

MANHATTAN CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

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Dear student and parents,

Below you will find the Freshman 2015 Summer Reading Assignments. Both assignments must be completed and presented to your English teacher on the first day of school, September 9, 2015. These assignments will be used to initially assess your writing skills. All students should be prepared to discuss both articles and their written work on the first day of class. Both assignments are relatively short, so students should take great care to actively read and respond thoughtfully to the questions. Be mindful that plagiarism is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. You must present your original work. Work that is not accurately cited may result in a failing grade.

For your convenience, these assignments will also be posted to the school website: www.mcsm.net

Assignment #1 (Fiction) – “The Monkey’s Paw”

Go this link to view and print the story:

http://resources.mhs.vic.edu.au/creating/downloads/The_Monkey%27s_Paw.pdf

Answer the following questions:

Task: Students will respond to the following questions in short response format (5-10 sentences each). Be sure to cite the text to support your answers.

1. What can you infer about the father's personality based on how he plays chess?
2. Sergeant Major Morris describes the monkey's paw in this way: "It had a spell put on it by an old fakir... a very holy man. He wanted to show that fate ruled people's lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow." What does Morris' statement mean when you first read it? What does it mean after you have read the entire story? Is this comment significant? If so, why?
3. Why does Major Morris throw the monkey's paw onto the fire and why do the Whites react so strongly to his action?
4. What happens to Herbert White?
5. What do you think happened at the end of the story? Why does Mr. White beg his wife not to let "it" into the house? What does he mean? What is he afraid of? Who or what was outside of the house?

Assignment #2 (Nonfiction) - "Can Money Buy Happiness?" – Science Daily, US News, or PBS

Go to these links and choose which of the three articles you are most interested in. Then answer the questions below:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/02/150228084708.htm>

<http://money.usnews.com/money/personal-finance/articles/2015/02/19/can-money-buy-us-happiness>

<http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/blogs/can-money-really-buy-happiness>

Task: Students will respond to the following questions in short response format (5-10 sentences per question). Be sure to cite the text to support your answers.

1. Summarize the article in your own words.
2. Identify some facts from the article and react to those facts. Do you think they are accurate, reliable? Why or why not?
3. Identify statements in the article that are opinions and not facts. How do you know that these statements are biased opinions, and not objective evidence?
4. Develop your own claim (thesis, argument, idea, opinion) about whether or not money can actually buy happiness.