



The Catholic High School of Baltimore Summer Reading List

Teacher's Name: Mrs. Emily Vandergriff

School Year: 2017-2018 **Grade Level:** 9

Course No.: 113 **Course Name:** American Literature I

Academic Level (Honors/AP/CP1/CP2/CPA): CPA

Reading:

Zig Zag by Ellen Wittlinger

Zig Zag Assignment:

Robin feels totally unworthy of her rich, smart boyfriend, Chris. So, when her divorced mother starts dating and Chris goes off to Rome for summer school, the 17-year-old accepts an invitation to drive from Iowa to California with her newly widowed Aunt Dory and her cousins, Iris (13) and Marshall (10), taking a circuitous route to see the country. Cramped in a car with a family still grieving, Robin finds herself in the middle of every conceivable sibling and parental dispute. Marshall and Iris are nasty and unkind to each other as well as to their suffering mother and Robin. As every dysfunctional episode ensues, the teen finds that she has the ability to help them all, and with that discovery she finds a way to help herself. There is nothing new about a novel that uses the plot device of a journey as a rite of passage. *Zigzag* has that commonplace plot filled with plain, everyday people experiencing plain, ordinary problems. Yet all four of the extended family members on the trip move from self-doubt to self-knowledge, from chaos to order. With gentle wisdom and remarkably true characters, Wittlinger's writing conveys a fundamental truth: life is a non-linear journey that everyone takes and it is the simple choices that define a person.

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Complete the following assignment for *Zigzag*:

1. Complete the following vocabulary and reading comprehension questions for each chapter. The vocabulary and answers to the questions should be typed using Times New Roman 12 point font.
2. After you have finished reading, write a personal essay in which you explore a time in your life where you were put into a somewhat uncomfortable position and had to make some difficult or hard decisions. Maybe it was a time where you were caught in the middle between two friends fighting and you worked, much like Robin, to bring peace. How did you know what to do? Could you sense yourself making more mature

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conversations or arguments? How did the experience make you feel? What was the end result? Did you come to any new conclusions about yourself and/or your life?

Your essay must be:

- ✓ 1 page typed
- ✓ 12 point Times New Roman
- ✓ Double-spaced
- ✓ One inch margins
- ✓ Header should be adjusted to the left and include, in this order:
 - Your Name
 - Date
 - English 111 Honors
 - Zigzag Essay
- ✓ If longer than one page, please staple it in the top left-hand corner
- ✓ Please do not place it in plastic folders of any kind.
- ✓ It is due on the first day of school. We will use your summer reading assignments during the first few weeks of school during a book talk.

Zig Zag by Ellen Wittlinger

Vocabulary & Reading Comprehension Questions by Chapter

Chapter 1

Vocabulary: nosh

1. What year in school is Robin?
2. Who is her best friend?
3. Where is Chris going to college?
4. What do Chris's parents do for a living?

Chapter 2

1. Why does Chris not like it that Robin and his mother think he's perfect?
2. Who is Robin's mom talking to?
3. How did she meet him?
4. Why is she being "weird" about it?

Chapter 3

Vocabulary: culvert

1. What was Chris's graduation present from his parents?
2. How does Robin think you should be able to tell if someone loves you?

Chapter 4

Vocabulary: cockles, contort, apprehensive

1. Why does Robin think the Melville's gave Chris that trip?
2. What is the "opportunity" proposed to Robin?
3. What stop does Robin want to make during the trip?

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4. Describe Robin's relationship with her Dad.

Chapter 5

Vocabulary: skeptical, enigmatic, waylaid, bereft

1. According to Franny, what makes love doomed?
2. With whom does Franny have a date?

Chapter 6

Vocabulary: comatose, louse, pretentious

1. Why didn't Robin enjoy having Chris over for dinner?
2. What does Michael plan to do?
3. What is Franny's attitude about Des that Robin says is just like her mother?
4. Where is the program Chris is attending located?

