

## Marina High School: Honors English 2 Summer Reading Assignment 2011-2012

### Overview

This summer, incoming English Honors 2 students are required to read two different texts: **Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*** and an abridged version of **Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo***. These books are readily available at libraries, bookstores, and through on-line vendors. (Check your local library for copies of the assigned texts.)

Hamilton's *Mythology* has gone through several different printings over the years, but the text is the same in all editions; thus, any copy of the book is acceptable.

*The Count of Monte Cristo* exists in various forms. The novel was written in French and is well over 1000 pages. There are several different abridgements and different translators. Students are encouraged to obtain an abridged copy, translated by Lowell Bair. If this translation is not available, any abridged version of the novel will suffice.

### Rationale

The focus of Honors English 2 is world literature, and thus it is essential that students have an in-depth knowledge of the myths and legends that pre-date Western writing. These stories form the basis for some of the earliest literature in the Western world and continue to shape and influence contemporary literature as well. Hamilton's *Mythology* presents these stories in a clear and organized manner, and reading this text will help students with the literature to be studied this year in English Honors 2.

*The Count of Monte Cristo* has been selected because it has literary and historical value, and it is also an extremely enjoyable and entertaining novel. Students frequently claim this to be one of their favorite books and find it to be an engaging summer reading experience. By having the students read the novel over the summer, we can use it to begin the year with a discussion of analysis and essay writing, rather than have to wait several weeks into the school year to address these essential skills.

### Assignments

#### *Edith Hamilton's Mythology*

- Read Chapters 1-12.
- Complete the written assignment on the back of this page and bring it to class on August 31<sup>st</sup> (the first day of school).
- There will be a test on these chapters during the first few weeks of school.

#### *The Count of Monte Cristo*

- Read the abridged version of the novel.
- There is no required written assignment to complete over the summer. However, you may want to annotate the novel (take your own notes) to help you keep track of plot, characters, literary devices, etc.
- There will be an essay assignment on the novel during the first few weeks of school.

### Questions

If you have any questions about the summer reading assignments, please e-mail either Mrs. Cooper ([hcooper@marinavikings.org](mailto:hcooper@marinavikings.org)) or Mr. Rasmussen ([crasmussen@marinavikings.org](mailto:crasmussen@marinavikings.org)) This document will also be available on the via a link on the Marina High School home page ([www.marinavikings.org](http://www.marinavikings.org)).

**Written Assignment for Edith Hamilton's *Mythology***  
**(due in class on August 31, 2011)**

**Address the following questions / topics with insights and details. You may use the space below to take notes as you read, but submit your responses on separate paper. Must be typed.**

**Chapter One: The Gods**

1. Create a glossary of the major gods mentioned in this chapter. Give their name and a one to two sentence definition/identification. List them in the order in which they are presented in the text. Do not just provide information about the 12 Olympians. Include them and other significant characters. You don't need to include the Roman gods, but know the Roman names for Greek gods/goddesses.

**Chapter Two: The Two Great Gods of Earth**

2. Write a thorough and thoughtful paragraph discussing the similarities and/or differences between Demeter and Dionysus. Include their personalities and actions.

**Chapter Three: How the World and Mankind Were Created**

3. Bullet the eight key events of this creation story. For each bullet point, write 2-3 complete sentences with details. Be sure they are in chronological order. Be sure your bullet points cover main ideas from throughout the chapter.

**Chapter Four: The Earliest Heroes**

4. Write a brief synopsis of Zeus' role in each story ("Prometheus and Io," "Europa," "The Cyclops Polyphemus," and "Flower-Myths: Narcissus, Hyacinth, Adonis"); then, write a paragraph analyzing your overall opinion of Zeus based on his actions in these myths. Explain with evidence from the text.

**Chapters Five and Six: Cupid and Psyche / Eight Brief Tales of Lovers**

5. What similarities do you notice between these stories and specific modern\*-day love stories (either from literature, movies, or television – include the titles)? Be sure to explain your choices.

\*modern = post ancient civilizations

**Chapter Seven: The Quest of the Golden Fleece**

6. What admirable qualities and flawed traits does Jason demonstrate in this story? Include specific examples from the text.

**Chapter Eight: Four Great Adventures**

7. What morals or lessons are presented in the stories of Phaëthon and Daedalus? Be sure to explain your choices with specific examples from the text.

**Chapters Nine – Twelve: Perseus, Theseus, Hercules, Atalanta (and the boar hunt)**

8. Which of these heroes is the most heroic and why? Which one is the least heroic and why? Be sure to include specific examples from the stories. (Write one paragraph to respond to each question.) Also, at the end of each paragraph, include at least one statement that addresses the opposition.