



## Millennium High School

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### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English SUMMER ASSIGNMENT – 2020

Welcome to 9<sup>th</sup> grade English! In the upcoming school year, you will explore various themes in literature while also sharpening your reading, writing, and discussion skills. **To help you prepare for 9<sup>th</sup> grade English, please complete the following summer reading assignment by the first day of school in September.** Instructions for submitting this assignment will be shared later this summer as the Department of Education updates information for the 2020-2021 school year.

1. **Read a book from the list below** over the summer. Choose a book you have not already read and also check to see that it will be challenging but also appropriate to your reading level.
2. **Write a letter to your future English teacher** about your experience reading the book. Your letter should be 1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced. In your typewritten letter, please:

Identify the author and title of the book you chose to read. Explain your reaction to the book. You may use some of the guiding questions below to inspire you, but *do not feel limited by these questions.* Your letter should be personal and thoughtful. Allow your teacher to get to know you better as a reader, writer, and person.

#### Guiding Questions:

- Why did you select the book that you read?
- To what extent did you enjoy the book and why?
- What were your thoughts on the main character? How would you describe him/her?
- What are some “big ideas” that came up in this book? How did you respond to them?
- How did the book shift your thinking about people, an idea, or the world?
- Why/how did you personally relate to or connect to this book?

### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Book List

#### Reading Level: Moderate

- *All American Boys*, by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely  
This novel looks at an instance of police brutality from the perspectives of two high school classmates: Rashad, who is savagely beaten by a local policeman who (wrongly) suspects him of shoplifting and assaulting a white woman, and Quinn, who sees the beating and initially pretends he didn't.
- *Pet*, by Akwaeke Emezi  
The genre-defying new novel by award-winning author Akwaeke Emezi explores themes of identity and justice. Pet is here to hunt a monster. Are you brave enough to look?
- *A Quiet Kind of Thunder*, by Sara Barnard  
A girl who can't speak and a boy who can't hear go on a journey of self-discovery and find support with each other in this gripping, emotionally resonant novel from bestselling author Sara Barnard.
- *Turtles All the Way Down*, by John Green  
It all begins with a fugitive billionaire and the promise of a cash reward. This is a story about lifelong friendship, 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.

## Reading Level: Challenging

- ***American Street*, by Ibi Zoboi**

When Fabiola Toussaint and her family leave Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Fabiola's mother is detained by U.S. immigration, leaving Fabiola to navigate her loud American cousins; the grittiness of Detroit's west side; a new school; and a surprising romance, all on her own. Just as she finds her footing in this strange new world, a dangerous proposition presents itself, and Fabiola soon realizes that freedom comes at a cost. Trapped at the crossroads of an impossible choice, will she pay the price for the American dream?

- ***The Astonishing Color of After*, by Emily X.R. Pan**

Leigh Chen Sanders is certain about one thing: When her mother died by suicide, she turned into a bird. Leigh, who is half Asian and half white, travels to Taiwan to meet her grandparents for the first time. There, she is determined to find her mother, the bird. In her search, she winds up chasing ghosts, uncovering family secrets, and forging a relationship with her grandparents. And as she grieves, she must try to reconcile the fact that on the same day she kissed her best friend and longtime secret crush, her mother was taking her own life.

- ***The Book Thief*, by Markus Zusak**

It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist — books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.

- ***Clap When You Land*, by Elizabeth Acevedo**

Camino Rios lives for summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people. In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance, the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered. Then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.

- ***Fahrenheit 451*, by Ray Bradbury**

Guy Montag is a fireman. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life. But when he meets an eccentric young neighbor who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known.

- ***How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, by Julia Alvarez**

The García sisters — Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, and Sofia — and their family must flee their home in the Dominican Republic after their father's role in an attempt to overthrow brutal dictator Rafael Trujillo is discovered. They arrive in New York City in 1960 to a life far removed from their existence in the Caribbean.

