



New Braunfels High School

2551 Loop 337 North • New Braunfels, Texas 78130

(830) 627-6000 • Fax (830) 627-6001

English 4: Optional Summer Reading Assignment 2019

Your optional summer reading assignment will focus on *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson.

As English 4 is largely based on the study of British literature, reading this novella will add to a student's understanding of the themes prevalent during the Victorian Age. Many students are surprised to learn that, while they thought they knew the plot of the story, the original work is much different than its modern counterparts.

Reading challenging works over the summer will keep students' minds engaged, as well as add to the class discussion of popular themes, such as good versus evil, reason v. the supernatural and the limits of scientific experimentation. With this in mind, students should plan to read this work slowly and thoughtfully, paying particular attention to Stevenson's style (to include plot structure, characterization and imagery). Students should annotate the work as they read, marking literary elements, interesting quotes, motifs and possible themes. It is essential that students read and analyze the original work. They must understand that simply reading a synopsis of the plot (to include "SparkNotes" or any other "study guide") or searching online for analysis will not substitute for understanding the original work.

Another advantage of this summer reading is the opportunity to have an extra test grade for the first grading cycle. Should a student decide to complete the summer reading assignment, he or she should be prepared to take an objective exam to demonstrate mastery of the plot upon return to school in the fall. This could positively affect the overall grade average. If a student chooses not to do the summer reading, there will be no penalty, but there will not be another opportunity for an additional test grade. The due date for the summer reading activity is **Friday, September 13, 2019**. Late examinations will not be offered.

Purchasing a copy of the novella will allow students to annotate the text, a skill that must be practiced throughout the year to ensure successful use in potential college courses. Of course, students might also check out the book from the public library. However, several websites offer the full text and it may be found online by searching for "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde online text."