

Freshman and Sophomore Summer Reading Assignment for 2021-2022

Parents:

Research has firmly established the correlation between time spent reading and reading achievement. Furthermore, the effects of reading extend into quality of life: high levels of leisure reading and reading proficiency are associated with greater academic, financial, professional, and civic benefits (National Endowment for the Arts, 2007). The Notre Dame Academy English department is committed to encouraging our students to become lifelong readers. As such, we have opened up our summer reading assignment to encourage autonomy and student choice in the reading process. The primary objective of this assignment is to allow students to choose and read books that interest them. With the volume of books available, we will not know the details of every book students might select. In the spirit of the Sisters of Notre Dame, who encourage transformation through education, it is important to know that we will not place a tight filter on selections. What we want is to nurture each student's willingness to read – for pleasure, for knowledge, for understanding – so that they choose to read beyond assigned reading, beyond what is compulsory for class. We encourage parents to be involved in this selection process as they see fit. Consider looking over your daughter's selection to ensure that you feel the content of the novel is appropriate for your child. If you have objections, have your student choose another book from the list. As Katherine Patterson notes, "it is not enough to simply teach children to read; we have to give them something worth reading. Something that will stretch their imaginations—something that will help them make sense of their own lives and encourage them to reach out toward people whose lives are quite different from their own."

-NDA English Department

Students:

Your assignment is to select ONE book from the list below based on your grade level for the 2021-22 school year. Read through the summaries of the texts at the end of this packet and choose any text that interests you and that you have not previously read, and then share your book selection and the information on the previous page with your parents. You must purchase a clean copy of your chosen book (there should be no writing in the book when you buy it). The specific assignment is explained on page 3. The grading rubric is on page 4.

-NDA English Department

Summer Reading Annotation Guide

Annotating your Selected Book

Begin by selecting a book from your grade level reading list. For this assignment your book will need to be a physical copy (no ebooks) and it should have no writing in it. Put your name and grade level inside the book with a permanent marker.

Your summer assignment is to read and carefully annotate your book. Your book should be read and your annotations completed by the first day back to school. Please bring the book with you on that day!

WHAT ARE ANNOTATIONS?

Think of annotation as a way to read closely and actively interact with the book you are reading. Instead of simply reading and turning the page, think about what you read and then share those thoughts on the pages of the book! Highlighted passages that have no notes to explain why they are highlighted are not considered annotation.

You DO NOT need to annotate on every page. Your annotations should be spread out throughout the book and should show a thoughtful and engaged reading of the text.

Aim for approximately 25-30 quality annotations per 100 pages.

SO WHAT DO I LOOK FOR AS I ANNOTATE?

IN GENERAL consider annotating for things like

- Brief summaries of what is happening (plot) in the text. *It's especially helpful to paraphrase difficult passages!*
- Questions about what you don't understand.
- Emotional reactions you may have to what you read!
- Connections you see to other parts of the book.
- Connections you see to real life, especially to your own life experience.
- Connections to other works of literature, to movies, to songs, to current events...
- Passages that describe or reveal the book's characters.
- Literary techniques you recognize (like symbolism, types of conflict, irony, etc)
- Historical context or traditions/social customs that are used in the book.

IN SPECIFIC you should focus on the following based on your grade level:

Incoming Sophomores: Symbolism and Conflict

Incoming Freshmen: Characterization and Setting

Name:

Class:

Date:

Annotation Rubric

A

- Text is marked throughout - approximately 25-30 annotations per 100 pages.
- Words and phrases are marked and commentary/notations appear in the margins that indicate a response to the words/phrases marked
- Marginalia (comments in the margin) reflect applications of literary terms, questioning, summarizing, analysis.
- Annotations demonstrate a high level of analysis and interpretation – thinking beyond the surface level of the text and insight beyond classroom terminology. Thoughtful connections made to other texts, or other events throughout the novel with in-depth analysis.
- Marginalia is relevant to your grade level focus

