



CLEVELAND
HUMANITIES
MAGNET

Summer Reading Assignment revised for 2017-2018

Welcome, students to ninth grade Core. Our curriculum is based on world cultures and globalization. Modern technology and economic growth have made our world smaller and smaller. Increasingly, we recognize that we are no longer just citizens of our own separate countries but citizens of the world, and we must become more knowledgeable about it and more responsible to it.

In preparation for the 2017-18 school year, you are required to complete a summer reading assignment. The ninth-grade teaching team has selected a book, *Funny in Farsi* by Firoozeh Dumas, a memoir about an Iranian girl who journeys with her family to America. This memoir is the personal recollection of Firoozeh Dumas' experiences as a young immigrant who struggles with her own identity as she learns about her new, adopted culture. The book relates to the focus in ninth grade on our ever-shrinking global world as we study the world cultures of Australia, Mexico, Africa, and China as critical thinkers of the twenty-first century. Dumas provides another look at the everyday life and culture of both Iran and America and her book lends itself as an honest discussion about cultural differences, ethnic assumptions, and racial biases.

Review from Amazon.com: This lighthearted memoir chronicles the author's move from Iran to America in 1971 at age seven, the antics of her extended family and her eventual marriage to a Frenchman. The best parts will make readers laugh out loud, as when she arrives in Newport Beach, Calif., "a place where one's tan is a legitimate topic of conversation." She is particularly good making gentle fun of her father, who loves Disneyland and once competed on the game show *Bowling for Dollars*. Many of the book's jokes, though, are groan inducing, as in, "the only culture that my father was interested in was the kind in yogurt." And the book is off-kilter structurally. After beginning with a string of amusing anecdotes from her family's first years stateside, one five-page chapter lurches from seventh grade in California to an ever so brief mention of the Iranian revolution, and then back to California, college and meeting her husband...Despite unevenness, Dumas's first book remains a warm, witty and sometimes poignant look at cross-cultural misunderstanding and family life. Immigrants from anywhere are likely to identify with her chronicle of adapting to America.

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Academic Honesty:

Academic honesty is crucial to the integrity of the individual student and our program. All students at Cleveland Humanities Magnet are expected to meet the highest standards of honesty in their academic work. Moreover, academic dishonesty could bring many consequences such as a zero on the assignment, a full grade lower on the final Core grade, parent conference, student name may be placed on the Magnet cheating list, and so forth. Basically, **do your own work** and do not put off the summer assignment until the last minute.

Turnitin.com is the cloud-based service we use to check for originality and detect plagiarism. It is used by more than 10,000 institutions in 135 countries, including many high school and universities, to manage the tracking, submission, and evaluation of student work online. Due to our high standards of academic honesty, students will be required to use Turnitin.com throughout their four years in the Core program.

How to submit your summer assignment:

- Please turn in your summer assignment online to **turnitin.com**. See instructions below.
- Also, bring a **hard copy** of your summer assignment on **the first day of school** to your **Core English teacher**.

Turnitin.com Instructions:

1. Go to www.turnitin.com
 2. If you already have an account, go to the top right hand corner of the page and enter your email address and password. If you do *not* already have an account, click *Create Account*.
 3. Click on student
 4. Input the class ID number: **15266756**
 5. Input the class enrollment password: **corebaby**
 6. Your class will show up on your homepage. Click on the name of your class to open your class portfolio: **9th Grade CORE (2017-2018)**
 7. Your class portfolio shows the assignments your instructor has created and your submissions to the class. To submit a paper, click the submit button next to the paper's assignment. **(Summer Assignment-Funny in Farsi Study Questions)**
 8. The paper submission page will open. Enter a title for your paper. To select a paper for submission, click the *browse* button and locate the paper on your computer. We accept submissions in these formats:
 - MS Word, WordPerfect, RTF, PDF, PostScript, HTML, and plain text (.txt)
After entering a title for your paper and selecting a file, click *submit* to upload your paper. If your paper is in a format that we do not accept, you can submit it by cut and paste. To submit a paper this way, select *cut & paste* using the pull down at the top of the form. To submit a paper by cut and paste, copy the text of your paper from a word processing program and then paste it into the text box in the submission form. If you submit your paper using the cut and paste method, you can skip the next step.
 - The paper you chose to submit will be shown on the next page. Look over all the information and make sure that it is correct. To confirm the submission, click the *yes, submit* button. The format will be correct on the paper you turn in, even if it does not appear correct when you review it.
 - After you confirm your submission, a digital receipt will be shown. This receipt will be e-mailed to you. To return to your portfolio and view your submission, click the portfolio button.
 9. **Turn in a paper copy on the first day of school.**
 10. Submission starts on **July 14, 2017** and will end on **August 13, 2017 at 11:59 pm**.
- ONLINE INSTRUCTIONS: http://www.turnitin.com/static/pdf/tii_student_qs.pdf

Summer Assignment: *Funny in Farsi* (Questions adopted from www.randomhouse.com/highschool/)

Instructions: The first week back from the summer break, you will be given a reading exam that demonstrates your understanding and completion of the book. The reading exam is in the form of quotes. You will be given three quotes from the book, and you will need to explain what is happening in the book where those quotes are located. Therefore, do not overlook your summer reading assignment and pace your reading wisely.

Additionally, you will complete and submit your answers to the *Funny in Farsi* reading questions prior to the first day of school. Make sure to bring a hard copy to your English class. Read the study questions carefully and provide thoughtful and detailed responses.

Study Questions

1. Firoozeh's parents don't speak English fluently, and their efforts to do so often lead to embarrassment, especially for their children. Why doesn't Firoozeh do more to encourage her parents to learn English? To what extent can you relate to the experience of being embarrassed by your family?
2. How does Firoozeh's interaction with her many relatives compared to your involvement with your extended family? To what extent is the notion of one's family defined differently by each culture? How might one measure the importance of the family in American society?
3. How does Firoozeh's engagement to François, a French Catholic, affect her relationship with her parents? To what extent does her mother's reaction to the news reflect her acceptance of the changing realities of contemporary life in America? Are mixed marriages (ethnic, religious, racial, etc.) accepted or considered controversial in your community, and why?
4. Firoozeh's father, Kazem is grateful for his opportunity to vote as a naturalized American citizen. Why might being able to vote make someone feel especially connected with one's community or country? Based on the information about Iran you have learned from *Funny in Farsi*, how do the political rights of Iranian citizen compare to the political rights of American citizens?
5. How did the promise of education in America change Kazem's life forever? To what extent does education seem to hold the same opportunities for immigrants from foreign countries and native citizens?
6. How does Firoozeh's experience of violence during the Shah's visit with President Carter in 1977 affect her? How do you think Firoozeh is able to reconcile this experience of bias and racial hatred with her appreciation for all that America offers her family?
7. How does Firoozeh's use of humor to describe her experiences as an Iranian immigrant in America enable you to appreciate the more confusing or mystifying aspects of American culture? How would the experience of reading this book differ for you if it were told from a more serious perspective? Of the many humorous moments detailed by Firoozeh Dumas, which was most memorable for you, and why?
8. How would you characterize the role of television in Firoozeh's family? Why does television's visual medium connect her relatives to American products and attitudes in ways that their language cannot?
9. Pretend you have just arrived in America, knowing nothing about Americans or American culture. Watch the evening news for five consecutive nights. Then write about your impressions of Americans. Then discuss the news media and its impact on how people formulate opinions.