



Dear Parents/Guardians,

We're excited to share our Summer Reading list for the 2017-2018 school year. We continue to make adjustments to the program to give students the best possible experience while also upholding the desire to turn them into life-long readers. We know that people who read are more successful in all spheres of life, and we want to give your child her/his best opportunity to be successful both here at OSS and beyond. On the other side of this sheet, you'll find the summer reading lists. Please note that you do not need to purchase copies of these books and **the only summertime requirement is that all books are read *prior to the first day of school***. All additional work will be assigned after school has begun.

A note on the books assigned for Summer Reading: We know that there are some difficult ideas in the books we've assigned. We know that there are events and language that you may question, albeit very minimal. We want you to know that we don't assign these texts lightly or without serious consideration about what is best for your student and their educational future. It is our job and our privilege to prepare your student for what lays ahead, both in their education and in their future. We have carefully selected each text we'll encounter this year based on age-appropriateness, complexity, thematic content, and an awareness of what we know colleges and employers will expect they've been exposed to. There is a certain canon of literature that students *must* be familiar with upon graduating from high school, and we work very hard to balance that with the literary appropriateness of each piece selected.

More than that, however, we also believe in the power of literature to encompass the human experience in a way that not only enlightens us but that connects us to the great, wide world around us. We believe that literature faces the human experience without flinching and that some of that experience is difficult. That being said, we don't intend to let your student float through these texts without guidance and help, and we *know* that they will have the opportunity to emerge on the other side with deeper insight, more compassion, a better understanding of themselves and the world around them.

We want to share with you an excerpt from a letter to the editor written by author Pat Conroy in 2007:

The world of literature has everything in it, and it refuses to leave anything out. I have read like a man on fire my whole life because the genius of English teachers touched me with the dazzling beauty of language. Because of them I rode with Don Quixote and danced with Anna Karenina at a ball in St. Petersburg and lassoed a steer in Lonesome Dove and had nightmares about slavery in *Beloved* and walked the streets of Dublin in *Ulysses* and made up a hundred stories in *The Arabian Nights* and saw my mother killed by a baseball in *A Prayer for Owen Meany*. I've been in ten thousand cities and have introduced myself to a hundred thousand strangers in my exuberant reading career, all because I listened to my fabulous English teachers and soaked up every single thing those magnificent men and women had to give. I cherish and praise them and thank them for finding me when I was a boy and presenting me with the precious gift of the English language.

We hope that, at the end of their time at OSS, all of our students leave with a deep love of the English language and for the stories that connect us. We hope that they are more compassionate, thoughtful, and intelligent people. We hope that they will develop wisdom and the ability to look beyond the surface of a thing to see its deeper truths, whether that "thing" is a book, a political situation, or another person. We hope that they are wise and just and true in their dealings with the world, and we *know* that great literature can help them to become all of those things. We thank you for entrusting them to us, and we thank you for your support as we guide them through these literary encounters, even those that may not make immediate sense to you. We also welcome your feedback and conversation.

Sincerely,

The OSS ELA Department

It's important to note that students are expected to complete all summer reading ***prior to the first day of school***. Please make arrangements to complete the reading even if you will be traveling during the summer as only those students who register *after* the 2017-2018 school year has begun will be exempt from this

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expectation. All exams will take place during the first grading period, at the discretion of the teacher, and the project will be completed during the school year **but not during class time**. Every student is expected to complete the project on time and participate in the literacy event(s) that will be held during first semester. This is part of their ELA grade. Information about the project and the literacy event(s) will be given to students after school has begun. The exams will be completed by the end of the first few weeks of school.

MIDDLE SCHOOL*

INCOMING 6th Graders:

1. *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London [exam]
2. One book from the summer reading list (see attached) [project]
3. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

INCOMING 7th Graders:

1. *The Jungle Book* (Part I ONLY) by Rudyard Kipling [exam]
2. One book from the summer reading list (see attached) [project]
3. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

INCOMING 8th Graders:

1. *The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson [exam]
2. One book from the summer reading list (see attached) [project]
3. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

HIGH SCHOOL** (Students will choose from the two listed books, and then read one book from the attached AP Reading list. Even students who do not plan to take AP English need to read one book from this list.)

INCOMING 9th Graders:

1. *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel **OR**
2. *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros [project]
3. One book from AP Reading List (even for students who do not plan to take AP) [project]
4. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

INCOMING 10th Graders:

1. *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger **OR**
2. *Night* by Elie Wiesel [project]
3. One book from AP Reading List (see attached) [project]
4. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

INCOMING 11th Graders: (NOT AP ENGLISH -- See below)***

1. *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë **OR**
2. *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote [project]
3. One book from AP Reading List (see attached) [project]
4. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

INCOMING 12th Graders: (NOT AP ENGLISH -- See below)***

1. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe **OR**
2. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson [project]
3. One book from AP Reading List (see attached) [project]
4. Short stories in packet [assigned by teacher]

****High School Students:** All the books on the list are high in literary merit. Some have more mature content – please research the book you'd like to read and make sure that it is appropriate for you.

*****11th and 12th Grade students** who are taking AP Language and Composition (11th) or AP Literature and Composition (12th) will have different summer reading assignments. Students should get those reading assignments from Miss Stevens (abigail.stevens@orlandoscience.org).