B

- Text is marked throughout but with less than 25-30 annotations per 100 pages
- Commentary/notations in margins appear less frequently or don't respond directly to the passage annotated.
- Marginalia may be primarily summary or paraphrase with some attempt at analysis.
- Annotations demonstrate analysis and interpretation – thinking beyond the surface level of the text. Thoughtful connections made to other texts or events.
- Marginalia is mostly relevant to your grade level focus

C

- Text is not consistently marked throughout
- Some random passages appear to be marked; passages selected often have no real significance
- Little/no marginalia or marginalia that is characterized by plot level questions or simplistic summary
- Annotations demonstrate some analysis and interpretation – thinking somewhat beyond the surface level of the text. Attempts at making connections.
- Marginalia is somewhat relevant to your grade level focus

D

- Text is only partially annotated
- Annotations are highlights only. Marginalia is minimal or non-existent
- Random passages appear to be marked; passages selected have no real significance
- Marginalia is not relevant to your grade level focus.

F

- Annotated text not submitted or annotations are plagiarized or student submits a text they have read previously for school or summer reading

Freshman/ Sophomore Book List (summaries from goodreads.com and amazon.com)

[In the Time of the Butterflies by Julia Alvarez](#)

It is November 25, 1960, and three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Nor does it explain that the sisters were among the leading opponents of Gen. Rafael Leónidas Trujillo's dictatorship. It doesn't have to. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas--the Butterflies.

[A Separate Peace by John Knowles](#)

Set at a boys boarding school in New England during the early years of World War II, *A Separate Peace* is a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. Gene is a lonely, introverted intellectual. Phineas is a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. What happens between the two friends one summer, like the war itself, banishes the innocence of these boys and their world.

[Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly \(NOT the young reader's edition\)](#)

Set amid the civil rights movement, the never-before-told true story of NASA's African-American female mathematicians who played a crucial role in America's space program. Before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of professionals worked as 'Human Computers', calculating the flight paths that would enable these historic achievements. Among these were a coterie of bright, talented African-American women. Segregated from their white counterparts, these 'coloured computers' used pencil and paper to write the equations that would launch rockets and astronauts into space.

[Turtles All the Way Down by John Green](#)

It all begins with a fugitive billionaire and the promise of a cash reward. *Turtles All the Way Down* is about lifelong friendship, the intimacy of an unexpected reunion, Star Wars fan fiction, and tuatara. But at its heart is Aza Holmes, a young woman navigating daily existence within the ever-tightening spiral of her own thoughts.

[Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card](#)

Andrew "Ender" Wiggin thinks he is playing computer simulated war games; he is, in fact, engaged in something far more desperate. The result of genetic experimentation, Ender may be the military genius Earth desperately needs in a war against an alien enemy seeking to destroy all human life. The only way to find out is to throw Ender into ever harsher training, to chip away and find the diamond inside, or destroy him utterly. Ender Wiggin is six years old when it begins. He will grow up fast.

[Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford](#)

In 1986, Henry Lee joins a crowd outside the Panama Hotel, once the gateway to Seattle's Japantown. It has been boarded up for decades, but now the new owner has discovered the belongings of Japanese families who were sent to internment camps during World War II. As the owner displays and unfurls a Japanese parasol, Henry, a Chinese American, remembers a young Japanese American girl from his childhood in the 1940s—Keiko Okabe, with whom he forged a bond of friendship and innocent love that transcended the prejudices of their Old World ancestors. After Keiko and her family were evacuated to the internment camps, she and Henry could only hope that their promise to each other would be kept. Now, forty years later, Henry explores the hotel's basement for the Okabe family's belongings and for a long-lost object whose value he cannot even begin to measure. His search will take him on a journey to revisit the sacrifices he has made for family, for love, for country.

[Little Women by Louisa May Alcott](#)

Grown-up Meg, tomboyish Jo, timid Beth, and precocious Amy. The four March sisters couldn't be more different. But with their father away at war, and their mother working to support the family, they have to rely on one another. Whether they're putting on a play, forming a secret society, or celebrating Christmas, there's one thing they can't help wondering: Will Father return home safely?

[Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen](#)

Marianne Dashwood wears her heart on her sleeve, and when she falls in love with the dashing but unsuitable John Willoughby she ignores her sister Elinor's warning that her impulsive behaviour leaves her open to gossip and innuendo. Meanwhile Elinor, always sensitive to social convention, is struggling to conceal her own romantic disappointment, even from those closest to her. Through their parallel experience of love—and its threatened loss—the sisters learn that sense must mix with sensibility if they are to find personal happiness in a society where status and money govern the rules of love.

[Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell](#)

Eleanor is the new girl in town, and with her chaotic family life, her mismatched clothes and unruly red hair, she couldn't stick out more if she tried. Park is the boy at the back of the bus. Black T-shirts, headphones, head in a book - he thinks he's made himself invisible. But not to Eleanor... never to Eleanor. Slowly, steadily, through late-night conversations and an ever-growing stack of mix tapes, Eleanor and Park fall for each other. They fall in love the way you do the first time, when you're young, and you feel as if you have nothing and everything to lose.

[House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer](#)

At his coming-of-age party, Matteo Alacrán asks El Patrón's bodyguard, "How old am I?...I know I don't have a birthday like humans, but I was born."

"You were harvested," Tam Lin reminds him. "You were grown in that poor cow for nine months and then you were cut out of her." To most people around him, Matt is not a boy, but a beast. A room full of chicken litter with roaches for friends and old chicken bones for toys is considered good enough for him. But for El Patrón, lord of a country called Opium—a strip of poppy fields lying between the U.S. and what was once called Mexico—Matt is a guarantee of eternal life. El Patrón loves Matt as he loves himself for Matt is himself. They share identical DNA.

[The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas](#)

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

[Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Sáenz](#)

Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When the two meet at the swimming pool, they seem to have nothing in common. But as the loners start spending time together, they discover that they share a special friendship--the kind that changes lives and lasts a lifetime. And it is through this friendship that Ari and Dante will learn the most important truths about themselves and the kind of people they want to be.

[The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd](#)

Set in South Carolina in 1964, *The Secret Life of Bees* tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted black "stand-in mother," Rosaleen, insults three of the deepest racists in town, Lily decides to spring them both free. They escape to Tiburon, South Carolina--a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. Taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters, Lily is introduced to their mesmerizing world of bees and honey, and the Black Madonna. This is a remarkable novel about divine female power, a story women will share and pass on to their daughters for years to come.

[This is My America by Kim Johnson](#)

Every week, seventeen-year-old Tracy Beaumont writes letters to Innocence X, asking the organization to help her father, an innocent Black man on death row. After seven years, Tracy is running out of time—her dad has only 267 days left. Then the unthinkable happens. The police arrive in the night, and Tracy's older brother, Jamal, goes from being a bright, promising track star to a "thug" on the run, accused of killing a white girl. Determined to save her brother, Tracy investigates what really happened between Jamal and Angela down at the Pike. But will Tracy and her family survive the uncovering of the skeletons of their Texas town's racist history that still haunt the present?

[Go Set a Watchman by Harper Lee \(sophomores only - incoming freshmen can not read this book\)](#)

From Harper Lee comes a landmark new novel set two decades after her beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Maycomb, Alabama. Twenty-six-year-old Jean Louise Finch—"Scout"—returns home from New York City to visit her aging father, Atticus. Set against the backdrop of the civil rights tensions and political turmoil that were transforming the South, Jean Louise's homecoming turns bittersweet when she learns disturbing truths about her close-knit family, the town and the people dearest to her. Memories from her childhood flood back, and her values and assumptions are thrown into doubt. Featuring many of the iconic characters from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Go Set a Watchman* perfectly captures a young woman, and a world, in a painful yet necessary transition out of the illusions of the past—a journey that can be guided only by one's conscience. Written in the mid-1950s, *Go Set a Watchman* imparts a fuller, richer understanding and appreciation of Harper Lee. Here is an unforgettable novel of wisdom, humanity, passion, humor and effortless precision—a profoundly affecting work of art that is both wonderfully evocative of another era and relevant to our own times. It not only confirms the enduring brilliance of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but also serves as its essential companion, adding depth, context and new meaning to an American classic.