Dear Freshman English Students:

Welcome to St. Cecilia Academy! We are excited to share some of our favorite books with you.

Your summer reading assignment is as follows:

1. Read and annotate each of these books carefully and thoughtfully:
   - *The Sword and the Circle* by Rosemary Sutcliffe (ISBN 978-0140371499)

*To annotate* a text means to write in the margins while reading. It is a way of engaging with and entering into an author’s art and ideas. The goal is to have a rich, satisfying, and thought-provoking reading experience.

To annotate means to *thoughtfully* and *frequently* do the following as you read:
- **Underline and/or star key sentences** (thesis statements, important topic sentences of sections, etc.)
- **Circle and define any words** that you cannot understand from the context
- **Ask questions in the margins** (example: “Is this true?” “What’s his evidence?” “Why is this character angry?” “This symbol seems important; what’s it mean?” etc.)
- **Make comments** about your own thoughts about / reactions to the text (example: “This character is crazy!” “I should tell Ellen about this.” “This character reminds me of me. Weird.” “So true!”)
- **Identify key symbols**, and speculate on their meaning, speculate on the book’s themes as you go.

As readers annotate, they often develop an annotating system of their own. You will learn what works for you. For now, the important thing is to read all your summer assignments with a sharp pencil in your hand, and take time to “talk back” to the text as you go.

2. Take handwritten notes about each book. Your notes should be organized by chapter and can focus on the following themes:
   - For *Lilies of the Field* take notes on the main character and any changes he undergoes.
   - For *The Story of My Life* take notes on the importance of education in Helen’s life and how she approaches obstacles to her education. (While you should read the letters at the end of the book, there is no need to take notes on them.)
   - For *The Glass Menagerie* take notes on the theme of memory.
   - For *The Sword and the Circle*, take notes on the themes of courage and honor.

Notes for all four books must be ready by the first day of school. They will be used in the first weeks of school for a writing workshop.

We would prefer students write their answers to this assignment by hand; if you wish to request an exception to type your answers, or have any other questions about the assignment, please contact Sister Scholastica: srscholastica@stcecilia.edu.

We look forward to seeing you in August!

- The Faculty of the SCA English Department