

MHS English Department 2019 Summer Reading List for Students Entering Grade 12

Students entering Grade 12 College Prep or Honors are encouraged to read one or more books for their enjoyment and for their continued skill development during the summer vacation. The books suggested in the list below are related thematically to several of the unit topics that students will explore in these courses.

If a student wishes to receive extra credit for reading one of the selections, he/she must: (1) read a text from the suggested titles below, (2) complete a reading journal (see guidelines*), and (3) submit the journal to his/her English teacher during the first week that the class meets (teacher will announce due date).

*The reading journal guidelines can be found on the MHS website under Summer Reading.

Students entering 12 AP are **REQUIRED** to read the **TWO** AP Selections** and may choose one of the selections from the list of suggested novels for extra credit by completing and submitting a reading journal (see guidelines*).
12 AP students: see attached document for the required reading selections and assignment.

Grade 12		
Author	Title	Synopsis
Jeannette Walls	<i>The Glass Castle</i>	Walls opens her memoir with a recollection of riding in a taxi and spotting her mother “rooting through a dumpster.” Wall’s parents were a matched pair of eccentrics, and raising four children didn’t conventionalize either of them. Living with a mom who thought that “being homeless is an adventure,” the Walls children learned to support themselves in a variety of ways. Publishers Weekly Synopsis
Marjane Satrapi	<i>Persepolis (Part 1)</i>	<i>Persepolis</i> is Marjane Satrapi’s wise, funny, and heartbreaking memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen years that saw the overthrow of the Shah’s regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. Amazon.com Synopsis
Ishmael Beah	<i>A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier</i>	This absorbing account by a young man who, as a boy of 12, gets swept up in Sierra Leone’s civil war, reveals the life and mind of a child abducted into the horrors of warfare. Told in a clear, assessable language, this memoir is a gripping firsthand account of war and the ongoing plight of child soldiers in conflicts worldwide. Publishers Weekly Synopsis
Sylvia Plath	<i>The Bell Jar</i>	Esther Greenwood is brilliant, beautiful, enormously talented, and successful, but slowly going under—maybe for the last time. In her acclaimed and enduring masterwork, Sylvia Plath brilliantly draws the reader into Esther’s breakdown with such intensity that her insanity becomes palpably real, even rational—as accessible an experience as going to the movies. A deep penetration into the darkest and most harrowing corners of the human psyche, <i>The Bell Jar</i> is an extraordinary accomplishment and a haunting American classic. Amazon.com Synopsis
Fredrik Backman	<i>Beartown</i>	Everyone knows Beartown is a hockey town. And everyone in Beartown knows someone who is connected to hockey, from the lonely owner of the local bar to the former athlete now managing the supermarket. In a town dying from economic decay and isolated by the surrounding wilderness, Beartown needs its junior hockey team to bring home the championship and bring in tourism and sponsorship dollars to keep the town alive. The son of a wealthy businessman and team patron, Kevin is the squad’s superstar. Amat is an immigrant whose speed and skill on the ice may be his ticket to popularity. Maya is the daughter of the team’s beloved general manager. When the paths of these three collide in the supercharged aftermath of a decisive game, the town’s financial survival rests on the moral convictions of its most vulnerable citizens. Booklist Review

Kevin Powers	<i>The Yellow Birds: a novel</i>	This first novel by Powers traces the story of a young soldier named John Bartle and his friend Murph during fighting in northern Iraq in 2005. Sterling, the tough sergeant of their platoon, has informally assigned Bartle the job of watching over Murph, who is young, small, and not much of a soldier, and Bartle had also promised Murph's mother that he would take care of him. As the horrors of war escalate, all the soldiers seem to lose their grip, and Murph finally snaps, leaving the compound and forcing Bartle and Sterling to search for him through the nightmarish landscape of a ravaged city. Alternating with this plot is the story of Bartle's life after his return home, as he attempts to piece together his friend's fate and come to grips with it. Library Journal Review
Vanessa Diffenbaugh	<i>The Language of Flowers</i>	In Victorian times, the language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions. But for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating mistrust and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now 18, Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what has been missing in her life.
Sue Monk Kidd	<i>Invention of Wings</i>	In the early 1830s, Sarah Grimké and her younger sister, Angelina, were the most infamous women in America. They had rebelled so vocally against their family, society, and their religion that they were reviled, pursued, and exiled from their home city of Charleston, South Carolina, under threat of death. Their crime was speaking out in favor of liberty and equality and for African American slaves and women, arguments too radically humanist even for the abolitionists of their time. Their lectures drew crowds of thousands, even (shockingly, then) men, and their most popular pamphlet directly inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> --published 15 years later. These women took many of the first brutal backlashes against feminists and abolitionists, but even their names are barely known now. Sue Monk Kidd became fascinated by these sisters, and the question of what compelled them to risk certain fury and say with the full force of their convictions what others had not (or could not). Amazon.com Review
Cheryl Strayed	<i>Wild</i>	At twenty-two, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. In the wake of her mother's death, her family scattered and her own marriage was soon destroyed. Four years later, with nothing more to lose, she made the most impulsive decision of her life. With no experience or training, driven only by blind will, she would hike more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mojave Desert through California and Oregon to Washington State—and she would do it alone. Told with suspense and style, sparkling with warmth and humor, <i>Wild</i> powerfully captures the terrors and pleasures of one young woman forging ahead against all odds on a journey that maddened, strengthened, and ultimately healed her. Amazon.com Review

Extra Credit Reading Journal for Grade 12

Answer the following questions **carefully and thoroughly**. Please use relevant textual evidence to support your ideas. Be sure to identify the book's title and author's name.

Due: first week of English class

Length: approximately 3 pages, **handwritten neatly**

- Write a one-page reaction statement to the book that you read. Be specific in your thoughts about points that you liked or didn't like about the book, ideas that intrigued you, etc. Be sure to include **specific textual references**. Include page numbers.
- Cite a memorable passage of no more than thirty words or three sentences from the book. Include page number(s). Explain **why** you have chosen this passage from the book.
- Describe your first impression of one character or event that you find interesting. Give at least **three** examples of textual evidence that supports or generates this impression. Be sure to include the page numbers.
- **Identify what causes a significant change in one character, and describe the results of that change. This change may be the consequence of a choice, a conflict of some kind that has to be resolved, a display of some outstanding trait like courage, or even the result of an action or event that occurs during the story.**