

Summer Reading, Etc.

Dear Meridian Students,

The summer is here and with it comes lots of time for independent reading. While we hope that all of you will be reading extensively in the coming months for the sheer pleasure of a good book, we also thought that it would be fun to have everyone read books together for a unified school reading experience and to prepare you for your upcoming classes.

If you have not tended to read much in past summers, please embrace the opportunity. A summer without reading is also a summer of lost academic growth. According to McGill-Franzen, Anne and Richard Allington's "[Lost Summers: For Some Children, Few Books and Few Opportunities to Read.](#)", students who don't engage in summer reading enter school 3 months behind where they left off the year before. Please visit a reading list at your local library, or email us for recommendations for further free reading.

Spanish and Math/Science review and readings will be sent separately.

Email any questions regarding summer reading to betsygrant@gmail.com .

We have ordered copies of the books from Rhythm and Muse, a Jamaica Plain bookstore, located at 470 Centre St, (617) 524-6622. The store offers a discount if you choose to buy your summer reading from them.

Have a great summer! – The Faculty

The whole school will read the following:

Mutant Message Down Under by Marlo Morgan

Complete the following assignments:

Part 1:

Choose at least **10** of the following question to answer thoughtfully. Length does not completely matter, but allow yourself to contemplate the question for a half-page or so. We will be sharing these, so please write carefully.

Chapter 2:

Look carefully at the last paragraph. Is she a captive? If so, to what? What role does fate play in this chapter?

Chapter 3

We've all heard of mind over matter. What role does this concept play in this chapter? In life in general?

Chapter 4

Do you believe in coincidences? In fate or free will? Has her experience been a result of fate or a series of coincidences?

Chapter 5

How does the disillusion of Aboriginal youth compare with the disillusion of American youth? In what ways is their experience different or the same from yours?

Chapter 6- choose 1

A: What strikes you the most about this chapter (food, medicine, etc.)?

B: What do you think about their name (Mutant) for her? What does it imply?

C: Does it only take one day to appreciate their culture? Is the same true for ours?

Chapter 7

Describe how the Aborigines view society and the universe. How is it similar to or different from the way you do / our society does?

Chapter 8

Pick a descriptive scene from the story and draw it. Copy the passage below the image.

Chapter 9

How can you apply this concept of surrender to your own life? Perhaps think about dealing with authority.

Chapter 10

Where is your value system at? Place the 10 most valuable things in your life in order. Could you function with non attachment?

Chapter 11

This chapter is so loaded with stuff... Pick your own thing to write about.

Chapter 12

How does Marlo's misperception of what happened with the dingoes demonstrate what happens when you misperceive? What can you do to help or change your tendency to do so?

Chapter 13

Why do the Real People keep asking about "forever"? What is it about forever that is important?

Why must we understand forever to understand their lesson?

Chapter 14

Choose an animal totem? What does this totem teach you?

Chapter 17

In their society they say no one talent is more valuable than another. Why does our society deem some things more valuable than others?

Chapter 18

Write down a dream you've had. Try to interpret its meaning

Chapter 20- choose 1

A: Explain, in your own words, the Real People's view of religion. How does this compare with your view of religion?

B: We only see the differences between people (ourselves and others especially), but they see the sameness between all. Why?

Chapter 21

Explain why you think a change in consciousness changes reality.

Chapter 22

What is your impression of what happened to the Aborigines when the British came to Australia?

How is it similar to or different from what happened to the Native Americans in America? How can we prevent this from happening again? Is there a part of the world where it is happening now?

Chapter 23

What do you think of the Real People's decision to let their people die off? Why did they choose Marlo to deliver their message? If being a mutant is a state of mind, are you a mutant?

Chapter 26

What is your special talent? Think simply, not necessarily by what our society values. What is it you can offer? Give yourself a new name.

Part 2:

Document (in writing) a journey that you have taken. It can be a physical journey like a move or vacation, a spiritual journey like coming to terms with a new idea, or a conceptual journey like understanding long division. At minimum, you should write a page, but we encourage you to delve in, apply your best creative/expository writing skills and do your best, most complete work.

Next year's Media and Journalism class (Division 1 grades 6 and 7) please read:

Nothing But The Truth: A Documentary Novel by Avi

Complete the following assignments:

1) Using your reading as a jumping-off point or source of inspirations, create your own activity which should reflect both:

- 1) An understanding of a theme within the book
- 2) Your creative self. Feel free to experiment and explore with any one or more of several mediums, such as . . .

- ORIGINAL WRITING (poetry, prose, script writing for stage, film, or video/TV)
- ORIGINAL ARTWORK (drawing, painting or sculpture)
- ORIGINAL MUSIC (music and/or lyrics)
- ORIGINAL MEDIA PRODUCTIONS (photography, slide presentation, video, film, etc.)

2) Document (by underlining, making notes in your margin or listing page numbers) the places in the book where the media appears. Write about their role: What problems do they create? How are they helpful? What mistakes do they make?