

The School of Environmental Studies

at the Minnesota Zoo

Dan Bodette, Principal

12155 Johnny Cake Ridge Road

Apple Valley, MN • 55124

952-431-8750



June 2017

Dear SES Junior:

Welcome to the School of Environmental Studies! We hope you are enjoying your summer and are looking forward to an exciting year at SES. We'd like to share some important information that will help you prepare for our studies when you join us this fall.

A Preview of Thematic Studies 11

This year-long course meets daily for 3 hours and integrates the concepts and skills of environmental science, social studies, and language arts. In this interdisciplinary course, we will spend the year exploring the thematic question, "**What are the relationships between all living organisms and the natural world?**" You will spend half of your day in this "house" class and the other half in your elective classes (like math and chemistry).

Summer Reading Requirement

Why summer reading? We require incoming juniors to complete some summer reading to help us more effectively build our learning community in the fall. The summer book focuses on a personal journey, place, and environment, which seems appropriate as we begin our journey of learning at SES. When school begins on **Tuesday, September 5**, we will ask you to bring new perspectives and ideas from your reading into our exploration of the thematic question. We are looking forward to some rich discussions!

What do I do as I read? Your goal is to interact with the text in a way that enriches your understanding of the text, as well as our thematic question. See instructions on the back.

Where do I find the book? Books are available at local bookstores and libraries; Half-Price Books has used copies. You could also order the book on-line from Amazon.com or other Internet sources. And of course, Barnes and Noble will have it.

If you are having trouble finding the book/s: Contact Mr. Haisting: scott.haisting@district196.org

All juniors will read Book #1: *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

The Old Man and the Sea is one of Hemingway's most enduring works. Told in language of great simplicity and power, it is the story of an old Cuban fisherman, down on his luck, and his supreme ordeal—a relentless agonizing battle with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream. Here Hemingway recasts, in strikingly contemporary style, the classic theme of courage in the face of defeat, of personal triumph won from loss. Written in 1952, this hugely successful novella confirmed his power and presence in the literary world and played a large part in his winning the 1954 Noble Prize for Literature. (Amazon).

By reading this book, you will be introduced to an interdisciplinary lens. The lens includes concepts about Santiago's personal journey, Cuba as a community, and the ocean environment within which it exists – all are themes we will be studying this fall.

As you read *Old Man and the Sea*, interact with the text in the following manner:

Flag Passages: Select 9 passages to flag with post-it notes. Passages (5 lines) will be selected because they help you answer the following questions:

1. **Personal Journey:** What does Hemingway want you to see about Santiago's accomplishments and challenges along his journey? Is he defeated by adversity?
2. **Environment:** What does Hemingway want you to see about the ocean and organisms of the ocean ecosystem? What does Santiago see?
3. **Community:** What does Hemingway want you to see about Santiago's community? Does Santiago need people? Why or why not?

Comments: The post-it notes will have comments on them explaining how that passage helps to answer the above questions. You are certainly welcome to address more than just the questions below. We value thinking and interacting with texts.

AP World History and/or AP Language and Composition Students will also read:

Unbowed: A Memoir by Wangari Maathai:

Maathai, a 2004 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, presents a matter-of-fact account of her rather exceptional life in Kenya. Born in 1940, Matthai attended primary school at a time when Kenyan girls were not educated; went on to earn a Ph.D. ...before founding Kenya's Green Belt Movement in 1977, which mobilized thousands of women to plant trees in an effort to restore the country's indigenous forests. Because Kenya's environmental degradation was largely due to the policies of a corrupt government, she then made the Green Belt Movement part of a broader campaign for democracy. Maathai endured personal attacks by the ruling powers-President Moi denounced her as a 'wayward' woman-and engaged in political activities that landed her in jail several times. (Amazon)

In AP Language and Composition, we will analyze the style and purpose of Maathai's memoir as well as her journey to become an influential global voice. For each chapter in the book:

- you should flag with a post-it one passage that makes you question, wonder, or think.
- write two sentences of your own reflection on each of those passages you have marked and be prepared to share your thoughts.

For AP World History we will look at the changes over time in the interactions between the people of Kenya and their natural environment. Maathai's autobiography includes information on what her grandparents told her of their relationship with the natural world during pre-colonial times, she grew up during the years when Kenya was a British colony and she was an adult as Kenya became independent. Consider all three of these periods and use post-its to flag at least six examples of the changes in Kenyan's ideas and actions toward the environment. Come to class on **Wednesday, September 6** prepared to discuss how this changed during Kenya's colonial period and how present day Kenyan's struggle with this legacy today.

Questions? Check the SES Website for more information at <http://www.district196.org/ses>

Have a great summer! We look forward to learning with you at SES!

The Junior Teachers:

Kim Colburn-Lindell, Roger Everhart, Scott Haisting, Karen Maunu,
Craig Nowicki, Sarah Oppelt-Santelli, Jean Unzicker, Hillary Wackman

SES Supply List for Juniors

For field work:

We'll be spending much time outside in the forests, fields, and water during the fall. We **recommend** these items to help you do more effective field work:

- Shoes suitable for hiking around forests & fields
- Some extra clothes to be left at school that will help you be prepared for any weather (rain poncho, sweatshirt, gloves, hat, etc.)
- A pair of wool or synthetic socks.

For academic work:

- Hardcover journal such as a Mead Composition book; **you will need this for the first day.** (You may choose a more decorative "blank book" if you wish, but it needs to be able to withstand going outside. Avoid spiral bound notebooks...and be about 8x10 in size).
- 3-ring binder and folder for organizing your assignments and class handouts; **you will need this for the first day.**
- Assignment book or planning calendar to help you keep organized (or you may use a digital one on your school issued ipad).
- Post-it notes & post-it flags for marking books as you read
- Highlighters
- Colored pencils for sketching

For your desk:

- Pens, pencils, markers
- Stapler
- Tape
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Kleenex
- Potted plants (optional)
- Photos and other desk decorations

(We expect that all desk decorations will be tasteful and nondiscriminatory.)

A note about "pets" in the houses:

You may keep fish, small reptiles & amphibians. We have a 15 gallon limit on tanks for fish and reptiles. No mammals, birds or turtles are allowed in the houses.

