

## Honors/Advanced Placement English III Summer Reading List 2022

English III (H) and (AP):

Students are required to take Accelerated Reader tests on assigned and choice novels.

- Novel: *Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger
- Film: *Dead Poets' Society* (1989—PG)
- **Also:** Students will read one work from the list provided below. This selection will feed into a major research project to be completed during their junior year. Students who read more than one book from this list can use these points toward an extra AR grade for summer/1<sup>st</sup> quarter and will also ease their reading requirements during the first quarter of the junior year.

Note: Any points over 10 earned on this choice book will count toward your first-quarter bonus AR grade. Points earned from *The Catcher in the Rye* do not count toward a bonus grade.

Have questions? Contact me: [sharon.guillory@stmcougars.net](mailto:sharon.guillory@stmcougars.net)

### Important to note:

I strongly encourage you to annotate your books as you read. Suggestions for why and how are provided in the great article available through this link:

<https://slowreads.com/2008/04/18/how-to-mark-a-book/>

### Choose from these books:

#### American Male Writers

*The Big Sleep* / Raymond Chandler: a dark and cynical mystery/detective story with a plot that reveals how truly twisted the human heart is; also presents us with a heroic detective who shows that chivalry is not completely dead in modern society. AR: 15

*The Call of the Wild* / Jack London: The story, filled with action and adventure, presents a strangely compelling world - the world of the Arctic Circle at the beginning of the 20th century. Now, this is no happy-happy book written for the more sensitive reader. Indeed, the story is filled with violence and conflict, and death, much as the Yukon was back then. AR: 7

*Carrie* / Stephen King: Stephen King's legendary debut, is about a teenage outcast and the revenge she enacts on her classmates. AR: 9

*Catch-22* / Joseph Heller: A broad comedy confronting the hypocrisy of war and mass society as Captain Yossarian frantically attempts to stay alive despite endless bombing missions. AR: 30

*Ender's Game* / Orson Scott Card: In a world decimated by alien attacks, the government trains young geniuses like Ender Wiggin in military strategy with increasingly complex computer games. AR: 16

*Fahrenheit 451* / Ray Bradbury: In the future, all books are burned instead of reading in an attempt to do

away with opposing opinions. A “fireman” begins to question the wisdom of burning books and illegally begins reading. AR: 7

***The Grapes of Wrath*** / John Steinbeck: Political, humane, and beautifully written, this timeless classic examines the close ties of family, the enduring spirit of humanity, and the degrading effects of poverty. Not an easy read, but a worthwhile one. AR: 25

***Invisible Man*** by Ralph Waldo Ellison: A black man fervently searches for his identity. This novel is a milestone in American literature, a book that has continued to engage readers since its appearance in 1952. The first novel by a then unknown writer, it remained on the bestseller list for sixteen weeks, won the National Book Award for fiction, and established Ralph Ellison as one of the key writers of the century. The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood," and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be. The book is a passionate and witty tour de force of style. AR: 33

***The Jungle*** / Upton Sinclair: This gritty description of urban life at the turn of the century shows the moral and physical degradation of a “jungle” in which humans barely live better than animals. AR: 22

***Killer Angels*** / Michael Shaara: A superb re-creation of the battle of Gettysburg, but its real importance is its insight into what the Civil War was about and what it meant. AR: 15

***Moby-Dick*** / Herman Melville: The story of Captain Ahab's quest to seek revenge on the whale that took his leg and made him aware of his mortality. The quest is an obsession and the novel a diabolical study of how a man becomes a fanatic. But it is also a hymn to democracy. Bent as the crew is on Ahab's appalling crusade, the novel is equally the image of a co-operative community at work: all hands dependent on all hands, each individual responsible for the security of each. Ishmael, the novel's narrator, is an ordinary sailor and an extraordinary observer and writer. Digressive, allusive, vulgar, transcendent, fascinating, the story Ishmael tells is above all an education: in the practice of whaling, in the art of writing. AR: 42

***The Old Man and the Sea***/ Ernest Hemingway: This short novel, already a modern classic, is the superbly told, tragic story of a Cuban fisherman in the Gulf Stream and the giant Marlin he kills and loses — specifically referred to in the citation accompanying the author's Nobel Prize for literature in 1954. AR: 4

***One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*** / Ken Kesey: Full of energy and passion, convicted criminal Randle McMurphy chooses a mental hospital over prison and comes to regret his decision. AR: 18