- ***Purple Hibiscus*, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her brother Jaja lead a privileged life among the frangipani trees of her family compound. Yet things are less perfect than they appear. Although her Papa is generous and well respected, he is fanatically religious and tyrannical at home. As the country falls apart under a military coup, Kambili and Jaja are sent to their aunt, where they discover a life beyond the confines of their father's authority. As they return home, tensions within the family escalate, and Kambili must find the strength to keep her loved ones together.

- ***A River of Stars*, by Vanessa Hua**

In a secret maternity home for mothers-to-be in Los Angeles, Scarlett Chen is far from her native China, where she worked in a factory and fell in love with the married owner, Boss Yeung. Now she's carrying his baby. When a sonogram of her baby reveals the unexpected, she goes on the run by hijacking a van—only to discover a stowaway: Daisy. The two flee to San Francisco's bustling Chinatown, where Scarlett joins countless immigrants trying to seize their piece of the American dream. What Scarlett doesn't know is that her baby's father is not far behind her.

- ***The Round House*, by Louise Erdrich**

One day in the spring of 1988, Geraldine Coutts, a woman living on a reservation in North Dakota, is attacked. The details of the crime are slow to surface because Geraldine is traumatized and reluctant to reveal what happened, either to the police or to her husband and thirteen-year-old son, Joe. The novel is an exquisitely told story of a boy on the cusp of manhood who seeks justice and understanding in the wake of a terrible crime that upends and forever transforms his family.

- *When the Moon Was Ours*, by Anna-Marie McLemore

To all who know them, friends Miel and Sam are as strange as they are inseparable. Roses grow out of Miel's wrist, and rumors say she spilled out of a water tower when she was five. Sam is known for the moons he paints and hangs in the trees and for how little anyone knows about his life before he moved to town. But as odd as everyone considers Miel and Sam, even they stay away from the Bonner girls, four beautiful sisters rumored to be witches.

Reading Level: Advanced

- *The Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger

Holden Caulfield, a 16 year old boy, is stuck between getting kicked out of his prestigious private school and returning home to his understandably upset parents. As a result, he is left roaming the streets of New York, depressed and lonely for several days. Holden's journey is at times both funny and sad and will leave an impact on readers due to Holden's distinct narrative voice as he relates his encounters with a variety of characters.

- *The Inheritance of Loss*, by Kiran Desai

In a crumbling, isolated house at the foot of Mount Kanchenjunga in the Himalayas lives an embittered judge who wants only to retire in peace, when his orphaned granddaughter, Sai, arrives on his doorstep. The judge's cook watches over her distractedly, for his thoughts are often on his son, Biju, who is hopscotching from one gritty New York restaurant to another.

- *Pachinko*, by Min Jin Lee

*Pachinko* follows one Korean family through the generations, beginning in early 1900s Korea with Sunja, the prized daughter of a poor yet proud family, whose unplanned pregnancy threatens to shame them all. Deserted by her lover, Sunja is saved when a young minister offers to marry and bring her to Japan.

## How to obtain a copy of a book this summer:

- Digital - FREE: The New York Public library's free reading App "[Simply-E](#)." Through the App, all New York City residents can remotely sign up for a library card (if you don't already have one) and take out books on their phone, tablet, or some e-readers.
- Digital - FREE: [Scribd](#). Sign up for a free, 30-day trial. (Requires a credit card number to sign-up.)
- Digital: Purchase a digital copy via [Amazon.com](#) or [BarnesandNoble.com](#) to read on your phone or e-reader.
- Paper Copy: Purchase a used copy via [Thriftbooks.com](#), [Abebooks.com](#), or [Amazon.com](#) – this is usually a less expensive option.
- Paper Copy: Support small businesses! Order a copy through your local bookstore. Exs: [McNallyJackson.com](#), [Strandbooks.com](#), [Booksaremagic.net](#), etc.
- Paper Copy: Order a hard copy from [Amazon.com](#) or [BarnesandNoble.com](#).

***A note to parents/guardians: As students move into high school, we seek to provide them with access and exposure to texts that represent a diverse range of relevant and consequential topics. As such, we encourage you to work with your child to select a book that is meaningful to them and best fits their interests and needs. Please feel free to encourage them to, or work with them to, research the texts using [commonsensemedia.org](#), [goodreads.com](#), or other book review resources to support their selection.***