

Mount Saint Mary Academy  
English II  
Summer Reading Assignments

**Texts**

*A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway  
*O Pioneers* by Willa Cather

*A Farewell to Arms*

**Instructions:** Read and annotate the text carefully. Write in the margins, underline, circle word you don't know (and look them up!). After you have done this, consider the questions below. Take some notes on your thoughts (about a half page for each question). This is not a formal writing assignment, but you will be developing one of these prompts into your first essay.

1. Before going back to the front, Lieutenant Henry introduces us to Ettore, a decorated soldier of the Italian army. "He was a legitimate hero who bored everyone he met" (124). How does Hemingway portray heroism in this novel? Is Lt. Henry a hero? Is Catherine a hero? Why or why not?
2. Throughout the novel, we find out very little about the personal histories of Lt. Henry and Catherine. How does Hemingway go about developing these characters? Can you relate to them? Why or why not?
3. What role does religion play in this novel? Choose two characters and describe how he or she is affected (or unaffected) by religion.
4. How does Hemingway use rain in this novel? Choose three examples from the text. What does rain symbolize? How does it relate to the relationship between Lt. Henry and Catherine?

*O Pioneers*

**Instructions:** As above, read and annotate the text carefully. Be prepared to answer questions on this novel in the first few weeks of school.