

Freshman English Summer Reading

Over the next ten weeks, you need to select TWO titles to read from the summer reading list. Because you will need to be familiar with these works upon your return to school in September, it is recommended (this means it is optional- but really a good idea) that you maintain a journal of notes and responses for each book (see below for more information). This way, you can review these journals/notes prior to the start of school without having to read over the book again. **You will also be completing an assignment for both books to be turned in on the first day of classes.**

During the first week of classes you will be required to answer an essay prompt in relation to the readings. This serves two purposes:

1. As a means to assess your reading comprehension and to ensure that the assigned reading was completed
- and
2. As a sample of your writing ability for your English teacher

To be sure that you get the titles you are interested in, **go to the library early** in the summer to pick up your books. You may, of course, purchase the books or even split the cost with a friend. Whatever method you choose, **be sure to select books that are of interest to you and ones that you haven't previously read.** The attached list offers something from just about every genre as well as a variety of reading levels.

What to include in your notes/journals: Notes on characters, setting, conflicts that arise, important events of the plot, a quote or description that you feel is important to understanding the book, or simply any facts that you feel are important or relevant to the plot. You may also want to write down possible themes or messages that the author is portraying in the story.

REQUIRED PASSAGE ASSIGNMENT

You will be required to find **TWO passages from EACH book** (a total of FOUR). As you read, make note of any passage that catches your interest. You are looking for one passage for each of the following criteria:

1. A passage or quote that captures the essence or theme of the book, in other words a message or meaning from the author about people or life in general
2. A passage or quote that you found striking in some way-perhaps it moved you emotionally or it was funny, shocking, or particularly descriptive

*****The passage or quote must be at least three sentences in length*****

Once you have chosen your passage, complete the following:

- ✓ Copy the passage down using quotation marks around the material you are quoting.
- ✓ Make note of the page number

- ✓ Under the passage record the title and author of the book
- ✓ Include a brief explanation (one paragraph), in your own words, that describes what the passage shows, who is speaking (if it is dialogue), and what is happening in the novel at this particular moment.
- ✓ In a second paragraph, explain the reason why you chose the passage (either number one or two from above) and how the passage reflects a theme that emerges in the novel or what about the passage moved you.

Sample Passage Example and Explanation Paragraph

Heart of Darkness

“They were dying slowly- it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing now, nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom” (Conrad 27).

At this point in the novel, Marlow, the narrator, is describing his reaction to the physical appearance of the first Africans he observes. Marlowe is shocked at the condition of these men who work in an ivory mine until they no longer have the strength to continue. At this point they crawl into adjacent woods, lean against a tree, and wait for death. This passage caught me by surprise. I was shocked by his description as Marlow seemed to be.

*****Remember these quotes are due on the first day of school. Don't forget them at home*****

FRESHMAN ENGLISH SUMMER READING SELECTIONS

Fiction

Watership Down by Richard Adams

A fantasy in which a maverick band of rabbits form a democratic society.

Catalyst by Laurie Halse Anderson (author of *Speak*)

The narrator, 18 year old Kate Malone, has placed all of her eggs in one basket: she has applied only to her late mother's alma mater, MIT. Calculus is a cinch, chemistry is her favorite subject, even physics comes easily to her, but when her MIT rejection arrives, it acts as a catalyst for the slow unraveling of her delicately balanced life.

Feed by M.T. Anderson

Both hilarious and disturbing, this story of two teens in a dystopian universe is hauntingly familiar in its barrage of greed and superficiality. In this society your brain cyberfeed provides an endless stream of information, entertainment, and advertising. When Violet's feed is disrupted, she's cast adrift and everyone is forced to examine the power of the feed in his/her life.

Illusion: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah by Richard Bach

Two free spirits, one a former miracle worker, barnstorm the Midwest.

The Squared Circle by James Bennett

A high school basketball star is entangled in the controversy surrounding his grades and his recruitment, as he must deal with the hazing and racism of his college fraternity.

