



"There is a world outside of this room...."

- Natalie Merchant

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The above quotation is from one of my favorite songs. It's a daily reminder that we need to continually expand the four walls of our classrooms. We need to take measures to ensure that the physical box we operate in daily does not become an intellectual box, constricting our thoughts and perspective.

One of the best ways to expand our horizons is through literature. No matter how confining the classroom walls may seem, the minute we stick our nose into a good book, we can be transported. We can be exposed to new places, new people, and new perspectives. And we, ourselves, become someone new after reading a book, for we have grown from the experience.

In our English course, we have a limited window in which to expose ourselves to the vast terrain of literary works. Unfortunately, we simply can't cover it all. And it would be presumptuous of me to suggest that the book selections I've made for the course are the "be all and end all" when it comes to exploring literature. So, it seems only fitting that the students make one of their own selections regarding what to read, in an effort to discover the breadth of possibilities available. However, I recognize that you have entrusted your child to me and, as an emerging parent myself, I understand the instinct to monitor those aspects of our world to which our children are exposed. In this case, I'm asking the students to select a literary work that could range from the classic to the contemporary. It can be fiction or non-fiction, but it should be something that captures their interest. The key is that the students invest fully in this reading experience, and since they're actively involved in the selection of their books, my hope is that it solidifies a love of literature as a leisure time activity.

While some of the literary content may be considered sensitive, I'd like to give my students, your children, as much latitude as possible in exploring new literary horizons. Of course, given your gatekeeper responsibility, I'd like your approval of your child's selection as well, so I've provided a space for your signature on the back of this letter.

I am requesting, further, that you take this opportunity to consider reading this book along with your child. It will help you stay in touch with one more aspect of your teenager's life, and it could make for some interesting dinner table discussions. Feel free to email mmetzler@mercyhs.com with any questions or concerns, and feel free to keep up with some of our classroom comings & goings at TeacherMetzler.com (or have your student walk through our Google Classroom page).

Warmest regards,

Michael A. Metzler

I hereby grant my permission for my child to read her/his book selection listed below.

Parent signature

Date

Student signature

Date

Book title & Author

NOTE: For other course information, please visit our website at

TeacherMetzler.com