

Summer Reading for Incoming 11th and 12th Graders - College Preparatory

“I have been established, anointed and sealed by God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” – 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

Parents and Students,

The connection between reading and academic success -- both now and on standardized tests, writing, post secondary learning, and in life -- is overwhelmingly correlated! I recommend (and this is advice I have to take myself!) branching out from one's favorite genre for variety and to discover additional types of writing to enjoy. **If you want to read something not on this list, just email me and let me know what you are reading.** (It probably will be fine.)

Assignment:

1. During the first week of your English semester (August or January), you will give a 4-6 minute oral presentation consisting of a short summary (unless someone else has already summarized your book), an analysis, and a review. You may use notes if you'd like.
2. During the first week of your English semester (August or January), you will write a paragraph about the book that deals with universal themes and the meaning of the work as a whole. **(Do not do this during the summer; we will talk about it in class!)**

Contemporary Fiction

- Julie by Catherine Marshall
- I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou
- Bleachers by John Grisham
- A Painted House by John Grisham

Timeless Favorites

- House of Seven Gables by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- A Farewell to Arms or The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway
- Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte
- Les Miserables by Victor Hugo
- Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy
- Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte
- Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
- Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison
- The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck
- Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
- Death of a Salesman - Arthur Miller (drama)

Science Fiction/Fantasy

- 1984 by George Orwell
- Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
- Foundation Trilogy by Isaac Asimov
- Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury
- The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien

- Lord of the Flies - William Golding

Historical Fiction

- Novels from the Savannah Quartet by Eugenia Price
- 1776 by David McCulloch
- Dear and Glorious Physician by Taylor Caldwell
- Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott
- Treasure Island, Kidnapped, or Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson
- Novels from The Georgia Trilogy by Eugenia Price
- A Lantern in Her Hand by Bess Streeter Aldrich

Non-Fiction

- Blue Like Jazz by Donald Miller
- Know What You Believe by Paul Little
- Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis
- Divine Nobodies by Jim Palmer
- Cost of Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Flags of our Fathers by James Bradley
- Same Kind of Different As Me by Ron Hall and Denver Moore

More Contemporary Selections:

- *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel - Minor language/situations - I'd rate it a PG
- *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* (A Hunger Games Novel) by Suzanne Collins

- *The Glass Hotel*- by Emily St. John Mandel (the author as Station Eleven).
- Those interested in legal thrillers will like John Grisham. I don't love all his novels (and he's written many through the decades!), but my favorite is *The Testament*, which follows a lawyer searching for a missing missionary in Brazil, with a clever plot and a twist ending. Grisham's books are not religious, but this one definitely has subtle Christian themes. All great are *The Firm* (his second novel that "put him on the map") and *A Time to Kill* (his first novel). *The Guardians*, *Camino Island*, and *Camino Winds* are two of his most recent novels that were enjoyable.
- *A Thousand Splendid Suns* - by Khaled Hosseini is a beautiful but sometimes harsh story set against the volatile events of Afghanistan's last thirty years, a historical fiction. Again, much literary merit but not difficult (this is the author of *The Kite Runner*, which I have not read).
- *Educated* by Tara Westover (an autobiography) is about survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom.
- Some great historical fiction I've read that doesn't fall into the clichés and copycats of recent years:
 - *All the Light We Cannot See* - Anthony Doerr. Mrs. Miles recommended this to me and now it's probably in my top 25 novels of all time!
 - *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* - Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows is delightful (I think it's a Netflix movie now, too).
 - *The Help* - by Kathryn Stockett
 - *The Alice Network*- about women spies in WW2
 - *The Lost Girls of Paris*
- *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy - kind of a western from a teenage boy's point of view. I haven't read it, but it looks pretty interesting and is written by a Knoxville-bred author who still frequents the local Barnes and Noble.
- *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison (more of a modern classic).
- *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton is good and not too lengthy, but it's been awhile since I've read it. A couple of students chose it last year because it was short but did not enjoy it!
- *Pride & Prejudice* by Jane Austen is a great readable classic. (Some will not like the cookie cutter ending, but it is what it is. It's worth the read.)
- *Gulliver's Travels* is a great adventure novel (I have only read excerpts).
- *For One More Day* - Mitch Albom - Bittersweet yet hopeful.
- *A Better Man* - Louise Penny - a series novel of a morally upright French detective solving a crime.
- *Dear Edward* - Ann Napolitano - a moving account of a young boy who is the sole survivor of a plane crash.
- *The Clover Girls* - Viola Shipman - A nostalgic novel about four adult women who are summoned back to their childhood summer camp.
- *Clock Dance* - Anne Tyler - a hopeful, late-life coming-of-age novel.
- *Biloxi* - Mary Miller - A Southern fiction novel about a man, his dog, and the strange turns life can take.
- *All Over but the Shoutin'* - Rick Bragg (non-fiction) - Alabama professor and *Southern Living* columnist shares his poverty-stricken childhood and his emerging literary career, paying homage to his mother.
- *The Awakening* - by Kate Chopin - a short novel I read recently. It's well-written and worth the read, but contains mature themes (a woman having an adulterous relationship, but the sin is not glorified but rather contains consequences that are biblically based).
- Anything by C.S. Lewis is great.
- I love Flannery O'Connor! She is Southern gothic, and her stories contain strong Christian themes (albeit many times exposing hypocrisy of false religion). It's not light reading and usually contains an ironic twist.

If you have any questions, let me know!

Thank you,

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