

History Summer Reading

All 2009-2010 7th and 8th graders will read a book for history class during the summer of 2009. Students will answer 6 questions for their book on paper. Processed on a word processor is preferred. This assignment will count towards the grade of the 1st trimester and will be worth 100 points total.

7th grade students must read *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* by Avi. This book is set in Medieval England and is an adventure story, with local lords trying to capture and kill the young Crispin.

8th grade students must read *Johnny Tremain* by Esther Forbes. This book is set in Boston, Massachusetts during the years before the American Revolution. Johnny gets caught up in the events leading up to the revolution and meets many of the important people who shaped our nations early years.

Books should be available in quantity at Booksmart in Morgan Hill, but also in Barnes and Noble and can be purchased online.

Students will read their assigned books and answer questions on the reading. Answers are due on the **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL – AUGUST 21ST**. Late work will be accepted but will received a reduced score. Each answer should be approximately 1 paragraph in length (ie...5 – 6 sentences). Questions are on the back of this page.

Please contact me if you have any questions at dcross@esmh.org

7th Grade Questions:

1. Describe the life of a serf. What is their relationship with Lord Furnival and what rights do they have?
2. After Crispin gives his sacred oath to Bear, he regrets it, thinking “far better to have died on the road.” What causes him to think his fate is so bleak? Why does he believe he must keep his oath? What does that tell you about his character?
3. Why does Crispin disobey Bear and leave the Green Man tavern? Is Bear’s reaction when he sees Crispin what you expected?
4. How does Crispin’s view of the world change over the course of his travels? Does seeing more of the world change the way he behaves or the things he believes?
5. The book constantly explores the notion of what it means to be “free.” Are there different kinds of freedom presented in the book? If so, describe them briefly. How do you think Crispin finally comes to define “freedom.”
6. Why do you think Avi chose to write about a nameless boy instead of a lord or prince or knight? What aspects of medieval life would a peasant experience that a prince would not?

8th Grade Questions:

1. Describe Johnny's position and his behavior in the Lapham household. What does his behavior reveal about his character?
2. Following his accident, what obstacles does Johnny face as he tries to redirect his life? How does Johnny’s friend Rab help him?
3. Explain the British tax on colonial tea. What response is planned by Sam Adams and the other Observers? How does Johnny help implement these plans?
4. What positions in favor of revolution are argued by Sam Adams and James Otis? How does Johnny react to Otis’ words?
5. Explain how the Minute Men learn of the British Army’s actual battle plans. What do these efforts reveal about the Patriots’ commitment to independence?
6. Summarize what happens after Johnny finds Rab at Lexington. At the end of the novel, what decision does Johnny make about his future? What does this decision reveal about his values and character?