

# Summer Reading 2010

## English 9 CP

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**READ THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BOOKS AND THE GUIDING QUESTIONS *BEFORE* YOU BEGIN READING EACH BOOK.**

Keep the questions at hand as you read and take notes, in the books, if they are yours, or on paper. **Answers to the questions SHOULD NOT be written out.** Guiding questions are just to help students with more effective comprehension.

**Assessment – first full day of classes:**

You will be asked to respond to short answer questions.

**All students must choose two of the following four books to read over the summer.** Use the guiding questions as you read. If you have already read any of these books, select two you haven't read.

*TUNES FOR BEARS TO DANCE TO* (Robert Cormier )

*FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON* (Daniel Keyes)

*INCANTATION* (Alice Hoffman)

*EYES OF THE EMPEROR* (Graham Salisbury)

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***TUNES for BEARS TO DANCE TO*** (Robert Cormier)

### About the Author

Robert Cormier was born and raised in Leominster, Massachusetts. He was a newspaper reporter and columnist for thirty years. His love for writing began early. As a young kid he always remembers writing stories, “in the seventh grade...I can't remember a time when I wasn't trying to get something down on paper.” Cormier has written numerous books for young adults and has won many awards. He died in 2000.

Taken from [www.classzone.com](http://www.classzone.com); LANGUAGE ARTS NOVELGUIDE

## NOVEL

Henry is a young boy whose brother dies and his family is struggling with the grief. His dad is in the throes of a nervous breakdown and his mother is trying to hold the family together with her waitressing job. Henry works at the local grocery store for a very prejudiced man named Mr. Hairston. Henry also befriends Mr. Levine, a holocaust survivor on a mission to accept his past. Mr. Hairston asks Henry to do something he'll regret and bribes him with the promise of buying a headstone for his brother's grave. This is something the family could never afford.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. There are many ways we find out what a character is like. What is Mr. Hairston like and how do we know this?
2. After surviving the concentration camps, Mr. Levine is determined to regain some peace of mind by rebuilding his village. What is this miniature village like?
3. Prejudice is the prejudging of a person before even knowing them. Where does prejudice come from? How can it be stopped?
4. At the end of the story Henry has to make a choice. What are his choices and what is the outcome? What would you have done? Why?

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## *FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON* (Daniel Keyes)

### About the Author

Daniel Keyes was born in 1927 in Brooklyn, New York. He earned his bachelor's and master's degree from Brooklyn College. After college, he worked as a teacher of the developmentally disabled. This is where he acquired his idea for writing a short story about a mentally handicapped man who has his intelligence tripled through an experiment.. "Flowers for Algernon" (the short story) was published in 1959, winning the Hugo Award for best story of the year.

In 1961 the short story was made into a movie entitled *The Two Worlds of Charlie Gordon*. By 1966 Keyes had expanded the short story into a novel winning the Nebula Award for best science fiction novel.

Flowers for Algernon was Keyes' only success. He went on to write three other novels and publish three works of journalism.

## NOVEL

**Flowers for Algernon is the story of a young mentally challenged man named Charlie Gordon, who volunteers to undergo an operation to triple his intelligence. The story is written in journal style and traces his development from innocence to intelligence. He is in constant competition with a mouse named Algernon, who has also had the operation. Charlie struggles to find happiness and peace.**

## **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

- 1. How would you describe Charlie Gordon in the beginning of the story? What is he like? Who are his friends? Is he generally a happy person? In what ways does his personality change during the course of the novel?**
- 2. As Charlie progresses, how do his relationships with Miss Kinnion and his co-workers change? Why do you think this happens?**
- 3. Modern science can do just about anything but increase intelligence. If it were possible to triple your intelligence, would you have the operation? Why or why not? What would be some benefits to having it done, what would be some disadvantages?**

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## ***INCANTATION* (Alice Hoffman)**

### **About the Author**

**In 1953 Alice Hoffman was born in New York City. She received her Undergraduate degree from Adelphi University and a Masters degree at Stanford. Her novel *INCANTATION*, is a nominee for the Rhode Island Teen Book Award in 2008. She currently lives in Boston and New York.**

**\*Taken from the Rhode Island Teen Book Award Web site.**

### **NOVEL**

**INCANTATION is set in Spain during the Inquisition. During this time, the Jews were being driven out of Spain or killed, much like what Hitler did in Germany during WW II. The main character is a sixteen-year-old named Estrella who, as a Catholic, frightfully watches what happens to Jews in her neighborhood. Eventually, she comes to find out a dark secret that her family has been keeping for many years. Will this secret destroy the family?**

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What kind of a relationship does Estrella have with Catalina in the beginning of the novel? How does it change over the course of time?
  2. The neighbors seem to be on a witch-hunt. Discuss how they treat people they are suspicious of?
  3. How do some people stand up for what they believe in and how do others just go along with the crowd? Which is easier to do and why? What are the consequences of both actions?
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## THE EYES OF THE EMPEROR (Graham Salisbury)

### AUTHOR

Graham Salisbury grew up in Hawaii where generations before, his family came to be missionaries. He was educated at California State University and Vermont College of Norwich University. He has written many books for young adults. He currently lives in Oregon.

### NOVEL

Eddy is a young Japanese American living in Hawaii during World War II. He wants to join the service and serve his country because he feels it is the right thing to do and also his friends are joining. Although he is only sixteen, he forges his birth certificate and joins the army. Army life is pretty predictable until the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor. Life for Eddy starts to change. The anti -Japanese sentiment in the country impacts Eddy's life in an unimaginable way as the army uses him in an inexcusable experiment. Although this story is fiction, Salisbury blends it with actual facts from events stemming from the war.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *EYES OF THE EMPEROR* reflects the prejudice that existed in this country after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Discuss two situations Eddy faced that involve prejudice.

**2. What was the experiment or mission Eddy was involved in on Cat Island and how would you feel if you were him?**

**3. There are many examples of courage in the story. How do you define courage? Discuss two examples from the story and reflect on a time when you were courageous.**