



BRENTWOOD ACADEMY

Summer Reading 2020: 9th Grade Literature and Composition (Standard)

A Rationale for Summer Reading

- To generate interest and pleasure that enriches literary and philosophical experience
- To prepare for thoughtful discussion and writing beginning the first day of class
- To encourage a lifelong love of reading
- To use time not available during the school year to read classics that expand cultural literacy

Required Text

- *A Separate Peace* John Knowles ISBN 978-0743253970
Gene is a lonely, introverted intellectual; Phineas is a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. Set at a boys' boarding school during World War II, what happens between them banishes the innocence of the boys and their world.

Choice Texts (Select ONE of the following books that you have not read before)

- *The Martian Chronicles* Ray Bradbury
This short story collection tells separate but interconnected tales of the human colonization of Mars. Lulled by lies and enchanted by an ancient native race's glamour, Earthmen conquer Mars and then are conquered *by* it.
Note: These stories should be read in the order that they appear in the book.

- *MAUS 1 and MAUS 2* Art Spiegelman
These graphic novels tell the story of a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe and his son, a cartoonist coming to terms with his father's story. *Note:* You must read both MAUS 1 and MAUS 2.

- *Of Mice and Men** John Steinbeck
This poignant and well-developed short novel tells the story of two friends and the tragedy that unfolds in their lives.
**Note:* Parental approval required because of language and themes.

- *Refugee* Alan Gratz ISBN 978-0-545-88083-1
A historical novel that braids the stories of three young refugees in three different time periods and settings: 1938 Berlin, 1994 Cuba, and 2015 Syria. A harrowing page-turner that sheds light on child refugees.

- *Don't Waste Your Life* John Piper ISBN 9781581344981
For the spiritually minded. Our culture defines success as having a comfortable income and cushy retirement. Millions waste their lives on such lesser pursuits--all because they have not awakened to the simple, biblical reality that "to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

- *The Contender* Robert Lipsyte ISBN 13: 978-0-06-447039-1
As a social statistic on the streets of Harlem, Alfred is a dropout, but Mr. Donstelli (owner of a local boxing gym) tells Alfred, "... it's the climbing that makes the man." Driven by the need to prove himself, sometimes backsliding, Alfred convinces everyone--especially himself--that he has heart, and becomes convinced that it pays to try (even at school, and maybe even helping other people).

- *Eat That Frog AND Bull's Eye* Brian Tracy ISBN 978-1-62656-941-6 and ISBN -13: 978-1-4926-3045-6

These two choices must be read together. These books outline key steps you can take to develop the most important mental skills you'll ever need -clarity, focus, and concentration. They teach you how to focus on the most important

tasks and make sure those get done. These books are great choices for those struggling with organization or procrastination.

• *Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging* Sebastian Junger ISBN 978-1-4555-6638-9

For the intellectual and philosopher, a short book with a solid argument about the downside of civilization's progress. The author explores soldiers with PTSD, asserting that its prevalence stems less from the traumas of battle than from the difficulties of rejoining a disjointed, divided society after collective tribal bonding.

• *Fallen Angels* Walter Dean Meyers ISBN 0-590-40943-3

The powerful story of an introspective Harlem youth who is sent to fight in Vietnam. He survives racist officers, pitched battles, guerrilla raids, and multiple wounds, not all of them physical; whether his numbed spirit will eventually thaw is a question the author leaves open.

**Note:* Parental approval required because of language and themes.

General Instructions/Evaluations

1. Students will begin the study of literature with *A Separate Peace*; they will be assigned journal entries, the first essay of the school year, and participate in seminar during the first weeks of school.
2. On the first day students are grouped by their choice book and receive specific evaluation method(s).
3. Students must have both summer reading books the first day of class.
4. Although not required for summer reading, annotation (highlighting, margin notes, summaries) of the reading is a beneficial tool for comprehension, retention, and application.

Please remember the BA English Department policy: Do not consult internet novel guides, any other electronic or printed summaries, or movies; read the texts themselves.