Tangerine by Edward Bloor

A blinded geek finds his new home zany and empowering in this coming-of-age story.

When Legends Die by Hal Borland

A Native American boy is left alone in the wilderness.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

A gothic novel in which a young heiress finds romance, mystery, and heartache.

Postcards From No Man's Land by Aidan Chambers

Alternates between two stories-contemporarily, seventeen year old Jacob visits a daunting Amsterdam at the request of his English grandmother- and historically- nineteen year old Geertrui relates her experience of the British soldiers' attempts to liberate Holland from its German occupation.

Whale Talk by Chris Crutcher

T.J. Jones, the mixed-race, larger-than-life, heroic, first person narrator of this novel, lays out the events of his senior year, with many digressions along the way. The central plot involves T.J.'s efforts to put together a swim team of misfits, as he tries to upset the balance of power at his central Washington school, where jocks and the narrow-minded rule.

Running Loose by Chris Crutcher

A boy's senior year in high school goes awry when he's kicked off the football team for taking a stand against the coach and his girlfriend is killed in a car accident.

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

A mystery and morality tale of a young man and his expectations of wealth.

Northern Light by Jennifer Donnelly

Mattie Gokey has a word for everything. She collects words, stores them up as a way of fending off the hard truths of her life, the truths that she can't write down in stories like the pain of her mother's death, having to raise her sisters, and the feelings she has for Royal Loomis and her dream of finishing high school and attending college. Yet when the drowned body of a young woman turns up at the hotel where Mattie works, all her words prove useless until she finds her voice through the love letters of the dead woman. *This is based on a true story.*

The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer

The science is as scary as the fiction in Farmer's riveting story of a teenage clone who discovers his special destiny in a future world.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon

When a teen discovers his neighbor's dog savagely stabbed to death, he decides to use the deductive reasoning of his favorite detective, Sherlock Holmes, to solve the crime. This doesn't come easy for him as he suffers from a disability that causes compulsive behavior, the inability to read others' emotions, and intolerance for noise, human touch, and unexpected events. However, he learned to cope amazingly well with the help of a brilliant teacher who encourages him to write a book. This is his book- a murder mystery that is much more.

Siddhartha by Herman Hesse

A young Hindu prince rejects his luxurious station in life to search for enlightenment.

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

An impassioned teenage author tells it like it is with the long haired kids from the wrong side of the tracks.

Breaking Boxes by A.M. Jenkins

A contemporary story of friendship, teen alienation, and prejudice.

The Eye of the World by Robert Jordan

A fantasy novel in which three teenagers, caught in a struggle between good and evil, make their way to a distant land.

Tomorrow, When the War Began by John Marsden

A group of six teens are camping in the bush when WWII breaks out in Australia. When they return home, they find their houses and streets deserted. Now these teens must be careful of their every move as they attempt to gather information, rescue a friend, and await assistance from the United States. With its non-stop action and suspense, this book takes you through an emotional tale of survival and hope.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

After a harrowing shipwreck, Pi finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean, trapped on a 26 foot lifeboat with a wounded zebra, a spotted hyena, a seasick orangutan, and a 450 pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. A story of adventure, survival, and ultimately, faith.

Memory by Margaret Mahy

Dealing with his feelings of guilt regarding his sister's death, a young man cares for an elderly woman who suffers from Alzheimer's disease.

Dragonsong by Anee McCaffery

A fantasy novel in which a young woman teaches her friends the fire dragons how to sing.

Twelve Days in August by Liza Ketchum Murrow

A young man struggles with peer pressure while making an important decision about his soccer team.

Fallen Angles by Walter Dean Myers

A coming of age tale for young adults set in the trenches of the Vietnam War in the late 1960's tells the story of Perry, a Harlem teenager who volunteers for the service when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry and his platoon come face-to-face with the Vietcong and the real horror of warfare. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments, and why the U.S. is there at all.

Big Mouth & Ugly Girl by Joyce Carol Oates

An awkward friendship between two self-styled misfits is at the center of this though-provoking, character-driven drama about the climate of hysteria by school violence in America.

