, read, and carefully annotate your own copy of the play. (Please get the **Folger Shakespeare Library edition** – editions absolutely matter!). We ask that you please read the play **well**. We start the year with *Othello*, so you'll want to have read it **well** at least once before we begin. It will become the foundation for much of what you learn in class next year so please **take this seriously**. We also ask that you make sure that you are prepared to compare and to contrast *Othello* with the other Shakespearean works that you have read, and, in particular, with *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

To ensure that you take full advantage of this opportunity☺, we also ask that you be prepared to take a comprehensive quiz that will cover the play in its entirety, so please come to class with **two copies** of any and all **critical-thinking questions** that you have about the play (**no fewer than two questions from each of the five acts of the play**), questions that you will have ample opportunity to ask in class.

Beyond this, we also ask that you please re-familiarize yourself with one of E.B. White's classic tales: *Charlotte's Web*. We want you to read the book with an eye and ear towards reacquainting yourself with Mr. White's rather unique form of characterization, a characterization that includes carefully-crafted anthropomorphism designed for emotional impact.

Finally, please take a long, hard look at your **"Written Assignment"** from IB English I HL. Is it as good as it can be? Is it interesting? Is it in your voice? Does it convey both your interest in the subject and your fluency in the language of literature? Please read your assignment critically, match it against the IB I HL Written Assignment descriptors/rubric and especially against Mr. Cahir's or Ms. Risse's written and verbal comments. Please seriously engage in the process and **revise and edit** your paper appropriately.

Among other things, please make sure that each page of the **Written Assignment** is numbered and that the paper has an appropriate word count. Once the process is complete, **e-mail the paper to yourself**. (Storing it on a remote server obviates the possible panic caused by electronic failure). This paper, along with your **Reflective Statement** from the same work, is a major component of your IB English exam (25% of your total IB Exam score) grade, a part over which you have far more control than you know.

A **hard copy** of the **revised/edited** draft of your Written Assignment, along with a hard copy of your *Othello* questions are due when you return. (**That's two things** -- in case you have lost count -- both of which will receive a grade and both of which are due on Thursday/Friday of the first week of the school year).

Having said all that, please, please, please enjoy your final summer as a high-school student ("Gather ye rosebuds while ye may..."), and come back ready for what we hope will be a thought-provoking, exhilarating, and joyous senior year!

Ms. Guilmartin and Mr. Dahl