



## ST. MARY ACADEMY - BAY VIEW

### Upper School 2020 Summer Reading Requirements

***Each student is required to complete two assignments this summer: the all-upper-school read and a grade-specific assignment as described below.***

#### **All-Upper-School Required Reading**

As a school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, St. Mary Academy - Bay View focuses on educating young women to take their place as global citizens in the twenty-first century. Attention to contemporary issues aligned with Mercy core values is key to an education that will bring about social consciousness, as asserted in the Academy's mission statement. Studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between women being educated and improvements within society. Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, was highly aware of this connection when she said, "Nothing is more productive to the good of society than the education of young women."

This summer's all-upper-school reading focuses on celebrating the achievements of women. The English Department has taken great pains in selecting both nonfiction and fiction readings on this subject. Each selection focuses on the obstacles women face in their path to success as well as their determination, courage, and persistence in reaching their goals and maintaining their integrity. Our hope is that by completing this summer reading, students will be prepared to discuss the challenges women face as well as the character traits these women model in their struggles. This summer's work will also prepare them to be "socially conscious young women" who will work to improve the quality of life for all living beings upon the Earth.

**Choose one of the following titles for your summer reading and complete the writing assignment.**

#### **Copeland, Misty *Life in Motion* (nonfiction)**

As the only African-American soloist dancing with the prestigious American Ballet Theatre, Misty Copeland has made history. But when she first placed her hands on the barre at an after-school community center, no one expected the undersized, anxious 13-year-old to become a ground-breaking ballerina. When she discovered ballet, Misty was living in a shabby motel room, struggling with her five siblings for a place to sleep on the floor. A true prodigy, she was dancing en pointe within three months of taking her first dance class and performing professionally in just over a year: A feat unheard of for any classical dancer. But when Misty became caught between the control and comfort she found in the world of ballet and the harsh realities of her own life (culminating in a highly publicized custody battle), she had to choose to embrace both her identity and her dreams, and find the courage to be one of a kind. (Amazon.com Review)

**Fagone, Jason    *The Woman Who Smashed Codes* (nonfiction)**

Joining the ranks of *Hidden Figures* and *In the Garden of Beasts*, the incredible true story of the greatest codebreaking duo that ever lived, an American woman and her husband who invented the modern science of cryptology together and used it to confront the evils of their time, solving puzzles that unmasked Nazi spies and helped win World War II. In *The Woman Who Smashed Codes*, Jason Fagone chronicles the life of this extraordinary woman, Elizebeth Smith, who played an integral role in our nation's history for 40 years. Fagone unveils America's code-breaking history through the prism of Smith's life, bringing into focus the unforgettable events and colorful personalities that would help shape modern intelligence. *The Woman Who Smashed Codes* is riveting popular history at its finest. (Amazon.com Review)

**Hosseini, Khaled    *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (fiction)**

Born a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women brought jarringly together by war, by loss, and by fate. As they endure the ever-escalating dangers around them, in their home as well as in the streets of Kabul, they come to form a bond that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other, and that will ultimately alter the course not just of their own lives but of the next generation. With heart-wrenching power and suspense, Hosseini shows how a woman's love for her family can move her to shocking and heroic acts of self-sacrifice, and that in the end it is love, or even the memory of love, that is often the key to survival. A stunning accomplishment, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a haunting, heartbreaking, compelling story of an unforgiving time, an unlikely friendship, and an indestructible love. (Amazon.com Review)

**Obama, Michelle    *Becoming* (nonfiction)**

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. (Amazon.com Review)

**See, Lisa    *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* (fiction)**

In nineteenth-century China, when wives and daughters were foot-bound and lived in almost total seclusion, the women in one remote Hunan county developed their own secret code for communication: nu shu (“women’s writing”). Some girls were paired with laotongs, “old sames,” in emotional matches that lasted throughout their lives. They painted letters on fans, embroidered messages on handkerchiefs, and composed stories, thereby reaching out of their isolation to share their hopes, dreams, and accomplishments.

With the arrival of a silk fan on which Snow Flower has composed for Lily a poem of introduction in nu shu, their friendship is sealed and they become “old sames” at the tender age of seven. As the years pass, through famine and rebellion, they reflect upon their arranged marriages, loneliness, and the joys and tragedies of motherhood. The two find solace, developing a bond that keeps their spirits alive. But when a misunderstanding arises, their lifelong friendship suddenly threatens to tear apart. *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* is a brilliantly realistic journey back to an era of Chinese history that is as deeply moving as it is sorrowful. This lyrical and emotionally charged novel delves into one of the most mysterious of human relationships: female friendship. (Amazon.com Review)

