

Sherman High School Pre-AP English I Summer 2019 Reading Assignment

My name is Larena Douglass, and I will be teaching pre AP English at Sherman High School next year. My room is A-124. You will need to purchase and read a copy of the book *The Stranger in the Woods: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit* by Michael Finkel. You can order it from an internet source or from a local book store.

First of all, you will need to annotate the book for the following: unfamiliar vocabulary, interesting quotes, names and locations, description of the hermit and the man who caught him, description of the author, literary and historical allusions, and any thoughts or insights you have regarding the story. You may annotate with a highlighter, a pencil, or with sticky notes. It's your book, your choice, but you need to be very familiar with the story when we meet at the beginning of school. There will be a test over the book during the first week of school.

Next, there are many words throughout the book that may be unfamiliar and confusing. I have made a list of most of the words that you will want to define as you read each chapter. You only need to look up each word and write a simple definition or a synonym next to the word on the list. If you will look up the words before you read the chapter, it will make the process easier and the reading more enjoyable. With the exception of the list from chapter 8, this task should not take you more than 5-10 minutes before each chapter, if that long. The first chapter has been done for you.

Thirdly, there are several quotes in the book that need a closer look. Tell what is going on at the time those quotes are used and how they contribute to the telling of the story. Those quotes and the vocabulary list are part of this packet.

Finally, in addition to the test, we will have an in-depth discussion over the book and the ideas and questions it raises about life and the world in which we live.

If you have any questions, you may email me at ldouglass@shermanisd.net. Enjoy the story of Christopher Knight, have a great summer, and I look forward to working with you in August!

Vocabulary List from *The Stranger in the Woods*

Chapter 1

gradation-changes in color

waning-decreasing

stealth-sneakiness

meticulous-extremely careful; neat

Chapter 2

vault

scuttle

emanating

intermittent

errant

contingencies

Chapter 3

wary

sheaf

bemused

Chapter 4

relic

veracity

protracted

wry

Chapter 5

jimmied

ransacking

enclaves

speculated

Chapter 6

elicited

inundated

iconic

solicited

restitution

Chapter 7

bestows

monastic

eremitic

scrutinizing

candidly

fortitude

placidity

exponentially

kindled

divulged

Chapter 8

nomadic

conjecture

foraging

shaman

shrewdly

opaque

droll

patronizing

elicited

innocuous

pilfering

engender

synchronicity

unabashedly

candid

poignant

staccato

garners

harrowing

mired

mangled

Chapter 9

fortitude

kvetching

dismayed

scowl

entity

nebulous

caustic

epistolary

clamoring

Chapter 10

self-effacingly

loon

ethos

lax

cryptic

clairvoyance

Chapter 11

fastidiously

aesthetically pleasing

scoffed

feng shui

pachinko

Chapter 12

tutelage

ingenuity

invariably

introverted

malaise

bestowed

precipice

Chapter 13

paradoxically

emancipating

recluse

misanthrope

ascetic

anchorite

swami

forsaking

dilettante

commodity

hobnobbing

piety

fervent

Chapter 14

rudimentary

impositions

metaphysical

scruples

tainted

Chapter 15

meticulously

vigilantes

Chapter 16

endemic

autonomy

absolved

garish

fortnight

innuendo

dispiriting

procure

pilfered

aversion

acutely

attuned

ravages

forthrightly

misanthropic

Chapter 17

contemplation

mantra

Chapter 18

venerated

heretical

equanimity

inebriation

lethargy

Chapter 19

lamented

indolent

apathy

recoiled

banality

stench

degradation

antithesis

quipping

grandiosity

adamant

Chapter 20

preponderance

unequivocally

albeit

idiosyncratic

antithetical

unfathomable

outlier

prosaic

melancholy

sporadically

Chapter 21

incurred

cajole

anomalies

treatise

Chapter 22

koan

artifice

empirical

Chapter 23

incapacitate

anomaly

nonchalant

ensconced

cache

Chapter 24

compulsive

leniency

sully

pro bono

renowned

denizen

encroach

empathy

gaunt

confounding

Chapter 25

enticement

imminent

guillotine

aesthetics

inaneities

hew

rescinded

connoisseur

peripherally

vapidity

Chapter 26

ulterior motives

apocryphal

elicit

Chapter 27

emaciated

misconstrue

autonomy

platitudes

orating

pontificating

allegorically

chastised

Chapter 28

restitution

demeanor

docile

visage

elegy

Name- _____

English I Pre-AP

Summer Assignment

Quotes from The Stranger in the Woods

Explain what each of the following quotes from the book means to you and tell its importance using complete sentences (2-3, minimum for each).

1. "It's better to be tough than strong, better to be clever than intelligent." –Christopher Knight (Chapter 12, paragraph 5)

2. "Saying nothing sometimes says the most."—Emily Dickinson (Chapter 16, paragraph 8)

3. "Beware the barrenness of a busy life." –Socrates (Chapter 18, paragraph 3)

4. “It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.”—Jiddu Krishnamurti (Chapter 19, paragraph 6)

5. “You cannot have a social deficit when you are alone. You cannot have a communication problem when you are alone. All the diagnostic criteria [of Asperger’s Syndrome] dissolve in solitude.”—Tony Atwood, psychologist and Asperger’s expert (Chapter 19, paragraph 11)

6. “It’s an awful thing, solitary.” – John McCain (Chapter 21, paragraph 5)

7. "...nothing can be expressed about solitude that has not been said better by the wind in the pine trees." Thomas Merton (Chapter 22, paragraph 2)

8. "The true solitary does not seek himself, but loses himself." –Thomas Merton (Chapter 22, paragraph 6)

9. "The more you realize, the more you realize there is nothing to realize. The idea that there's somewhere we have got to get to, and something we have to attain, is our basic delusion."—Tenzin (Diane Perry) (Chapter 22, paragraph 10)

10. "My mind required to live its own life apart from other things." – Richard Jefferies
(Chapter 22, paragraph 12)

11. "Solitude is the profoundest fact of the human condition."—Octavio Paz (Chapter 28,
paragraph 20)

12. "Ultimately, and precisely in the deepest and most important matters, we are
unspeakably alone."—Rainer Maria Rilke (Chapter 28, paragraph 20).

Literary Allusions in *The Stranger in the Woods* by Michael L. Finkel

As you read the book, you will notice many references to authors and people throughout history. Look up the following literary and historical allusions and make a connection between the reference and to the story Finkel is telling. There are many more references in the book, but this list will help you to understand Christopher Knight's story more completely.

Socrates

Chernobyl nuclear disaster

Loch Ness monster

Himalayan yeti

Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

James Joyce's *Ulysses*

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*

Henry David Thoreau

The Unabomber

Bedlam

Stonehenge

Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Tao Te Ching by Lao-tzu

Anchorites

Jesus of Nazareth, Siddhartha Gautama, Muhammad

Harry Houdini

Emily Dickinson

Jack Kerouac

Valhalla

Notes from the Underground by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Very Special People by Frederick Drimmer

Stoicism

Friedrich Nietzsche

Asperger's

schizoid personality disorder

Thomas Merton

Rainer Maria Rilke

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Dalai Lama

Krakatoa

Lady of the Woods

James Boswell and *The Life of Samuel Johnson*