All Upper School English, Grades 9-12
Summer Reading Project
2023

*DUE DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12*

This year, the English department is piloting a new summer reading program at Park. Instead of reading a selection of texts related to your Fall electives, all Upper School students (9-12) will read a shared text with the goal of fostering conversation and community across the campus. Faculty and staff will also have an opportunity to share and be part of this collective experience.

This summer, we will be reading Eric Gansworth’s poetic memoir, *Apple: (Skin to the Core)* [ISBN 978-164614038]. Gansworth is a Haudenosaunee writer and artist and an enrolled member of the Onondaga Nation. Much of his creative output explores the Native American experience in the United States, blending examinations of personal history, family, tradition, and mainstream culture. Gansworth teaches English and Creative Writing at Canisius College.

Please remember that summer reading is an expectation of all students. We unequivocally believe that you continue to grow as readers and thinkers with each new book you pick up. The exposure to and study of complex ideas and artful writing often develops your own thinking and sophistication as a reader and writer.
As you read, you should take notes to help your memory in September. Concepts to consider as you read:

**Setting:** details of time and place

**Narrative Style:** the point of view or structure, the language

**Characters:** the significant people/individuals in the novel. (Note: avoid only focusing on physical features. Instead, consider personality, motivation, relationships with others, changes over time)

**Themes:** major messages/points the author seems to be trying to convey. (see below ‘Thematic Reflection’)

**TASK:**
Select **ONE** of the following prompts and reflect critically on the themes and ideas that Gansworth develops in his memoir:

1. **Poetic Memoir (Creative writing)**
   Using *Apple: (Skin to the Core)* as a model, write your own poetic memoir about an important event or thing in your life. It might be a memory from your childhood or something that happened over the summer. You might pick a song, album, or movie like Gansworth does and reflect on how it is meaningful to you.

   Your response should be written in *verse* and be the equivalent of at least one chapter or 5-6 entries. That does not necessarily mean that it needs to rhyme or follow a set meter, but it should pay specific attention to how sound helps to create meaning in poetry.
   - Experiment with words and the sounds words make (think about assonance, consonance, and alliteration)
   - Draw on metaphors and other figurative language (for example, similes, onomatopoeias, hyperboles, oxymorons)
   - Explore patterns and/or structure of your lines
   - Try to incorporate a *rhythm* (with or without rhyme)

2. **Artistic Representation (Creative Choice)**
   Respond artistically to a theme from the novel that speaks to you. This may include an extended *art/writing journal* of creative reflection that addresses one or more themes, a zine, painting, sculpture, collage, musical piece, or other form of art.

   In considering *Apple: (Skin to the Core)*, you may want to use the “importance of story,” images, impressions, or setting as a focus for the art journal page(s). You may also choose to consider a collage of several etched ideas from the text (a quote, symbols, characters, conflict, or motifs). These are only ideas…be creative. You should complete at least one full art journal page/piece to submit.

   In addition to the artistic piece, you need to include a one paragraph summary of what is being represented in your work (color choice, reasoning behind selection, clarify any/all elements you included and why) and reflect on how your work connects with the text.
3. Thematic Reflection (Critical writing)
Select two or three themes that you see recurring in the memoir and examine how they show up in your own life, in your community, or within the national discourse. How does the book affect you personally? Dedicate a minimum of 2 handwritten pages or 500 words typed to EACH of the themes you choose.

- Forced Assimilation
- Reclaiming Identity
- Power of Family & Community
- Risk & Resilience
- Importance of Women in a Culture
- *Etc.*

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<th>Does not meet expectation</th>
<th>Meets expectation</th>
<th>Exceeds expectation</th>
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<td>Student has met the length/component requirements for selected task.</td>
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<td>Student demonstrates thoughtful engagement with, and thorough understanding of, source material</td>
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<td>(For tasks 1 and 2 only) Creative choices reflect a serious engagement with the prompt</td>
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<td>(For task 3 only) Thematic analysis is supported by textual evidence</td>
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