

St. Paul's Episcopal School
2019-2020 English Summer Reading Instructions
For All Rising Freshmen

St. Paul's Episcopal School views summer assignments as a valuable pursuit for the college preparatory student. Summer assignments provide the student with the opportunity for reading enrichment, independent study, time-management and continuity of content review. An additional advantage is that the students begin the school year with a common body of knowledge.

Summer reading books for all grades are available at St. Paul's Campus Store.

Hemingway, Ernest. The Old Man and the Sea
(ISBN 0-684-80122-1)

Freshman English Instructions:

You will participate in class discussion of the book, followed by a test including an essay section.

The Old Man and the Sea is a short novel or novella. The protagonist of this novella is an old, weathered sailor who has hit a streak of bad luck. Unable to catch a fish for over eighty days, Santiago loses his young assistant, Manolin, who has been forced by his parents to go with a "luckier boat." Nonetheless, the young boy remains devoted to Santiago, the old man who has taught him so much about fishing. He admires Santiago's strength and his determination. Moreover, the young boy seems to worry about his older friend and in many ways attempts to take care of him. Hemingway's terse dialogue reveals much about the relationship between these two unlikely characters. Speaking simply and realistically, they discuss baseball, the weather, and fishing. The novella is set on the coast of Cuba in the 20th century. Spanish terms flavor the setting and give it an exotic air.

When reading The Old Man and the Sea for English class, look for the themes of friendship, loyalty, courage, pride, perseverance, and suffering. How are these themes developed in the novella? Consider the major conflicts in the novella - man versus nature and man versus himself. How are these conflicts resolved? Look for realistic details. Hemingway's descriptions make you see and smell the Gulf waters and transport you to a small boat buffeted by a mighty ocean. Your hopes for Santiago in his quest will rise and fall like the ocean waves, and, in the end, you will have to decide whether or not he sleeps the sleep of a hero. What a wonderful adventure you will take in this novella.