**Senna, Danzy    *Caucasia* (fiction)**

Birdie and Cole are the daughters of a black father and a white mother, intellectuals and activists in the Civil Rights Movement in 1970s Boston. The sisters are so close that they speak their own language, yet Birdie, with her light skin and straight hair, is often mistaken for white, while Cole is dark enough to fit in with the other kids at school. Despite their differences, Cole is Birdie’s confidant, her protector, the mirror by which she understands herself. Then their parents’ marriage collapses. One night Birdie watches her father and his new girlfriend drive away with Cole. Soon Birdie and her mother are on the road as well, drifting across the country in search of a new home. But for Birdie, home will always be Cole. Haunted by the loss of her sister, she sets out a desperate search for the family that left her behind. *Caucasia* is a modern classic, at once a powerful coming of age story and a groundbreaking work on identity and race in America. (Amazon.com Review)

**Assignment: Personal Reflection Essay: Due the first day your English class meets.**

**What to reflect on and write about in your essay:** What is the biggest “take-away” for you from the book you read? This essay is **not** a book summary; it is a personal essay about what you found most interesting or enlightening about the woman/women portrayed in the book and how she is/they are a model for you in shaping your own life.

**Format to use to complete this assignment:** Your essay should be typed, using 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced. No cover page. Put your name, the course title (for example, English 9), your teacher’s name, and the date in the upper-left corner of the page. Use the title and author of the novel as the title of your essay and center it. Minimum length: 2 – 2.5 pages.



## ST. MARY ACADEMY - BAY VIEW

### Class of 2024 Required Reading

**Ninth-graders, in addition to the all-upper-school selection, you have a choice of one of three novels for your second required summer reading. You must also complete a reflection essay on the novel you choose. This essay is due the first day your English class meets in the fall.**

**Choose one of the following novels:**

#### ***The Bean Trees* by Barbara Kingsolver**

Feisty Marietta Greer changes her name to "Taylor" when her car runs out of gas in Taylorville, Ill. By the time she reaches Oklahoma, this strong-willed young Kentucky native with a quick tongue and an open mind is catapulted into a surprising new life. Taylor leaves home in a beat-up '55 Volkswagen bug, on her way to nowhere in particular, savoring her freedom. But when a forlorn Cherokee woman drops a baby in Taylor's passenger seat and asks her to take it, she does. A first novel, *The Bean Trees* is an overwhelming delight, as random and unexpected as real life. The unmistakable voice of its irresistible heroine is whimsical, yet deeply insightful. Taylor playfully names her little foundling "Turtle," because she clings with an unrelenting, reptilian grip; at the same time, Taylor aches at the thought of the silent, staring child's past suffering. With Turtle in tow, Taylor lands in Tucson, Ariz., with two flat tires and decides to stay. The desert climate, landscape and vegetation are completely foreign to Taylor, and in learning to love Arizona, she also comes face to face with its rattlesnakes and tarantulas. Similarly, Taylor finds that motherhood, responsibility and independence are thorny, if welcome, gifts. This funny, inspiring book is a marvelous affirmation of risk-taking, commitment and everyday miracles. (PW Review)

#### ***Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys**

World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, many with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia, and Florian, whose paths converge en route to the ship that promises salvation, the *Wilhelm Gustloff*. Forced by circumstance to unite, the three find their strength, courage, and trust in each other tested with each step closer to safety. Just when it seems freedom is within their grasp, tragedy strikes. Not country, nor culture, nor status matter as all ten thousand people—adults and children alike—aboard must fight for the same thing: survival.

Told in alternating points of view. . . this masterful work of historical fiction is inspired by the real-life tragedy that was the sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff*—the greatest maritime disaster in history. Ruta Sepetys unearths a shockingly little-known casualty of a gruesome war, and proves that humanity and love can prevail, even in the darkest of hours. (Amazon.com Review)

***Sarah's Key* by Tatiana de Rosnay**

Paris, July 1942: Sarah, a ten-year-old girl, is brutally arrested with her family by the French police in the Vel' d'Hiv' roundup, but not before she locks her younger brother in a cupboard in the family's apartment, thinking that she will be back within a few hours.

Paris, May 2002: On Vel' d'Hiv's 60th anniversary, journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article about this black day in France's past. Through her contemporary investigation, she stumbles onto a trail of long-hidden family secrets that connect her to Sarah. Julia finds herself compelled to retrace the girl's ordeal, from that terrible time in the Vel' d'Hiv', to the camps, and beyond. As she probes into Sarah's past, she begins to question her own place in France and to reevaluate her marriage and her life.

(Amazon.com Review)

**Assignment on Choice Novel: Personal Reflection Essay**

**What to reflect on and write about in your essay:** What is the biggest “take-away” for you about this novel—a character? something that happened? a theme or message? What would you say to a family member or friend to convince them to read this novel? (Note: There is no option for not liking the novel; you must find something good to say!)

