

May 2008

Dear Parents and Guardians of incoming World History Students:

My colleagues and I agree with research that shows students who read over the summer maintain or improve their literacy skills; those who don't read see their skills diminish. This letter will introduce you to your child's summer-reading responsibilities, setting up what we expect will be a successful start to the next school year.

All World History students in both honors and standard sections will read Marjane Satrapi's highly-acclaimed, engaging graphic novel, Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood. (Please note that they should NOT purchase the combined volume). We will use this book as a reference point throughout the entire year. Satrapi's description of growing up during the Islamic Revolution of the 1970's touches on major themes of world history, such as the role of religion in government and society, the development of patriarchy and the roles of women, and the causes and impacts of revolutions. In addition, it will contribute to a greater understanding of current events in the Middle East.

For the summer reading assignment, students need to complete a summer reading study guide by thoughtfully and completely answering the questions. Students should read the guide before reading the book and should have it with them as they read the book, since the guide references specific passages. The questions will guide the student through the reading and will be used later in class discussion. When students return to school in August, they should bring the completed packet with them. It will be the first assignment for the school year. This guide can easily be downloaded from [www.peaktopeak.org](http://www.peaktopeak.org), our school's webpage. For your convenience, Peak to Peak and Barnes and Noble will be holding a May book fair where families may purchase all the books needed for the upcoming school year.

Please sign this form below and return it to this year's classroom teacher. This will indicate that you and your child understand the summer-reading expectations. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Have a great summer and thanks for reading!

Sincerely,

Catherine Schyling

Jennifer Giansiracusa

World History Instructors

I have read and understood the summer reading responsibilities for incoming World History students for the 2008-2009 school year.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Student Signature

**World History 10 and 15  
Summer Reading Guide  
2008-2009**

**Text:** Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood by Marjane Satrapi. NOTE: Do not purchase the combined volume or the second volume, which have similar titles. We will be reading only this first book.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the summer reading assignment is to deepen your understanding the author's perspective, Iranian culture, current events in the Middle East and the experience of growing up during a cataclysmic set of events such as the Islamic Revolution. Since this is a graphic novel and only takes a couple of hours to read, the temptation for students may be to treat it as a comic book when, in fact, it deals with important themes in world history. We will be referring to this book throughout the year in a variety of ways.

- Directions:**
1. Answer questions one and two, below.
  2. Choose three other questions from the list below and answer them.
  3. Write three of your own questions, as follows:
    - One quiz question that would test a reader's understanding of the book (level one)
    - One question that could be used as an essay prompt about the book (level two)
    - One question about a universal theme that is explored in the book (level three)

**Due:** Monday, August 18

***Persepolis* Questions:**

Answer both of these questions:

1. Marjane Satrapi, the author, says, "I believe that an entire nation should not be judged by the wrongdoings of a few extremists. I also don't want those Iranians who lost their lives in prisons defending freedom, who died in the war against Iraq, who suffered under various repressive regimes, or who were forced to leave their families and flee their homeland to be forgotten." In what ways does her novel succeed or fail in accomplishing her goals?
2. Make a list of some of the values expressed inside her home and some of the values expressed outside. How does the narrator deal with the differences in these values?

Choose any three questions to answer:

3. In what ways is her life in revolutionary Iran like and unlike contemporary teenage life in the U.S.?
4. What does the book seem to criticize about Persian (Iranian) culture and what does the book admire about it?
5. *Persepolis* is told from the limited perspective of one relatively-privileged young girl in her early teens. What aspects or events in the book might be presented differently if told from a different perspective?
6. What is "Persepolis" (you may need to research this) and why might the book have this title?
7. How would you characterize the narrator of the story? In what ways is she admirable and in what ways is she not? How does she change, if at all?
8. How might *Persepolis* be different if it were a traditional novel instead of a graphic novel? That is, how does the fact that it is a graphic novel impact its meaning and its effect on the reader?