When the Emperor was Divine by Julie Otsuka

This novel captures the anguish of Japanese American internment through the separate viewpoints of one family: the mother as they leave home, the daughter on the long train journey, the son in the camps, the father returning to his family. The particulars make universal the experience of prejudice and disenfranchisement.

The Day No Pigs Would Die by Robert Newton Peck

This gentle, heartwarming novel concerns a farm boy, his love for his father and his coming of age.

The Chosen by Chaim Potek

The friendship that develops between two Jewish boys in the NYC ids the focus of an optimistic story.

The River Between Us by Richard Peck

A historical novel set at the beginning of the Civil War that opens in 1916, as 15 year old Howard Leland Hutchings recounts his trip in a Model T to visit his father's childhood home in Grand Tower, IL. When he and his younger brothers meet the four elderly people who raised their father, the novel shifts to 1861, and the narrator shifts to 15 year old Tilly Pruitt, the boys' grandmother. The novel looks at the female Civil war experience and the changes occurring in the country, including the splits among towns and family caused by the war.

A Door Near Here by Heather Quarles

Four young siblings must band together in order to survive an alcoholic mothers' neglect.

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin

A unique book that is part mystery, part game, and part puzzle.

I Capture the Castle by Dodie Smith

Imagine living in a castle that is falling apart and you and your family are poor. That is the situation in which Cassandra finds herself. All she wants is to improve her writing skills, which she does by writing in her journals which allow us to see her family and town as she does. One meeting with the new neighbors, the Cotton's, will change Cassandra's entire world. Opportunities will present themselves to the entire family and those choices will affect everyone.

Jaguar by Roland Smith

An expedition in Brazil joins son with father in an adventure addressing environmental issues.

Taste of Salt: A Story of Modern Haiti by Frances Temple

Fiction based on the reality of two people caught in a brutal political regime.

The Grounding of Group 6 by Julian F. Thompson

They did not know that being sent to private school was a literal death sentence.

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

The novel that began the fantasy genre stars Bilbo Baggins as he adventures to find stolen treasure.

The Time Machine by H.G. Wells

A scientist travels to the future and examines the de-evolution of humanity.

Ethan Frome by Edith Wharton

An American classic about the tragic love story set in remote New England.

The Once and Future King by T.H. White

The stories of King Arthur told in their best, contemporary form.

The Pigman by Paul Zindel

Narrated from alternate points of view, two teenagers relate the story of their awakening after encountering a generous and trustworthy elderly man.

Reef of Death by Paul Zindel

Seventeen year old PC can't resist his uncle Cliff's frantic call and is soon aboard a plane to Australia. Upon arriving, PC realizes that his uncle is in an even more bizarre predicament than usual, and that Cliff is counting on him to unravel the threads of the mystery linking a missing diver, Murial, a map, a deserted ship, and a huge creature that lurks in the depths beneath the reef.

Nonfiction

Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World by Jennifer Armstrong

This is the true story of Ernest Shackleton and the crew's ill-fated journey to Antarctica in 1914. They were to be the first explorers ever to cross the Antarctic continent. Unfortunately, just 100 miles from the Antarctic shores, their ship was trapped and crushed by the frozen sea. The team suffered numerous challenges yet every single crewmember survived the ordeal.

All Creatures Great and Small by James Hereto

The pains and joys of a rural veterinarian.

No Matter How Loud I Shout by Edward Humes

The juvenile justice system is exposed by the first journalist to be granted access to juvenile court.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Malcolm X

A first hand account of the turbulent life of an African American leader.

The Only way I know How by Cal Ripken and Bryan White

The account of the famous Oriole shortstop's journey to baseball's consecutive-game record.

Eleven Seconds: A Story of Tragedy, Courage, and Triumph by Travis Roy with E.M. Swift

Travis Roy played for the B.U Terriers for 11 seconds before he was paralyzed.

Night by Elie Weisel

A terrifying and moving story of a Jewish boy in Nazi Germany.