Read The Stranger in the Woods by Michael Finkel closely over your summer break. When you return to school in August, we will discuss and analyze this book with a focus on education.

As you read, annotate/take notes related to the following essential questions:

- **What is the relationship between “school” and “education”?** Consider what Knight learns about the world and himself and where/how he learns it.
- **How can education liberate the mind and body? How might it corrupt?** Consider the ways in which Knight liberated through his learning? How is he corrupted? What is the source of this liberation/corruption?
- **What are the intended outcomes of education, whether institutional or self-instructed?** Consider the goals of education today both realistically and idealistically. How does Knight both fall short and surpass these goals.

Using your annotations and direct evidence from the text, prepare for our first formal seminar discussion by considering the following questions. Be sure to have direct textual evidence to support your ideas.

1. Discuss the significance of the Socrates epigraph that opens The Stranger in the Woods. How does this set the tone for the book? How does it relate to the book's larger discussion of needs versus wants?
2. In chapter seven, the narrative lens of The Stranger in the Woods shifts to allow for the author’s point of view to emerge. What spurs Finkel to reach out to Knight, initially? Discuss their early exchanges, as well as Finkel's first visit. How does their relationship evolve? What impact does this narrative shift have on the larger text?
3. Knight wonders if “modern society, with its flood of information and tempest of noise, was only making us dumber.” Reflect on this statement. What are the pitfalls of technology in relation to modern living? How does our reliance on technology undercut some of the most essential human functions?

Respond to the following prompt by arguing your position on Knight and his choices using appropriate evidence from the text. Your essay should be between 400 and 600 words, double spaced, using the 12 pt Times New Roman font.

- Often in our democratic society we consider education as a right, a tool that enables both freedom and success. Discuss to what degree you consider Knight to be an educated person. What, if anything, should we value about him and his choices? How does your own education thus far compare to the knowledge Knight acquires and the means by which he acquires it? Support your answer with as much specific evidence from the book and your personal experience as you can.