

2013 Summer Requirements  
8th Grade English  
Rhodes

I hope you are having a safe and relaxing summer! To prepare for 8th grade English and to earn your first grades, you will be reading Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli and completing a few writing assignments, as well as completing online grammar/usage quizzes on quia.com. Please complete each of these activities with precision and effort; I know what you're capable of, and these tasks will allow you to remain as strong as you were in May throughout the summer.

***Again, these are your first grades of the year, and they are weighed heavily.***

### **Stargirl:**

1. **Graded annotations:** I will take up your books on the first day of school (Thursday, August 15) and return them to you on Monday. I will be grading your annotations. This is what I expect:

- **At the front of the book**, you will write the list of characters. In parenthesis next to the character's name, write a basic description of them. It doesn't have to be in complete sentences. *For example: Wayne Parr (sets tone for what's cool; is kind of boring himself; dates Hillari)*
- **At the top of each page**, there should be between 3 and 10 words summarizing the basic idea of what is happening on that page. *For example: Leo describes Stargirl's house; dinner with "Susan's" parents*
- **At the end of each chapter**, there should be two quotes that are memorable from the chapter. If you choose quotes that are not important, or seem randomly chosen, you will not receive full credit. The quote should have the page number in parenthesis AFTER the quotation marks end and BEFORE the period. *For example: "He was elected to nothing, honored for nothing - and yet, though I did not realize this until years later, he was grand marshal of our daily parade" (19).*
- **Throughout the book**, you must mark the vocabulary from the print-out sheet on the portal (see below). You can either underline or box the word when you come to it.

2. **Vocabulary:** On the portal, there is a document with all the vocabulary you are responsible for from the book. You must not only mark these words when you encounter them; you must also fill in the line on the document with the word's part of speech and definition. The first word (keen) has been done for you. I will check this document on the first day of school.

3. **Essay questions:** You will choose **two** from the following list to answer. You must type your responses in Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced, with the MLA heading in the top left corner. You may title each essay Stargirl Essay. The title is in the center, but nothing else; not bolded, not larger. Open each question with a topic sentence that gives a preview of what your essay addresses. You will probably have more than one paragraph per answer; be sure you break up the writing in a logical way. The assorted questions that accompany each option are suggestions. You don't have to answer them in order; it's just to get your thoughts going. ***Remember: no first person ("I"); keep sophisticated voice (don't get casual); choose vivid words; proofread; stay organized (don't let your thoughts flow like a bad roller coaster ride!).*** I will take these up on the first day of school.

- In Stargirl, Leo and Stargirl are the main characters, or the “protagonists.” Compare and contrast Kevin and Dori as “best friends” to the protagonists. How are they alike in their friendship to Leo/Stargirl? How are they different? How do they react differently to hardships; how do they express their own opinions? Who is a better friend, a worse friend, or do they swap throughout the book? Are they equal? [350 words]

- If you had to choose one thing that was the bottom line about how Stargirl was different from everyone else, what would it be? Justify your answer. Obviously, this question is more complicated than it seems, or the requirement wouldn't be 350 words. [350 words]

- In chapter 9, there is an analogy regarding mud frogs. First, explain the analogy: what two things are being compared? What awakened them? Then, explain why it's appropriate: how does this illustrate what's happening at Mica? Are there flaws in the analogy? [350 words]

- Readers feel complicated emotions towards Leo, his beliefs, his courage, his mistakes, and his choices. Discuss the evolution of readers' emotions towards Leo throughout the book. Precise word choice (i.e. happy, mad, and sad should be replaced with more precise words) is vital here. Be sure you avoid “I” by using the term “the reader” or “readers.” [350 words]

4. **Test at school:** Sometime during the first or second full week of school, you will have a test over Stargirl. It will include specific plot elements, characters, and vocabulary. If you need to make annotations that will help you remember these things, please do so.

**Want to listen while you read?** Audible.com has a great audio version of Stargirl: <http://www.amazon.com/Star-Girl/dp/B0001290IU>

**Online Quia Quizzes:** Log in to quia.com (click the blue Quia Web).\*

You will have **five online quizzes** that will be released throughout the summer. These quizzes will compose your **first test grade** in 8th grade English! Each quiz may have a component in Grammar Girl; the description of the quiz will let you know if you should read any portion of Grammar Girl before you take it. Once you begin each quiz, you will have a time limit that will vary quiz to quiz. It might be 15 minutes; it might be 30 minutes. The schedule is as follows:

Quizzes are “open” and “closed” on these dates\*\*:

- Quiz 1: Available on June 5; closed on June 14
- Quiz 2: Available on June 17; closed on June 24
- Quiz 3: Available on June 26; closed on July 4
- Quiz 4: Available on July 8; closed on July 15
- Quiz 5: Available on July 17; closed on July 26

\*If you don't remember or don't have a quia login, I will set you up! Email me at [kailey.rhodes@stratford.org](mailto:kailey.rhodes@stratford.org).

\*\*If you will be missing any of these dates to go to summer camp or the like, please email [kailey.rhodes@stratford.org](mailto:kailey.rhodes@stratford.org) and I will release the quizzes to you at a time that you can complete them.