Chapter 7

Vocabulary: bedraggled, inane

1. Why does Dory want to take this trip?
2. Why did Marshall get kicked out of private school?

Chapter 8

Vocabulary: dumbfounded

1. Where was their first stop on the road trip?
2. What is the only thing that interested Iris?
3. What club was Dory involved with as a kid?
4. What was Marshall afraid to get on?
5. Where did they stay that first night?

Chapter 9

Vocabulary: nostalgic, minarets

1. Where did they stop for lunch?
2. Where were they planned to stay the night?

Chapter 10

Vocabulary: pinnacle, ravine

1. What happened while they slept?
2. What was their activity for the day?
3. What was Marshall's accomplishment during the activity?
4. How does Marshall record things?

Chapter 11

Vocabulary: dude ranch, corral

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1. Why was Robin happy to hear that her mother wasn't taking Michael Evans too seriously?
2. What state are they driving through and where did they stop for lunch?
3. Where are they staying for three days?
4. What happened when Robin confronted Iris about having an eating disorder?

Chapter 12

Vocabulary: rapturously, gait, exhibition, canter

1. What are the names of the horses they each rode?
2. Surprisingly, who was the best rider?
3. What did Robin catch iris doing? Was she successful?

Chapter 13

1. What big news does Dory have to tell Iris and Marshall?
2. What is Iris's boyfriend's name?
3. What does it seem that Iris is struggling with?

Chapter 14

Vocabulary: disdain

1. Who has taken a liking to Robin?
2. Is Chris having a good time in Italy? Explain.
3. What does Marshall try and how does he do?
4. What event did Iris try?

Chapter 15

Vocabulary: incredulous, frugality

1. Where were the next stops in Denver?
2. What does Marshall think is the "most important thing?"
3. What happened in the parking lot?

Chapter 16

Vocabulary: wistfully, incredulous, unfurl

1. How did Iris take the news of leaving her private school?
2. What's the name of their new school?
3. What is interesting about the "Cadillac Ranch" and where is it located?

Chapter 17

Vocabulary: scathing, intermediary, belligerent

1. Name three sites from Chris's letter.
2. What's the name of the resort they're at in Texas?

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3. What is Robin beginning to love and what does she want to be a part of?

Chapter 18

1. Why is Acoma Pueblo called “sky city?”
2. What is special about Acoma Pueblo?
3. What’s the name of the back road Dory is taking to Santa Fe?
4. What happened when they left the café?

Chapter 19

1. Who was the first to help them?
2. How did Iris sprain her ankle?
3. How long will Dory have to stay in the hospital?

Chapter 20

1. What are Savannah’s parents’ names?
2. What’s the name of their motel?
3. How many brothers and sisters does Savannah have?
4. Where does Savannah go to school and what does she study?

Chapter 21

1. What are the names of the horses?
2. What happened between Iris and Marshall?
3. Where did Savannah take them?
4. What surprise did Robin’s mom tell her about?

Chapter 22

Vocabulary: cavorting

1. How did Robin get Marshall to go to sleep?
2. Why does Robin think Marshall is ok?
3. What’s wrong with Iris?
4. When did it get worse than ever before?

Chapter 23

Vocabulary: relinquish

1. Who surprised Robin?
2. What two things does her dad want?

Chapter 24

Vocabulary: indoctrinate, sullen

1. Why does Iris say she throws up?

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2. Where did Cesar take Robin?
3. Why does Iris feel betrayed?
4. What does Robin say she's beginning to understand?

Chapter 25

Vocabulary: raucous

1. How did Marshall decorate the welcome home cake?
2. Explain how Dory says things are going to change.
3. What is her unbreakable rule?

Chapter 26

Vocabulary: melancholy

1. What did Iris and Marshall surprise Robin with?
2. How does Robin feel about Chris now?

Chapter 27

1. What realization did Robin come to about her mother?
2. What did the zig zag trip open Robin up to?

Submission & Assessment

- Your summer reading assignment is due on the first full day of school – Tuesday, September 6, 2017.
- Make sure you **proofread** your summer reading assignment before turning it in. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation count!
- There will be a **test** on the summer reading book at the beginning of the school year. You will receive more information about the test during the first week of school.
- My email should you have any questions is:
evandergriff@thecatholichighschool.org