



Dear Future 8<sup>th</sup> grade Vanguard English Language Arts student,

We are thrilled to welcome you to the FBMS 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELAR Vanguard team! In preparation for a very exciting, very busy school year, you are asked to complete the below summer reading project to be handed in the first week of classes, no later than Friday, September 4th.

The project is designed to give you the opportunity to choose a novel that is new to you – one that you've never read or studied before in another class (that would make for a very dull summer!) – and to create an original work based on your analysis of the story.

Note – you will have the opportunity to present your completed projects to a younger audience during the fall semester as a way to encourage enthusiasm for and interest in reading...so remember to be as creative and engaging as possible!

#### Assignment Instructions:

- **Choose one new book** from the attached recommended reading list to read over the summer.
- Complete the **literary analysis packet** – 3 activities total
- Choose one **project** to complete (see "Project Guidelines" page for details):
  - Create a 30-second movie trailer for your book
  - Convert your story into a short graphic novel or children's book
  - Write a Scene-Changer skit

#### Grading:

All materials are due Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup> (the second week of school) to your ELAR teacher. You will have the opportunity to present your project during the first six-weeks for extra credit (details to be provided the first week of school).

- **Vocabulary log** – 20 pts.
- **Character analysis chart** – 20 pts.
- **Plot diagram** – 20 pts.
- **Project** (see "Guidelines" for rubric) – 40 pts.
- **Extra credit opportunity** – 5 pts. added to total project grade

Total possible = 105 pts.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or general thoughts to share, please do contact either of your teachers via the email addresses given below. Have a Wonderful Summer, and Happy Reading!

## **FBMS Vanguard ELA/R Summer Recommended Reading List – Grade 8**

### **The House on Mango Street – Sandra Cisneros**

The House on Mango Street is a 1984 coming-of-age novel by Mexican-American writer Sandra Cisneros. It deals with Esperanza Cordero, a young Latino girl, and her life growing up in Chicago with Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. Esperanza is determined to "say goodbye" to her impoverished Latino neighborhood. Major themes include her quest for a better life and the importance of her promise to come back for "the ones [she] left behind". [Amazon Paperback (new) \$6.22, Amazon Kindle \$6.83, Houston Public Library: Available at

### **A Tree Grows in Brooklyn – Betty Smith**

Francie Nolan, avid reader, penny-candy connoisseur, and adroit observer of human nature, has much to ponder in colorful, turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. She grows up with a sweet, tragic father, a severely realistic mother, and a brother who will always be the favored child. Francie learns early the meaning of hunger and the value of a penny. Like the Tree of Heaven that grows out of cement, resourceful Francie struggles against all odds to survive and thrive. [Houston Public Library: Available for free download (e-book), available at several branches, see HPL Catalog for details.]

### **Make Lemonade – Virginio Euwer Wolff**

Viginia Euwer Wolff's groundbreaking novel, written in free verse, tells the story of fourteen-year-old LaVaughn, who is determined to go to college--she just needs the money to get there. When she answers a babysitting ad, LaVaughn meets Jolly, a seventeen-year-old single mother with two kids by different fathers. As she helps Jolly make lemonade out of the lemons her life has given her, LaVaughn learns some lessons outside the classroom. [Amazon Paperback (new) \$8.09, Houston Public Library: Available Available at several branches, see HPL Catalog for details.]

### **The Book Thief – Markus Zusak**

It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist--books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement. [Amazon Paperback (new) \$7.94, Amazon Kindle \$7.54, Houston Public Library: Available at several branches, see HPL Catalog for details.]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Project Guidelines and Grading Rubric

Choose one of the below three projects to complete after reading your novel:

- **30-Second Movie Trailer** – Imagine your book is being turned into a movie and that you have been selected to create a 30-second trailer to advertise the film to potential viewers. You may use any method available to you to film and edit your 30-second trailer, which should include a title slide, information about the setting, main character(s), and plot. Some suggestions are: live-action (filmed using a camera using actors), Photo Story 3 (free downloadable software), and Screencast-O-Matic (online program used to record a PowerPoint presentation with audio).
- **Convert your story into a short graphic novel or children's book** – Summarize your novel and convert it into a graphic novel or children's book. Your work should include a title page (cover), should summarize the main plot points (rising action, climax, falling action, resolution), characters, and setting of the novel, and should include a minimum of 12 illustrated pages (for a children's book), or 7 illustrated pages (for a graphic novel).
- **Write a Scene-Changer skit** – Choose one scene from your novel in which a main character makes a decision that has an effect on the plot of the story. Imagine a *different* decision the character could have made, and use this to create a 5-7 page original script that shows the conflict, new decision, and new outcome of the scene. Your script should include a title page, a 1-paragraph description of the setting [*in brackets*], and 5-7 pages of original character dialogue.

