9th Grade Summer Homework:

Dear 9th Graders,

Your summer homework consists of the following:

2. New York Times Project

You will be expected to write an in-class essay on your first day of classes based on your reading. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you annotate while you read, underlining language that you find interesting, ideas that are meaningful to you, or moments that stand out.

Please bring the book with you to class- you are encouraged to use direct quotes when writing your essay.
Dear Students,

This summer, you are required to read selected articles from The New York Times as way to increase vocabulary, make connections to the world around you, improve reading comprehension, and advance your grammar and writing skills.

You will benefit from focusing on these four areas tremendously in the following ways:

- **Vocabulary:** Research shows that the best way to improve your SAT Verbal score is through reading and exposure to sophisticated vocabulary. The New York Times is an exemplar text that will greatly increase your understanding of vocabulary. You will focus specifically on prefix, suffix, root words, and etymology; this will enhance your understanding of the words you read over the summer and broaden your vocabulary knowledge.

- **Making Connections:** By reading The New York Times, you will be exposed to the most current events that are taking place today. While we may not always agree with ideas expressed in The New York Times, it is important to be aware of different opinions and multiple perspectives. You will begin to form your own opinions and, as a result, you will find yourself engaging in discussions with people around you. Becoming more knowledgeable and worldly is a skill that will take you far, by broadening your perspective and building your unique character and individuality.

- **Reading Comprehension:** The most effective way of becoming a better reader is by reading more. Just like anything else, the more you practice a skill, the better you get! Therefore, reading selected articles from The New York Times each week is an approachable way to enhance your reading comprehension, an important skill in all areas- from a Biology textbook to a literary novel, to a chapter in a history book, or your SAT Verbal score.

- **Grammar and Written Skills:** Reading well-written articles is proven to be a beneficial way of improving your own writing. Therefore, we will ask for you to pay close attention to the grammar and style of these articles. This will expose you to proper usage and different styles of reporting, which you will use in your own writing!

**The New York Times Summer Reading Project**

Each week, the MDY website will post 3 different articles that you are required to read to: [www.mdyhsreading.wordpress.com](http://www.mdyhsreading.wordpress.com). In order to get the most out of the articles, you are required to complete one assignment per week as a response to that week’s selected articles. Therefore, by the end of the summer, you will have completed eight different assignments- one per week. If at any time you have any questions, please email Mrs. Harari at rharari@mdyhs.net.

**Guidelines:**

1. To ensure you are improving each of the skills outlined above, the assignments will be divided into four sections: vocabulary, connections, comprehension, and grammar. Each section will have multiple options for you to choose from. You must have, by the end of the summer, two different assignments from each section, which will total up to eight assignments altogether.

2. Each assignment you complete should have your name on it, and must include the cover page.

3. Please keep your assignments in a manila envelope with your name and grade printed on it in black marker. You will submit this envelope with all of your completed assignments on the first day of class to your English Language Arts teacher. This project will count as 10% of your Fall semester grade.
The New York Times Summer Reading Project
Assignment Sheet

You will choose one assignment per week to complete as a response to the articles. You must have, by the end of the summer, two different assignments from each section, which will total up to eight assignments altogether.

Vocabulary

- Choose six words from this week’s articles you did not know before, and for each word: Create a cartoon (in-color!) on an index card that best demonstrates the idea that the word represents. Write the word neatly on top of the cartoon, and on the back of each index card write the definition and the sentence in which it was used. Paper clip the index cards together and place them in a small Ziplock bag to place in the manila envelope.

- Choose ten unfamiliar words from the articles we read this week that contain Greek or Latin roots. For each, create a chart that lists the word, the Greek or Latin root and meaning, your own definition of the word based on the roots, and then the dictionary definition. HINT: Use Greek and Latin root charts at the end of this booklet.

- Choose ten unfamiliar words from the articles we read this week. Divide each one into prefix, suffix, and root word. Create index cards for each one, with the word and its definition written in black in the center. The prefix, suffix, and root word should all be on the back of the card, with their meanings underneath. Paper clip the index cards together and place them in a small Ziplock bag to place in the manila envelope.

- An allusion is a reference to people, places, works of art, literary work, or events. Identify five allusions from the articles you’ve read this week. Which of these allusions can you identify because of something you read about in school? Which can you identify because of books or stories you read? Are there any you didn’t “get”? If not, ask your parents or grandparents if they can identify them. Then, write a paragraph explaining how they impacted the article.

- Rewrite a Times article from this week using language that would be understood by a child in the third grade (an 8-year-old). Then explain what is lost (or gained) by using simper vocabulary.

Making Connections

- Create a survey question based on one of the weekly themes. Survey friends and/or family members to determine their beliefs on the issue. Then, write up a summary (one page) discussing the different beliefs and how they compare to yours.

- Print out one of the articles from this week, and paste it on to the middle of a large sheet of blank paper (at least 8.5 X 14). Write a response to the article in the margins of the sheet of paper that surrounds the article. You can respond to a specific word, phrase, or sentence you think is important. Margins must be filled completely!

- Bring up one of the articles from this week, or the overall theme from this week, at your dinner table. Then, reflect on and answer the following questions: What did the discussion sound like? How did everyone feel about the topic? How did you feel before and after the discussion? Did your thoughts or ideas on the topic change after discussing it with your family? Why or why not?

- Compare how The Times reports a news story with how it is reported by other media such as magazines, radio, television, tabloid newspapers, and the Internet. Show the similarities and differences, and use specific examples from The Times and other media.

- How does who you are affect how you read the newspaper? After reading the articles this week, think about how you responded to each of them based on your interests, age, race, religion, gender, geographical region, and describe how these factors affected your reaction to the article. Then imagine the response of someone quite different from you to these articles. Describe this person and how he or she might respond to the article.
Reading Comprehension

- Select an article with special interest to you because of the headline. **Before you read**, write 5 or more specific questions that you expect to be answered when you read the entire article. **After you read**, write the answers you found to each question you wrote. If a question was NOT answered in the article, leave it blank. Then, answer the following questions: What words in the headline of the article you chose especially encouraged you to read the complete article? Was the headline an accurate summary of the article? Explain. What important facts would you have missed if you had not read the whole article?

- Create a bulleted list of main ideas from each of the news articles you have read this week. Then, turn each list into paragraph form to create a summary paragraph of each article.

- In the assigned articles for this week, identify four statements of fact and four statements of opinion. Keep a record of the statements you find and write them down, along with descriptive information to identify specifically where each statement of fact and opinion was found. Then, write a paragraph explaining why it is necessary for a reader to be able to distinguish fact and opinion. Include specific examples from *The New York Times* in your paragraph.

- Choose one of the articles from this week, and create a log (T-chart) that has observations on one side (direct quotations from the article), with your inferences on the other (conclusions you draw based on each observation). There should be at least four.

- While you read one of the articles from this week, mark in green pen what you believe the main idea of the article is. Then, in blue pen, underline the sentences you believe are the supporting details for the main idea. Finally, in red pen, highlight or bracket sections of the article that seem confusing, difficult, or unclear for any reason (new vocabulary, a reference to something you don’t know, etc.) Now, on a piece of paper, write the main idea and supporting details in your own words. Then, try to make meaning of what you highlighted or bracketed in red.

Grammar and Writing Skills

- Signal words (but, although, however, therefore, etc.) are words that help make a transition from one thought to the next, and are key in understanding the logic of a sentence. Read over the articles this week, and identify all the signal words. Then, write down five sentences with signal words. Now, re-write each of the sentences without the signal words. Then, write a paragraph where you discuss how the meaning changes.

- Using specific details from the articles this week as evidence, support one of the following quotes: “A stumble may prevent a fall.” (English proverb) OR “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” (Winston Churchill)

- Find five examples for each of these from this week’s articles: Plural nouns, singular nouns, present tense verbs, verbs in simple past, past participle verb forms, nominative case pronouns, objective case pronouns, singular pronouns, plural pronouns, possessive pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, idioms (could be more than one word).

- Complex sentences sometimes follow certain patterns, such as parallel structure. For example, “the barnacles have a lot more food, are growing a lot faster, and have much greater reproduction.” Find an example of parallel structure in this week’s articles, recognize the specific pattern in the sentence, and extend that pattern with another sentence.

- Choose an article from this week’s reading. As you read, choose various words or phrases to black out (choose words or phrases that can be deduced from the context and logic of the sentences and paragraphs). Then, go back and fill in the blanks with other words that would sound right within that context. Try to choose the best word or words that will complete the thought and fill in the blanks. Lastly, write a paragraph in which you explain how the author’s words differ from yours.

- Rewrite one of the articles from this week from a first-person point of view.

- Select one of the articles from this week, and retype it on a computer without any punctuation. Print it out. Then, insert
punctuation that you think will make the writing clearer and easier to read. Next, compare it with the original article used in The Times. Write a paragraph comparing the two.

- Agreement refers to the matching of word forms in a sentence (Example: People are supporting the mayor, or A student must turn in his paper). Choose one of the articles from this week, and as you read, find examples of subject-verb agreement. Create a list of the examples you found.

- Choose one of the articles from this week to work with. Circle every pronoun you can find in the article and draw an arrow from each pronoun to the noun from which it gets its meaning. Underline the noun. Example: Jonas Smith led the league in bases stolen, yet he was never honored for his achievement.

Checklist:

Before you submit your project, be sure your manila envelope includes the following:

- Two different assignments from the vocabulary list
- Two different assignments from the making connections list
- Two different assignments from the reading comprehension list
- Two different assignments from the grammar and writing skills list
- Each assignment should have your name and the week it corresponds to.

Project developed by Rachel Harari
You must attach this sheet to each New York Times assignment that you complete.

Name: ________________________________

Assignment Category (check one):

- O Vocabulary
- O Reading Comprehension
- O Grammar
- O Making Connections

Bullet Number: ________________

Failure to include this sheet, or fill out the information completely, will result in point deduction.