**Format to use to complete this assignment:** Your essay should be typed, using a 12-point font and double-spaced. No cover page. Put your name, English 9, your teacher's name, and the date in the upper-left corner of the page. Use the title and author of the novel as the title of your essay and center it. Minimum length: 1.5-2 pages.





## ST. MARY ACADEMY - BAY VIEW

### Class of 2023 Required Reading

**Sophomores, in addition to the all-Upper-School reading, you have a choice of one of three novels for your second required summer reading. You must also complete a reflection essay on the novel you choose. This essay is due the first day of class in the fall.**

**Choose one of the following novels:**

#### ***The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life. (Amazon.com Review)

#### ***Beneath the Scarlet Sky* by Mark T. Sullivan**

Based on the true story of a forgotten hero, the *USA Today* and #1 Amazon Charts bestseller *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* is the triumphant, epic tale of one young man's incredible courage and resilience during one of history's darkest hours. Pino Lella wants nothing to do with the war or the Nazis. He's a normal Italian teenager—obsessed with music, food, and girls—but his days of innocence are numbered. When his family home in Milan is destroyed by Allied bombs, Pino joins an underground railroad helping Jews escape over the Alps, and falls for Anna, a beautiful widow six years his senior. In an attempt to protect him, Pino's parents force him to enlist as a German soldier—a move they think will keep him out of combat. But after Pino is injured, he is recruited at the tender age of eighteen to become the personal driver for Adolf Hitler's left hand in Italy, General Hans Leyers, one of the Third Reich's most mysterious and powerful commanders. Now, with the opportunity to spy for the Allies inside the German High Command, Pino endures the horrors of the war and the Nazi occupation by fighting in secret, his courage bolstered by his love for Anna and for the life he dreams they will one day share. (Amazon.com Review)

#### ***The Rule of One* by Ashley Saunders and Leslie Saunders**

In their world, telling the truth has become the most dangerous crime of all. In the near-future United States, a one-child policy is ruthlessly enforced. Everyone follows the Rule of One. But Ava Goodwin, daughter of the head of the Texas Family Planning

Division, has a secret—one her mother died to keep and her father has helped to hide for her entire life.

She has an identical twin sister, Mira. For eighteen years Ava and Mira have lived as one, trading places day after day, maintaining an interchangeable existence down to the most telling detail. But when their charade is exposed, their worst nightmare begins. Now they must leave behind the father they love and fight for their lives. Branded as traitors, hunted as fugitives, and pushed to discover just how far they'll go in order to stay alive, Ava and Mira rush headlong into a terrifying unknown. (Amazon.com Review)

### **Assignment on Choice Novel: Reflection Essay**

**What to reflect on and write about in your essay:** What is the biggest “take-away” for you about this novel—a character? something that happened? a theme or message? What would you say to a family member or friend to convince them to read this novel? (Note: There is no option for not liking the novel; you must find something good to say!)

**Format to use to complete this assignment:** Your essay should be typed, using a 12-point font and double-spaced. No cover page. Put your name, English 10, and the date in the upper-left corner of the page. Use the title and author of the novel as the title of your essay and center it. Minimum length: 1.5-2 pages.



## ST. MARY ACADEMY - BAY VIEW

### Class of 2022 Required Reading

**Juniors, in addition to the all-Upper-School reading, you have a choice of one of three novels for your second required summer reading. You must also complete a reflection essay on the novel you choose. This essay is due the first day of class in the fall.**

**Choose one of the following novels:**

#### ***The Martian* by Andy Weir**

Six days ago, astronaut Mark Watney became one of the first people to walk on Mars. Now, he's sure he'll be the first person to die there.

After a dust storm nearly kills him and forces his crew to evacuate while thinking him dead, Mark finds himself stranded and completely alone with no way to even signal Earth that he's alive—and even if he could get word out, his supplies would be gone long before a rescue could arrive.

Chances are, though, he won't have time to starve to death. The damaged machinery, unforgiving environment, or plain-old "human error" are much more likely to kill him first.

But Mark isn't ready to give up yet. Drawing on his ingenuity, his engineering skills—and a relentless, dogged refusal to quit—he steadfastly confronts one seemingly insurmountable obstacle after the next. Will his resourcefulness be enough to overcome the impossible odds against him? (*Amazon Review*)

#### ***In Cold Blood* by 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. *In Cold Blood* is a work that transcends its moment, yielding poignant insights into the nature of American violence. (*Amazon Review*)

#### ***Refuge* by Terry Tempest Williams**

In the spring of 1983 Terry Tempest Williams learned that her mother was dying of cancer. That same season, The Great Salt Lake began to rise to record heights, threatening the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge and the herons, owls, and snowy egrets that Williams, a poet and naturalist, had come to gauge her life by. One event was nature at its most random, the other a by-product of rogue technology: Terry's mother, and Terry herself, had been exposed to the fallout of atomic bomb tests in the 1950s. As it interweaves these narratives of dying and accommodation, *Refuge* transforms tragedy



into a document of renewal and spiritual grace, resulting in a work that has become a classic. (*Amazon Review*)

### **Assignment on Choice Novel: Reflection Essay**

**What to reflect on and write about in your essay:** What is the biggest “take-away” for you about this novel—a character? something that happened? a theme or message? What would you say to a family member or friend to convince them to read this novel? (Note: There is no option for not liking the novel; you must find something good to say!)

**Format to use to complete this assignment:** Your essay should be typed, using a 12-point font and double-spaced. No cover page. Put your name, course title (English 11 or AP English Language), and the date in the upper-left corner of the page. Use the title and author of the novel as the title of your essay and center it. Minimum length: 1.5-2 pages.



## ST. MARY ACADEMY - BAY VIEW

### Class of 2021 Required Reading

**Seniors, in addition to the all-Upper-School reading, you have a choice of one of three novels for your second required summer reading. You must also complete a reflection essay on the novel you choose. This essay is due the first day of class in the fall.**

**Choose one of the following novels:**

#### ***Kindred* by Octavia Butler**

The visionary author's masterpiece pulls us—along with her Black female hero—through time to face the horrors of slavery and explore the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now.

Dana, a modern black woman, is celebrating her twenty-sixth birthday with her new husband when she is snatched abruptly from her home in California and transported to the antebellum South. Rufus, the white son of a plantation owner, is drowning, and Dana has been summoned to save him. Dana is drawn back repeatedly through time to the slave quarters, and each time the stay grows longer, more arduous, and more dangerous until it is uncertain whether or not Dana's life will end, long before it has a chance to begin. (Amazon.com Review)

#### ***The Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris**

This beautiful, illuminating tale of hope and courage is based on interviews that were conducted with Holocaust survivor and Auschwitz-Birkenau tattooist Ludwig (Lale) Sokolov—an unforgettable love story in the midst of atrocity.

In April 1942, Lale Sokolov, a Slovakian Jew, is forcibly transported to the concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. When his captors discover that he speaks several languages, he is put to work as a *Tätowierer* (the German word for tattooist), tasked with permanently marking his fellow prisoners.

Imprisoned for over two and a half years, Lale witnesses horrific atrocities and barbarism—but also incredible acts of bravery and compassion. Risking his own life, he uses his privileged position to exchange jewels and money from murdered Jews for food to keep his fellow prisoners alive.

One day in July 1942, Lale, prisoner 32407, comforts a trembling young woman waiting in line to have the number 34902 tattooed onto her arm. Her name is Gita, and in that first encounter, Lale vows to somehow survive the camp and marry her.

A vivid, harrowing, and ultimately hopeful re-creation of Lale Sokolov's experiences as the man who tattooed the arms of thousands of prisoners with what would become one of the most potent symbols of the Holocaust, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* is also a testament to the endurance of love and humanity under the darkest possible conditions. (Amazon.com Review)

## ***I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika Sanchez**

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* meets *Jane the Virgin* in this poignant but often laugh-out-loud funny contemporary YA about losing a sister and finding yourself amid the pressures, expectations, and stereotypes of growing up in a Mexican-American home.

Perfect Mexican daughters do not go away to college. And they do not move out of their parents' house after high school graduation. Perfect Mexican daughters never *abandon* their family.

But Julia is not your perfect Mexican daughter. That was Olga's role.

Then a tragic accident on the busiest street in Chicago leaves Olga dead and Julia left behind to reassemble the shattered pieces of her family. And no one seems to acknowledge that Julia is broken, too. Instead, her mother seems to channel her grief into pointing out *every possible way* Julia has failed.

But it's not long before Julia discovers that Olga might not have been as perfect as everyone thought. With the help of her best friend Lorena, and her first love, first everything boyfriend Connor, Julia is determined to find out. Was Olga really what she seemed? Or was there more to her sister's story? And either way, how can Julia even attempt to live up to a seemingly impossible ideal?

### **Assignment on Choice Novel: Reflection Essay**

**What to reflect on and write about in your essay:** What is the biggest "take-away" for you about this novel—a character? something that happened? a theme or message? What would you say to a family member or friend to convince them to read this novel? (Note: There is no option for not liking the novel; you must find something good to say!)

**Format to use to complete this assignment:** Your essay should be typed, using a 12-point font and double-spaced. No cover page. Put your name, course title (English 12 or AP English Literature), and the date in the upper-left corner of the page. Use the title and author of the novel as the title of your essay and center it. Minimum length: 1.5-2 pages.