

## Honors English II Summer Reading Assignment

Each rising 10<sup>th</sup> grader will read two books this summer: *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe and *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. Students will be tested on these novels on the second day of school. In addition, students will complete the following written assignments, all of which will also be due on the second day of school. A total of two writings will be collected. These writings should be typed in 12 point font and double spaced. Please note the word count assigned to each piece of writing. Remember to demonstrate your best writing abilities as this will be the first impression your 10<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher will have of your work.

### *Things Fall Apart*

Choose ONE of the following to explore in a response to your reading. Your response should be a minimum of 500 words. Include specific examples to make your point.

1. Why does Achebe fill his novel with proverbs, folktales, tribal myths, and fables? What is he trying to achieve with these axioms and stories? How do these serve to emphasize or underscore an important purpose in writing the novel?
2. Why do you think Achebe included the subplot of Ikemefuna and his death? What does that part of the novel suggest about Ibo culture? What does it suggest about Okonkwo?
3. Throughout the novel, Okonkwo is concerned with being a strong, powerful person. What does it mean to be a strong person in Ibo society and what does it mean to be strong in modern American society? Write a short essay in which you compare Okonkwo's values to your own. Use examples from both the novel and your life to illustrate your views on personal strength.

### *The Alchemist*

In *The Alchemist*, Santiago has to turn many hardships and setbacks into learning opportunities as he tries to make his Personal Legend a reality. He frequently finds himself in situations that initially seem unfortunate. Select a quote that is significant in both Santiago's life journey and your own. Use this quote as an opening to a narrative of **at least 500 words** about your own Personal Legend and the events of your life that have helped you reach your goals or have distracted you on your path to success. What obstacles are blocking your path, and how are you dealing with them? As you write, help your reader to understand who you are and how your life has been shaped by coincidence, hardships, and individual choices. Share specific, unique, personal stories that only you could tell about yourself.