### Grading Rubric

Novel Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Points Possible	Score
Accurately portrays the characters and events of the novel	15	
Includes major plot elements (rising action, climax, falling action, resolution)	15	
Creative/Original	10	
Organized and includes title page (or title slide)	10	
Followed Guidelines	5	
Shows Time and Effort	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	

Teacher Comments

Class Period \_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary Log

Find **10 words** from your selected novel that you are not already familiar with to complete the exercise below.

[illegible]

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Class Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Character Analysis

**Choose one main character** from your novel that you would like to “get to know” better, and use the below chart to **identify** ten quotes the author uses to describe that character’s role in the story, physical traits, personality, and actions.\*

Novel Title/Author \_\_\_\_\_

Novel Character \_\_\_\_\_

Page #	"Quote" – cite a quote from the story that provides evidence of one of your character's traits (ex. appearance, speech, thoughts, actions, or reactions of others to your character)	Character Trait – what does this quote reveal about your character? (Is it a positive trait? A negative trait? Does it demonstrate a change in your character over time?)

\*Use additional paper if needed

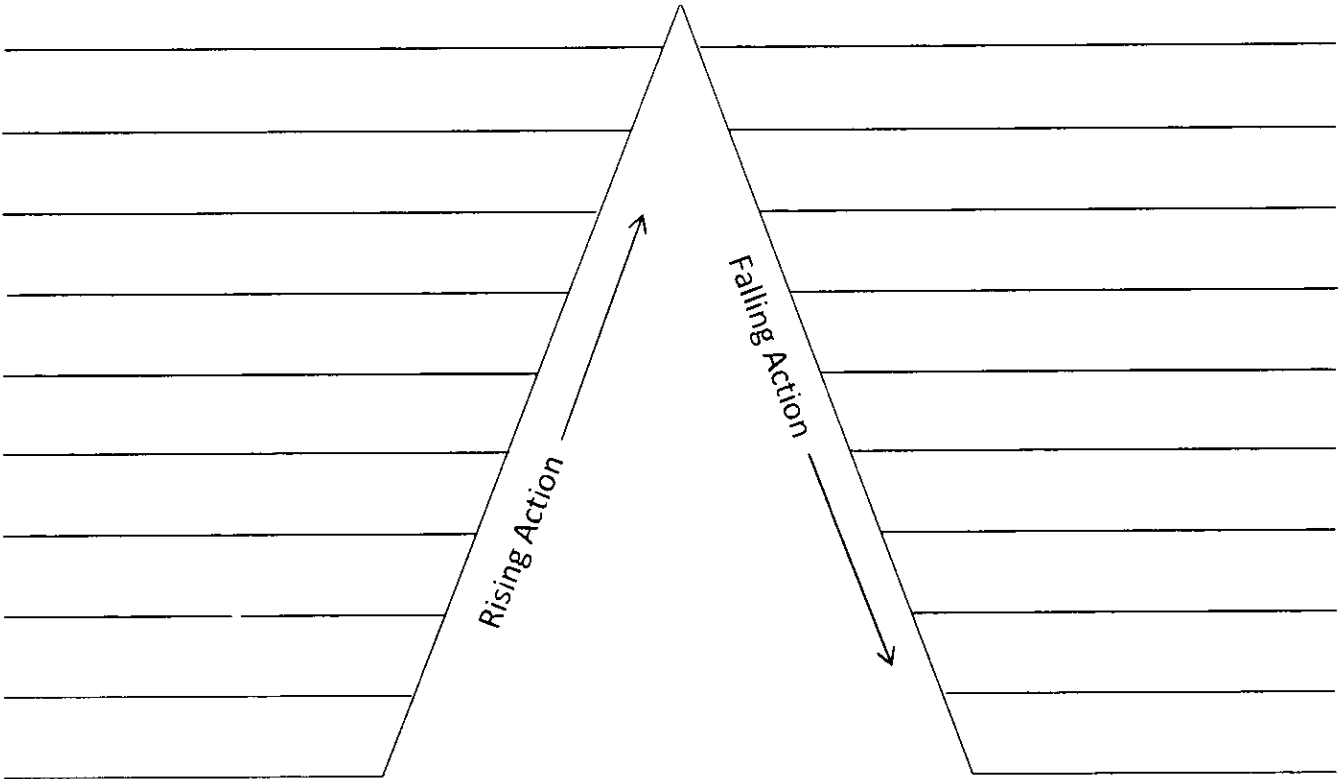
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Class Period \_\_\_\_

Plot Diagram

Novel Title/Author \_\_\_\_\_

Climax – peak of action and conflict

Examples of conflicts/complications/significant events



Examples of outcomes/responses/resolutions

Exposition

Resolution

Setting (time/place):

Main character(s):

Initiating event/conflict (exposition):

Conclusion/Resolution:

Theme(s)/author’s main purpose: