

Here is the summer letter and assignment that was handed to each of the students during the last week of school. Please note that the Zinn reading is a packet that each student should have, and if another copy is needed, please contact the school.

I hope you all have an amazing summer!

Best,  
Michelle YM

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June 2019

Dear Class of 2020,

I am excited to be your Humanities teacher again for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade! Next school year, we will immerse ourselves in American history, culture, and literature. In the meantime, enjoy the summer by taking care of yourself, spending time with family and friends, and of course, a bit of reading and writing.

**Please complete the following assignments (due on the first day of school):**

Read and underline key points in the reading (handout provided), *A Young People's History of the United States*, by Howard Zinn. 2) Answer the following questions with a thoughtful (3-5 sentence) response. You may hand-write or type your responses.

1. Whose perspective(s) are present in Zinn's text?
2. What purpose does Zinn believe the telling of history serves?
3. Does reading this excerpt from Zinn change your understanding of the story of Christopher Columbus and the "founding" of America?
4. What does a "people's history" mean?

In addition to the Zinn reading and prompts, please read John Steinbeck's, *The Pearl*, and use the following guide for annotation:

1. Circle/highlight at least one word in each chapter that needs to be defined. Use context clues to define them in the margin of the book.
2. Underline at least two lines/phrases of writing that is striking in imagery. Identify what device(s) is being used in the margin of the book. Pay close attention to the motifs of “songs” and the everchanging “pearl”.

John Steinbeck’s, *The Pearl*, may be purchased from most bookstores. You are required to have your own hard copy (any edition) of the novel.

I look forward to seeing you all after a well-deserved break!

Best,  
Michelle Yi Martin