

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade History: The Modern World – Summer Reading Assignment

Rising Sophomores are expected to engage in thoughtful summer reading. While reading, please take notes on the guiding questions as there will be discussions or a writing assignment highlighting them. **This year, students get to choose one (1) book from a list of three (3):**

### **Empires of the Sea – Roger Crowley** (*Non-Fiction*) - 368 pages

Crowley writes a thrilling account of the 16<sup>th</sup> century clash between Christendom and Islam, featuring a colorful array of Kings, popes & pirates.

- What 2 – 3 characters (on each side) were most significant in this historical narrative? Why?
- In a sense, one could describe the historical development of the world today as a ‘coming together’: what are the ways that global connections & events impacted the more narrow focus of this book?
- “*The key to Europe was Malta; the key to Malta was Saint Elmo.*” Are these valid generalizations? Why or Why not?
- Did anything surprise you or open your eyes by providing a new window onto the world? Why do you think this book was chosen for a class about “The Modern World”?

### **The Afghan Campaign – Steven Pressfield** (*Historical Fiction*) - 368 pages

This novel follows a 2,300-year-old clash between an invading Western Army & fierce Eastern Warriors while exploring the ethical challenges soldiers face as they embark on a new type of war.

- Consider the characters mentioned in the novel: who are the protagonists? Antagonists? And what examples / incidents in the book support these characterizations?
- Identify at least four military tactics / strategies employed by either Alexander’s army or the Afghan fighters (*at least one from each side*): why do you think those tactics/strategies were used?
- What recurring themes or tropes are expressed in the book? Of the themes you identified, which do you think is the most significant and why?
- Why do you think this novel, set so far in the past, was chosen for a Modern World History course?

### **Revolution – Jennifer Donnelly** (*Historical YA Fiction*) – 472 pages

Donnelly tells a story of two girls, Andi and Alexandrine, and their struggles with life, loss and love over centuries.

- Who are the protagonists? Antagonists? What examples in the book support these characterizations?
- In *Revolution*, Andi discovers a diary dating back to the French Revolution & grows obsessed with the girl’s plight. Draw parallels between Andi’s “personal revolution” and the French Revolution.
- What was life like in Paris in the 1790’s? 2011? Focus on the *daily lives* of people when you answer: what do they eat? Where do they go? What do they do for fun? What are their greatest concerns?
- As you read, make a list of the historical events that Alex refers to in her diary. Briefly describe the events and Alex’s reaction to them.