

Junior and Senior Summer Reading Assignment 2023-2024

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 beginning on page 5 based on your grade level for the 2023-24 school year. You should 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 of this document. The grading rubric is on page 4.

-NDA English Department

2023-2024 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 should have no writing in it. Put your name and grade level inside the book with a sharpie.

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 Seniors: Historical/cultural connection and Tone

Incoming Juniors: Historical/cultural connection and point of view

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

Junior/Senior Book List (summaries from goodreads.com and amazon.com)

“YOUNG READER” EDITIONS ARE NOT ALLOWED!

*If you are taking AP Literature or AP Language and Composition, you do not choose from the books below. See the summer assignments for those classes.

The Complete Persepolis #1-4 (2000-2004) by Marjane Satrapi

Persepolis is the story of Satrapi's unforgettable childhood and coming of age within a large and loving family in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution; of the contradictions between private life and public life in a country plagued by political upheaval; of her high school years in Vienna facing the trials of adolescence far from her family; of her homecoming--both sweet and terrible; and, finally, of her self-imposed exile from her beloved homeland. It is the chronicle of a girlhood and adolescence at once outrageous and familiar, a young life entwined with the history of her country yet filled with the universal trials and joys of growing up.

The Underground Railroad (2016) by Colson Whitehead

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted. In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor—engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

All the Light We Cannot See (2014) by Anthony Doerr

Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel. In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.

Ready Player One (2011) by Ernest Cline

In the year 2044, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines, puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them. But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win—and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.

Homegoing (2016) by Yaa Gyasi

Ghana, eighteenth century: two half sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery.

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close (2005) by Jonathan Safran Foer

Nine-year-old Oskar Schell is an inventor, amateur entomologist, Francophile, letter writer, pacifist, natural historian, percussionist, romantic, Great Explorer, jeweller, detective, vegan, and collector of butterflies. When his father is killed in the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center, Oskar sets out to solve the mystery of a key he discovers in his father's closet. It is a search which leads him into the lives of strangers, through the five boroughs of New York, into history, to the bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima, and on an inward journey which brings him ever closer to some kind of peace.

The Handmaid's Tale (1985) by Margaret Atwood

Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. She must lie on her back once a month and pray that the Commander makes her pregnant, because in an age of declining births, Offred and the other Handmaids are valued only if their ovaries are viable. Offred can remember the years before, when she lived and made love with her husband, Luke; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all of that is gone now . . .

In Cold Blood by (1965) Truman Capote

On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues. As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. At the center of his study are the amoral young killers Perry Smith and Dick Hickcock, who, vividly drawn by Capote, are shown to be reprehensible yet entirely and frighteningly human. *In Cold Blood* is a seminal work of modern prose, a remarkable synthesis of journalistic skill and powerfully evocative narrative.

Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia (2006) by Elizabeth Gilbert

In her early thirties, Elizabeth Gilbert had everything a modern American woman was supposed to want—husband, country home, successful career—but instead of feeling happy and fulfilled, she was consumed by panic and confusion. This wise and rapturous book is the story of how she left behind all these outward marks of success, and set out to explore three different aspects of her nature, against the backdrop of three different cultures: pleasure in Italy, devotion in India, and on the Indonesian island of Bali, a balance between worldly enjoyment and divine transcendence.

Becoming (2018) by Michelle Obama

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America—the first African American to serve in that role—she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, dramatically changing the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, and standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments. Along the way, she showed us a few dance moves, crushed Carpool Karaoke, and raised two down-to-earth daughters under an unforgiving media glare. In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it—in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same.

The Sun is Also a Star (2016) by Nicola Yoon

Natasha: I'm a girl who believes in science and facts. Not fate. Not destiny. Or dreams that will never come true. I'm definitely not the kind of girl who meets a cute boy on a crowded New York City street and falls in love with him. Not when my family is twelve hours away from being deported to Jamaica. Falling in love with him won't be my story.

Daniel: I've always been the good son, the good student, living up to my parents' high expectations. Never the poet. Or the dreamer. But when I see her, I forget about all that. Something about Natasha makes me think that fate has something much more extraordinary in store—for both of us.

The Universe: Every moment in our lives has brought us to this single moment. A million futures lie before us. Which one will come true?

Firekeeper's Daughter (2021) by Angeline Boulley

As a biracial, unenrolled tribal member and the product of a scandal, Daunis Fontaine has never quite fit in—both in her hometown and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation. When her family is struck by tragedy, Daunis puts her dreams on hold to care for her fragile mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother's hockey team.

After Daunis witnesses a shocking murder that thrusts her into a criminal investigation, she agrees to go undercover. But the deceptions—and deaths—keep piling up and soon the threat strikes too close to home. How far will she go to protect her community if it means tearing apart the only world she's ever known?

Jane Eyre (1847) by Charlotte Bronte

Orphaned as a child, Jane has felt an outcast her whole young life. Her courage is tested once again when she arrives at Thornfield Hall, where she has been hired by the brooding, proud Edward Rochester to care for his ward Adèle. Jane finds herself drawn to his troubled yet kind spirit. She falls in love. Hard. But there is a terrifying secret inside the gloomy, forbidding Thornfield Hall. Is Rochester hiding from Jane? Will Jane be left heartbroken and exiled once again?

Lord of the Flies (1954) by William Golding

At the dawn of the next world war, a plane crashes on an uncharted island, stranding a group of schoolboys. At first, with no adult supervision, their freedom is something to celebrate; this far from civilization the boys can do anything they want. Anything. They attempt to forge their own society, failing, however, in the face of terror, sin and evil. And as order collapses, as strange howls echo in the night, as terror begins its reign, the hope of adventure seems as far from reality as the hope of being rescued. Labeled a parable, an allegory, a myth, a morality tale, a parody, a political treatise, even a vision of the apocalypse, *Lord of the Flies* is perhaps our most memorable novel about “the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart.”

The Botanist's Daughter (2018) by Kayte Nunn ***HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR NEHS MEMBERS***
A buried secret...

Present day: Anna is focused on growing her new gardening business and renovating her late grandmother's house. But when she discovers a box hidden in a wall cavity, containing water colours of exotic plants, an old diary and a handful of seeds, she finds herself thrust into a

centuries-old mystery. One that will send her halfway across the world to Kew Gardens and then onto Cornwall in search of the truth.

A lady adventurer...

1886: Elizabeth Trebithick is determined to fulfil her father's dying wish and continue his life's work as an adventurer and plant-hunter. So when she embarks on a perilous journey to discover a rare and miraculous flower, she will discover that the ultimate betrayal can be found even across the seas...

Two women, separated by centuries. Can one mysterious flower bring them together?

Common Reader for Summer 2023 is *Between Shades of Grey* (2011) by Ruta Sepetys. All students are expected to read this novel for our Common Reader Day.