

2019 Grade 11 American Literature Summer Reading Assignment

Instructions: All students entering grade 11 must complete summer reading. Choose one book from the list below.

CP Students: For the selected text, identify a major theme and record a **minimum of four** important quotes. The first week of school, you will be assessed on the merit of your quotes and your ability to understand and write about their literary significance in the text.

Honors students: Take notes on what the book (from the list of contemporary books) indicates about the American dream. In addition, Honors students must also read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Identify a major theme in the text and record a minimum of four important quotes. For each, write a 50 – 100-word explanation as to why this passage is important. This assignment must be typed, and will be due the first week of school.

List of Contemporary Books

*All students entering 11th grade will choose a book from this list.

Author	Title	Synopsis
Erik Larson	Devil in the White City	Author Erik Larson imbues the incredible events surrounding the 1893 Chicago World's Fair with such drama that readers may find themselves checking the book's categorization to be sure that 'The Devil in the White City' is not, in fact, a highly imaginative novel. Larson tells the stories of two men: Daniel H. Burnham, the architect responsible for the fair's construction, and H.H. Holmes, a serial killer masquerading as a charming doctor. (www.goodreads.com)
Barbara Kingsolver	Poisonwood Bible	The Poisonwood Bible is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it -- from garden seeds to Scripture -- is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa. (ww.goodreads.com)
David Scheff	Beautiful Boy	What had happened to my beautiful boy? To our family? What did I do wrong? Those are the wrenching questions that haunted every moment of David Sheff's journey through his son Nic's addiction to drugs and tentative steps toward recovery. Before Nic Sheff became addicted to crystal meth, he was a charming boy, joyous and funny, a varsity athlete and honor student adored by his two younger siblings. After meth, he was a trembling wraith who lied, stole, and lived on the streets. (www.goodreads.com)
Tara Westover	Educated	Tara Westover was 17 the first time she set foot in a classroom. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, she prepared for the end of the world by stockpiling home-canned peaches and sleeping with her "head-for-the-hills bag". In the summer she stewed herbs for her mother, a midwife and healer, and in the winter she salvaged in her father's junkyard.

		<p>Her father forbade hospitals, so Tara never saw a doctor or nurse. Gashes and concussions, even burns from explosions, were all treated at home with herbalism. The family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent.</p> <p><i>Educated</i> is an account of the struggle for self-invention. It is a tale of fierce family loyalty and of the grief that comes with severing the closest of ties. With the acute insight that distinguishes all great writers, Westover has crafted a universal coming-of-age story that gets to the heart of what an education is and what it offers: the perspective to see one's life through new eyes and the will to change it. ((www.goodreads.com))</p>
Delia Owens	Where the Crawdads Sing	<p>For years, rumors of the “Marsh Girl” have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens.</p> <p><i>Where the Crandads Sing</i> is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps. ((www.goodreads.com))</p>
Hillary Jordan	Mudbound	<p>It is 1946, and city-bred Laura McAllan is trying to raise her children on her husband's Mississippi Delta farm - a place she finds foreign and frightening. In the midst of the family's struggles, two young men return from the war to work the land. Jamie McAllan, Laura's brother-in-law, is everything her husband is not - charming, handsome, and haunted by his memories of combat. Ronsel Jackson, eldest son of the black sharecroppers who live on the McAllan farm, has come home with the shine of a war hero. It is the unlikely friendship of these brothers-in-arms that drives this powerful novel to its inexorable conclusion.</p>
Sue Monk Kidd	Invention of Wings	<p>Kidd's sweeping novel is set in motion on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership of ten-year-old Handful, who is to be her handmaid. We follow their remarkable journeys over the next thirty five years, as both strive for a life of their own, dramatically shaping each other's destinies and forming a complex relationship marked by guilt, defiance, estrangement and the uneasy ways of love.</p>

<p>Jhumpa Lahiri</p>	<p>Namesake</p>	<p><i>The Namesake</i> takes the Ganguli family from their tradition-bound life in Calcutta through their fraught transformation into Americans. On the heels of their arranged wedding, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli settle together in Cambridge, Massachusetts. An engineer by training, Ashoke adapts far less warily than his wife, who resists all things American and pines for her family. When their son is born, the task of naming him betrays the vexed results of bringing old ways to the new world. Named for a Russian writer by his Indian parents in memory of a catastrophe years before, Gogol Ganguli knows only that he suffers the burden of his heritage as well as his odd, antic name. (www.goodreads.com)</p>
<p>Sara Gruen</p>	<p>Water for Elephants</p>	<p>This book takes place during the Great Depression where the main character, Jacob, finds a home in the circus among other outcasts of society and the trained animals where bonds of trust and love develop. Readers get a glimpse into the rare lives of circus performers where drama abounds, including love and even murder.</p>