



MILLER SCHOOL
of ALBEMARLE

Summer Reading Assignment

Course: English 11 – American Literature
Grade: 11th
Teacher: Mrs. Sarah Goodbar
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Required Book: *The Road*, by Cormac McCarthy (ISBN: 978-0307387899)

The comforts of civilization are gone. Starvation is a constant threat. Savage killers prowl the forests. Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* could almost be a book about America's beginnings and the desperate colonists who struggled to survive in the vast wilderness of the new world.

The Road, though, is about America's ending, not its beginning.

An apocalyptic event has blackened the landscape and killed most living things. The book's hero and his son travel through charred cities, the remnants of an old world that has been destroyed. The laws and institutions, the songs and celebrations, the very beliefs that defined their previous lives tremble on the verge of extinction. *The Road*, again, could almost be a book about America's beginnings, echoing the plight of the native American peoples who survived the coming of the Europeans and the end of the world as they had known it.

The Road is a book about how to survive, why to survive, and even whether to survive. In this ruined America, some will do anything to stay alive while others would rather die than face a world so bleak and violent. (A few scenes, I warn you, are extremely disturbing.) Your assignment is to read *The Road* and keep a reading journal as you go. Each journal entry should begin with an important quotation from a different section of the book, followed by a 100-150 word reflection on that quotation. You must write at least five journal entries. Please include the page number of each quotation. No other citation is necessary.

Email me your assignment before the first day of class.

My email is sgoodbar@millerschool.org.

Please put "American Literature Assignment" as the subject line.