HUMANITIES SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

The Summer Assignment for incoming juniors focuses on Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden*, a seminal text that has become part of Mass Academy culture and lore. Students will read excerpts of the text, read a selection of modern responses to *Walden*, write reflections, and expand their vocabularies.

**Text:** Enriched Classics Pocket Books edition of *Walden* and “Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau (ISBN # 13:978-0-7434-8772-6). **Important:** This edition was selected specifically because of its accessibility and the applicability of its explanatory notes. You do NOT need to read “Civil Disobedience.”

**Students must read each of the following chapters from *Walden*:**
- Chapter One: Economy
- Chapter Two: Where I Lived and What I Lived For
- Chapter Three: Reading
- Chapter Four: Sounds
- Chapter Five: Solitude
- Chapter Six: Visitors
- Chapter Seven: The Bean Field
- Chapter Eight: The Village
- Chapter Eleven: Higher Laws
- Chapter Twelve: Brute Neighbors
- Chapter Thirteen: House-Warming
- Chapter Sixteen: The Pond in Winter
- Chapter Seventeen: Spring
- Chapter Eighteen: Conclusion

After reading *Walden*, students will read “Conversation: The Legacy of Henry David Thoreau” from the following link:
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1_V3mDX3aawcPVuwJ1AEW80R0h39j4BMC

You are not responsible for answering any of the questions following the readings.

From *Walden: Living Deliberately* – Bill McKibben (2008) **this is a helpful introduction to Walden**
From *Walden* – E.B. White (1934)  
*A Short History of America* – Robert Crumb (1979)  
“Living Like Weasels” – Annie Dillard  
*Doing Nothing* – Sue Monk Kidd (2008)  
“My Walden, My Walmart” – Crispin Sartwell (2012)  
From *Walden on Wheels: On the Open Road from Debt to Freedom* – Ken Ilgunas (2013)

**Writing Assignment Due on the first Day of School (8/15):**

Students will write a personal *Walden Journal*, keeping a running commentary of reflections on and reactions to the text. The journal will:
- Include no more than one (double-spaced) typed page of reflections and reactions for each assigned chapter of *Walden*.
- Include at least three entries reflecting on and responding to the readings in “Conversation: The Legacy of Henry David Thoreau.”
- The writing style may be informal; correct grammar and spelling must be used.
• Be in the form of a logbook or diary, with a date written down for each journal entry. Reflections and comments should be honest reactions to what Thoreau says. Students may argue with him, talk back to him, ask questions, challenge his observations and comments, agree and disagree with him.

This is a difficult book to read. The Introduction (pp. vii – xv), end-notes (pp. 401 – 428), and Interpretive Notes (pp. 431 – 430) in the Enriched Classics edition of Walden should help you as you slog your way through Thoreau’s text.

**Important:** The final pages of your journal should contain a Vocabulary Appendix listing of at least 50 new words (plus their definitions) that you encountered in reading Walden.

The **Journal** may be illustrated with artwork, drawings and/or a unique cover.

Additional Optional Resource: The “Great Books: Walden” documentary
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHRD6w4g3brs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHRD6w4g3brs)

Come to school on August 15th ready to discuss Walden and the supplementary readings. I look forward to hearing your musings, opinions, and rants.