

**XAVIER COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL
SUMMER READING 2025**



Dear Incoming Sophomore,

We hope that this letter finds you well and anticipating a rewarding sophomore year. We hope that you will have many good experiences and make many good decisions before we see you again in August. One of those decisions we would like to help you with is the decision to remain engaged in some kind of academic activity this summer. It is our belief that encouraging students to read year-round is a key element in the development of lifelong learners. While the summer is certainly time to be away from school, we hope that it is not a time to stop reading, thinking, and growing.

You will read one book this summer (see below) and complete the attached writing assignment. This required work will be part of the overall theme of the year. This novel has been selected for its interest level and readability as well as for its challenging, compelling content. In short, you should expect to think, but the book should be fun to read. You will be expected to take a substantive test on it in the first week of classes. Please carefully read and annotate the book in preparation.

Required Book:

- *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein (Fiction)
A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, unconditional love, loyalty, and hope. It is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life...as only a dog could tell it.

Assignment:

- Your task is to read the assigned book *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, reading for and taking notes for characterization and plot. Your job when you return to school is to prove that you have read and understand the text.
- You will also be expected to **review the provided list of literary terms (below)**, noting the definition. **Find and handwrite an example for EACH term.** You are not expected to find these examples in the assigned book, but should research or give your own example. In any case, make sure that it is accurate and correct. You will be required to **hand in the completed list of literary terms ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.** This list will be something you have for reference as we analyze the different texts we'll be studying throughout the school year.

Literary Terms with Definitions

The following is a list of 38 selected words that could assist with literary analysis. Please keep this list available, if not memorized, throughout the year.

Allegory: a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.

Ex:

Alliteration: the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

Ex:

Allusion: a brief and indirect reference to a person, place, thing, or idea of historical, cultural, literary, or political significance.

Ex:

Analogy: a comparison in which an idea or a thing is compared to another thing that is quite different from it. It aims at explaining that idea or thing by comparing it to something that is familiar. Metaphors and similes are tools used to draw an analogy.

Ex:

Anecdote: a short and amusing or interesting story about a real incident or person.

Ex:

Antagonist: the opposing force that brings conflict and is instrumental in the development of the protagonist, or main character.

Ex:

Aside: A term used in drama and theater, an aside happens when a character's dialogue is spoken but not heard by the other actors on the stage. An aside is typically a quick, short statement.

Ex:

Connotation: a meaning that is implied by a word apart from the thing which it describes explicitly. (Words carry cultural and emotional associations or meanings, in addition to their literal meanings or denotations.)

Ex:

Denotation: refers to the literal, dictionary definition of a word.

Ex:

Diction: word choice.

Ex:

Double Entendre: literary device that can be defined as a phrase or a figure of speech that might have multiple senses, interpretations, or two different meanings, or which might be understood in two different ways. Often, a double entendre will include an innuendo as one of the interpretations.

Ex:

Euphemism: refers to polite, indirect expressions that replace words and phrases considered harsh and impolite, or which suggest something unpleasant.

Ex:

Exposition: the writer's way to give background information to the audience about the setting and the characters of the story.

Ex:

Foreshadow: literary device in which a writer gives an advance hint of what is to come later in the story. It often appears at the beginning of a story, or a chapter, and helps the reader develop expectations about the coming events in a story.

Ex:

Hyperbole: from a Greek word meaning "excess," it is a figure of speech that uses extreme exaggeration to make a point or show emphasis. It is the opposite of understatement.

Ex:

Idiom: refers to a set expression or a phrase comprising two or more words. An interesting fact regarding the device is that the expression is not interpreted literally. The phrase is understood to mean something quite different from what individual words of the phrase would imply. It is also known as a figure of speech.

Ex:

Irony: There are three types of irony. Verbal (also known as sarcasm): the use of words to mean something different than what they appear to mean. Situational: the opposite of an expected outcome occurs. Dramatic: the audience knows what will happen before the characters.

Ex:

Juxtaposition: a literary technique in which two or more ideas, places, characters, and their actions are placed side by side in a narrative or a poem, for the purpose of developing comparisons and contrasts.

Ex:

Malapropism: the mistaken use of a word in place of a similar-sounding one, often with unintentionally amusing effect.

Ex:

Metaphor: a figure of speech that makes an implicit, implied, or hidden comparison between two things that are unrelated, but which share some common characteristics. In other words, a resemblance of two contradictory or different objects is made based on a single or some common characteristics.

Ex:

Monologue: a typically long speech spoken by a single character but addressed to the other characters on stage.

Ex:

Motif: any recurring element that has symbolic significance in a story. Through its repetition, a motif can help produce other narrative (or literary) aspects such as theme or mood.

Ex:

Onomatopoeia: a word that sounds like the common sound of the object it is describing.

Ex:

Oxymoron: a figure of speech in which two opposite ideas are joined to create an effect. The common oxymoron phrase is a combination of an adjective preceded by a noun with contrasting meanings

Ex:

Paradox: a statement that contradicts itself and still seems true somehow.

Ex:

Parody: an imitation of a writer, artist, subject, or genre in such a way as to make fun of or comment on the original work. Parodies are often exaggerated in the way they imitate the original in order to produce a humorous effect.

Ex:

Personification: a form of figurative language in which something that is not human is given human characteristics. This device is often used in poetry to enhance the meaning and beauty of poems

Ex:

Plot: a literary term used to describe the events that make up a story, or the main part of a story. These events relate to each other in a pattern or a sequence.

Ex:

Protagonist: the central character or leading figure in poetry, narrative, novel or any other story.

Ex:

Pun: A play on words that produces a humorous effect by using a word that suggests two or more meanings, or by exploiting similar sounding words that have different meanings.

Ex:

Sarcasm: a form of verbal irony that mocks, ridicules, or expresses contempt. It is a Latin word that translates as “to tear the flesh.”

Ex:

Satire: a technique employed by writers to expose and criticize foolishness and corruption of an individual or a society, by using humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule.

Ex:

Simile: a figure of speech that makes a direct comparison, showing similarities between two different things. A simile draws resemblance with the help of the words “like” or “as.”

Ex:

Soliloquy: monologue given by a character in a play who is usually alone on the stage. During a soliloquy, a character might reveal key thoughts, feelings, and opinions to the audience members. However, other characters in the play do not hear the soliloquy (even in the rare cases that other characters are on stage).

Ex:

Symbol: a literary device that contains several layers of meaning, often concealed at first sight, and is representative of several other aspects, concepts or traits than those that are visible in the literal translation alone.

Ex:

Syntax: the way in which words and sentences are placed together in the writing. Usually in the English language the syntax should follow a pattern of subject-verb-object agreement but sometimes authors play around with this to achieve a lyrical, rhythmic, rhetoric or questioning effect.

Ex:

Theme: the central topic of a text. Themes can be divided into two categories: a work's thematic concept is what readers "think the work is about" and its thematic statement being "what the work says about the subject". A text may have several themes.

Ex:

Understatement:

a figure of speech employed by writers or speakers to intentionally make a situation seem less important than it really is. An understatement is opposite to hyperbole, which is an overstatement.

Ex: