



King Philip Regional High School



English Language Arts Department

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Summer Reading Assignment
Summer Reading

PURPOSE OF SUMMER READING:

The summer reading program in the English Language Arts department seeks to foster an interest in reading. The works chosen for the summer reading program are intended to be engaging. In addition, the works relate to the overarching understandings that unify the curriculum in each grade and level.

RECOMMENDED JOURNAL:

In order to appreciate and understand a work of literature, a reader must actively read; in other words, he or she must actively engage with the text. To assist you in developing this process, we RECOMMEND that you create a reading journal as you read. A journal will allow you to reflect on your reading experience. Some issues that warrant reflection are

- a. Explore your thoughts or opinions on the character(s), event(s), conflict, etc. How do you feel about a character's actions or decisions? What are your initial impressions of the character(s)? How have your impressions changed as the novel has progressed.
- b. Write down significant quotes and provide the page number. Explain why you feel the quote is significant.
- c. Write down any questions that remain unanswered. Instructors can use these questions to launch engaging discussions.



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Summer Reading 2009

Grade 9 Honors—Choose one of the following books: *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith or *Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer

Betty Smith's novel tells the story of Francie Nolan and her struggle to survive and thrive while growing up in poverty in Brooklyn, New York in the early 1900s.

Jon Krakauer's *Into Thin Air* is a first hand account of Krakauer and his team's ill fated attempt to climb Mt. Everest in 1996.

Grade 9 College Prep—Choose one of the following books: *Forgotten Fire* by Adam Bagdasarian or *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson

After most of his family is killed, Vahan Kendarian, the main character in *Forgotten Fire*, displays fortitude while trying to save his own life during the Armenian genocide.

In *Speak*, Melinda is beginning her freshman year of high school with few friends, parents who can't seem to understand her, and a secret.

Grade 9 Essential College Prep— Read the short story “The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell

In Connell's short story, a hunter finds himself to be the one being hunted after becoming stranded on a deserted island.

Grade 10 Honors—*A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines

Jefferson, a black man in the South in the 1940's, witnesses the shooting of a white store owner. Although he is an innocent bystander, he is accused of the crime, found guilty, and sentenced to death. Jefferson's grandmother asks a teacher, Grant Wiggins, to counsel Jefferson to help him learn to face his death with dignity. Both men are remarkably changed by the relationship that ensues. Oprah's Book Club calls this “a powerful exploration of race, injustice, and resistance.”

Grade 10 College Prep— *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom

This novel tells the story not of Eddie's life, but of his afterlife. A wounded war veteran, Eddie is a depressed old man who works in an amusement park. One day there is a freak accident, and Eddie dies trying to save the life of another. He awakens in the afterlife and learns that heaven is a journey where he will meet five people from his past. These people will provide insight into his life and help him answer many questions about his purpose in the world.



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Grade 10 Essential College Prep—*The Boy in Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne

Bruno is a young boy living in Germany during World War II. One day he discovers that he and his family are leaving the only home he's ever known. When he arrives at his new home he finds a mysterious and eerie place with a tall fence that separates him from the other people living near him, and these people are all dressed in striped pajamas. As a young and naive explorer, Bruno decides to befriend a little boy on the other side of the fence, and their newfound friendship leads to a realization for everyone in Bruno's family.

Grade 11 Advanced Placement—*Nickel and Dime* by Barbara Ehrenreich

How does anyone survive, let alone prosper, on minimum wage? Barbara Ehrenreich, a financially successful syndicated writer, tackled this question by moving from Florida to Maine to Minnesota. Along the way, she takes on a series of minimum wage jobs. Ehrenreich's account of these experiences provides the reader with insight into the anxiety, desperation, and generosity of the "working poor." Her work provides a window into America and another side of "the American Dream."

Grade 11 Honors—*In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote

Truman Capote's examination of the 1959 murder of the Herbert Clutter family provides insight into the criminal mind and the complexities of America and the American Dream. This hybrid of fiction and non-fiction, which has been called a "non-fiction novel," has been hailed as both a vanguard and a masterpiece. Capote's work goes beyond the simplistic "crime novel" and becomes a multi-layered examination into the mind of a killer and the mind of America.

Grade 11 College Prep—*The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother* by James McBride

This memoir weaves together the story of James, one of twelve children growing up in Brooklyn, New York, son of a white, ex-Orthodox Jewish mother. As James learns of his mother's past and identity, he reflects on his own world of social alienation, family expectations, and racial curiosity. To understand his present existence, James juxtaposes his mother's self-discovery with his own understanding of self and race. The two stories force the reader to question racial identity, the individual within the family structure, and the influence society imposes on the individual.



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Grade 11 Essential College Prep— “A&P” by John Updike and “The Enormous Radio” by John Cheever

These two easily accessible short stories will begin our year focusing on literary elements, and devices used to create and develop various types of characters. Thematically, these stories will highlight the struggle individuals encounter when confronting society. In both short stories, there is conflict between the thoughts and beliefs of individuals, and the standards and expectations of society. We will continue this same thematic analysis as we continue reading *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Macbeth*, and *The Crucible*.

Grade 12 Advanced Placement—*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte and *Othello* by William Shakespeare

Considered a “masterpiece of imaginative fiction” now, but “lurid and shocking” by mid 19th century standards, Bronte’s passionate love story of Cathy and Heathcliff spans two generations— from the time the boy Heathcliff arrives to live on the estate of the Earnshaws, through Cathy’s marriage and Heathcliff’s plans for revenge, to Cathy’s death and the union of the Earnshaw and Hinton heirs. The novel raises essential questions: Why do we love so intensely? What is the result of such love? How do we avoid tragedy in our lives?

The most vivid and intense of Shakespeare's tragedies, *Othello* studies the presence and power of evil in the world. It asks the audience to reflect on several questions: What is the nature of jealousy? How does jealousy affect those who experience its ramifications? Critics have stated that no other tragedy in English literature makes so strong an appeal to our sympathy for human suffering.

Grade 12 Honors—*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte

How would you respond if you grew up as an orphan, went to school at an inhumane boarding school, and then became a teacher in a mansion, where you fell in love with a mysterious person? This novel raises these questions as well as other relevant questions. What is the effect of sin on the individual? How do different people react to sin and suffering? How do human beings find redemption? This example of Romanticism and Gothicism has intrigued “young” people of all ages for many years.



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Grade 12 College Prep— *1984* by George Orwell or *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

What would happen if totalitarian were really total: with all power split into three equal groups— Eastasia, Eurasia, and Oceania? Orwell's novel, dominated by "Big Brother," explores the reality where "Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely" (Lord Henry Acton). The novel explores the question of what would happen if our very ideas were controlled by "thought police," and asks the questions: What is freedom? How do we achieve inner freedom in the midst of oppression?

The subject of innumerable films and plays, an opera and a rock opera, cartoons and commercials, *Frankenstein* is one of literature's most enduring and haunting characters. The variety of questions the character and the book raise are as relevant today as they were nearly 200 years ago: Why are there "monsters" among us? How much are they/we products of nature and how much of nurture? Should we place limitations on science and scientists? Is revenge an appropriate response to a perceived wrong?

Grade 12 Essential College Prep— *Animal Farm* by George Orwell

A group of animals on a farm decide to overthrow the humans and form their own society on the farm. They, at first, seem successful, but their new society begins to breakdown.