



Dear Incoming Freshman,

We hope that this letter finds you well and at the beginning of a restful summer. While starting high school at Xavier may still seem a long way off, you should know that many people have already begun preparing for you to walk onto campus in August. Classes are being formed, lockers are being reorganized, and you have your first homework assignment.

This summer, you will be required to read one book and to prepare to have your first classroom discussion in English. It is our hope that this reading will give you a few things to think about before you arrive on campus. The book has been selected for its interest level, readability, and compelling content.

In August, all ninth grade students will be expected to complete **two in-class assessments**. One assessment will be a test, while the second assessment will be an in-class essay. To prepare, please carefully read and annotate the book. Expect to participate in lively discussions about this material. In addition, **Honors English students must submit their books to the instructor on the first day of class to receive a grade on book annotations - please make in-text notes on items including: setting, characters (protagonist/antagonist), conflict, themes, symbols, climax and resolution, impactful passages, examples of Jesuit principles. Students will need a physical copy of the book for this activity.**

Required Book:

- *The Stranger in the Lifeboat* by Mitch Albom

A ship explodes. Ten passengers are adrift at sea on a lifeboat. After 3 days, they find another survivor out on the ocean. The passengers thank God for finding this survivor. The survivor then says he is God. What is going on here??? A year later, a few thousand miles away, the lifeboat washes ashore a beach. No one is on board. What happened? This story is about struggle and the possible paths we take to navigate it.

Summer assignment for ALL students:

Xavier, like other Jesuit high schools, describes its graduating students with five characteristics called the Graduate at Graduation, or the “Grad at Grad.” After four years at a Jesuit school, this is what we hope you, our students, will look like. Before you begin this assignment, **you should familiarize yourself with the way Jesuit high schools describe the graduate at graduation.** Use the graphic organizer to write down information about the Grad at Grad principles and to record examples of them in the story as you read. Our first conversations in class will be about the principles and any examples you find and record in **the graphic organizer** (see below - please print).

Read about the Grad at Grad Principles: <https://www.xavierprep.org/about/grad-to-grad.cfm>

Summary: Your task in English as you enter freshman year is to analyze the book for characterization and plot, as well as to locate the “Grad at Grad” qualities that appear in it. During the first couple of weeks of school, you will demonstrate that you have read the text AND that you understand the “Grad at Grad” by writing and by discussing how these principles come through in the reading. Bear in mind that the author will not tell you, “this is a Grad at Grad.” Rather, you must infer how to apply the Grad at Grad principles to this text from the actions of the characters, the outcomes of the plot, and the themes you see. Your teacher will ask you to defend your opinions with clear reasoning and concrete evidence. The graphic organizer will help you to organize your thoughts.

Jesuit Identity -- Grad at Grad Principles in our Summer Reading

Due (handwritten) on the first day of class for ALL students: Use this graphic organizer to find examples of Jesuit philosophy in the reading. First, students should list details about each of the five Grad at Grad principles. Then, students should look for examples of the principles as they read. Try to find two examples for at least four of the principles.

<p>What are the Grad at Grad Principles? List and explain your understanding below. READ ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES</p> <p>Print out your own copy of this graphic organizer: CLICK HERE</p>	<p><i>The Stranger in the Lifeboat:</i> Find examples of the Grad at Grad Principles at work in the book. As you read, annotate with the principles in mind.</p>
<p>Grad at Grad #1:</p>	<p>Example 1:</p> <p>Example 2:</p>
<p>Grad at Grad #2:</p>	<p>Example 1:</p> <p>Example 2:</p>
<p>Grad at Grad #3:</p>	<p>Example 1:</p> <p>Example 2:</p>
<p>Grad at Grad #4:</p>	<p>Example 1:</p> <p>Example 2:</p>
<p>Grad at Grad #5:</p>	<p>Example 1:</p> <p>Example 2:</p>