



THE MASTER'S SCHOOL

American Literature, English 11 *Mrs. Jessica Sperry*

Summer Assignment

All students entering American Literature are required to read *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane and *Into the Wild*, by Jon Krakauer. Students are also required to write an essay on *The Red Badge of Courage* and make annotations throughout *Into the Wild*. Students are strongly encouraged to purchase their own paperback or hardcover copy of *Into the Wild*, because upon returning to school, students will be required to compose an in-class, open-book essay about the book.

***Into the Wild* Assignment**

Directions: As you read *Into the Wild*, make annotations throughout the book. These can be written in the book itself, or can be written on Post-It notes throughout the book. These annotations can be brief (several words to a sentence), and should provide some sort of meaningful comment that shows you are engaging in the text and thinking critically about it. You should have at least one annotation every few pages. Please bring the book, with annotations, to school at the start of the year so that I can give you credit for it. You will also be required to write an in-class essay, using only the book and annotations, during the third week of school.

***The Red Badge of Courage* Assignment**

After reading *The Red Badge of Courage*, write a five-paragraph essay of about three pages in length. This essay should include your own original ideas; do not include ideas from Shmoop, SparkNotes, or other similar sources. This essay will be due by the third week of school. You may choose from one of the two essay options below:

Option #1: Think about how Henry Fleming’s character grows up over the course of the novel. How is he different at the novel’s end than he was at its beginning? What has he left behind and what has he gained? What has inspired or forced Henry to grow up? After you have developed an opinion about the topic of growing up in *The Red Badge of Courage*, state it in a thesis sentence, introduced in your first paragraph. Support your thesis with clearly organized paragraphs and evidence from the text. Form a conclusion in your final paragraph.

Option #2: Compare and contrast the way Crane presents war in *The Red Badge of Courage* with the way another work of literature or a film presents war. The other work you choose does not have to be set in the Civil War. For example, you might choose to compare *The Red Badge of Courage* to a film you have seen about World War II or the Vietnam War. Remember, however, that you should choose the other work wisely; there should be a basis for comparison, or a reason why the reader would find the comparison and contrast interesting. Remember to support your thesis with evidence from both works in the body of your essay, and write a final paragraph concluding your comparison of the two.