***On The Road***/ Jack Kerouac: Not only the soul of the Beat movement and literature but one of the most important novels of the century. Like nearly all of Kerouac's writing, *On The Road* is a thinly fictionalized autobiography, filled with a cast made of Kerouac's real-life friends, lovers, and fellow travelers. Narrated by Sal Paradise, one of Kerouac's alter-egos, *On the Road* is a cross-country bohemian odyssey that not only influenced writing in the years since its 1957 publication but penetrated into the deepest levels of American thought and culture. AR: 22

***The Red Badge of Courage* / Stephen Crane:** A boy moves from cowardice to courage during the Civil War. AR: 8

***Salem's Lot* / Stephen King:** When two young boys venture into the woods and only one comes out alive, Mears begins to realize that there may be something sinister at work and that his hometown is under siege by forces of darkness far beyond his control. AR: 23

***The Scarlet Letter* / Nathaniel Hawthorne:** First published in 1850, this novel is Nathaniel Hawthorne's masterpiece and one of the greatest American novels. Its themes of sin, guilt, and redemption, woven through a story of adultery in the early days of the Massachusetts Colony, are revealed with remarkable psychological penetration and understanding of the human heart. AR: 14

***The Sea Wolf* / Jack London:** Jack London's stated intention in writing this book was to place a man and a woman, both intellectual, well-to-do, yet socially soft into the challenging world of a seal-hunting boat and watch them strive for survival. In this context, he has created one of the most fascinating characters of all literature, Wolf Larson, the inhuman captain of the "Ghost." Larson takes great delight in the suffering he brings to Humphrey Van Weyden and Maud Brewster, but they steadily grow to meet the challenge. This book can be read and enjoyed on two levels: as a rousing sea adventure, or as a discourse on society and sociology. AR: 18

***A Separate Peace* / John Knowles:** A friendship forms between two boys attending a New England boarding school during World War II. Gene, smart and socially awkward, draws the attention of Phineas, a handsome, athletic, and outgoing boy. The two become friends, but war and rivalry lead to a tragic accident. This is a classic story about friendship and adolescence. 10

***The Shining* / Stephen King:** An alcoholic father takes his family to an isolated resort where he will work as a caretaker for the winter. The isolation begins to take its toll on his sanity, and he starts seeing ghosts of a previous caretaker and the family he murdered. AR: 25

***Slaughterhouse-Five* / Kurt Vonnegut:** Billy Pilgrim, an optometrist from New York, shuttles between the cellars of Dresden, smoldering from Allied bombardment, and a luxurious zoo on the planet Tralfamadore. AR: 8

***Snow Falling on Cedars* / David Guterson:** In 1954 a fisherman is found dead in the nets of his boat, and a local Japanese-American man is charged with his murder. In the course of his trial, it becomes clear that what is at stake is more than one man's guilt. For on San Piedro, memories grow as thickly as cedar trees and the fields of ripe strawberries - memories of a charmed love affair between a white boy and a Japanese girl; memories of land desired, paid for, and lost. Above all, San Piedro is haunted by the memory of what happened to its Japanese residents during World War II, when an entire community was sent into exile while its neighbors watched. AR: 23

***Stranger in a Strange Land* / Robert Heinlein:** A best-selling 1961 Hugo Award-winning novel that tells the story of Valentine Michael Smith, a human raised by Martians on the planet Mars, after his return to Earth in early adulthood. The novel explores his interaction with—and the eventual transformation of—Earth culture.

The novel's title refers to the Biblical Book of Exodus. Later editions of the book have promoted it as "the most famous Science Fiction Novel ever written." AR: 25

*The Things They Carried* / Tim O'Brien: Stories retelling the author's experiences as a soldier in the Vietnam War. AR: 10

## **American Women Writers**

### **Louisa May Alcott**

*Little Women*: A novel that spoke to the Victorian era, became part of the American family mythos, and provides a good read as well. Appeared in an era when sentimentality was appreciated by readers, and the novel has its share of sentimental events and speeches, along with a strong didactic tone. Readers have been enchanted for generations with the story of the March family. AR: 33

### **Kate Chopin**

*The Awakening*: Dramatic in form, intensely focused, this book is Kate Chopin's most elaborate orchestration of the theme of bondage and illusion. It makes use of imagery and symbolism to an extent never before evident in her work. The question that is raised: Is the individual responsible to others or to the self? Chopin captures the deep inner life of Edna Pontellier and projects it powerfully upon the world of convention. AR: 12

### **Zora Neale Hurston**

*Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Protagonist Janie Crawford finds love and self-identity only by rejecting that life dictated by her grandmother and becoming a wholehearted participant in black folk culture. Does not represent the oppression of blacks because Hurston refused to view African American life as impoverished. Loving celebrations of a separate black folk life were Hurston's effective political weapon; racial pride was one of her great gifts to American literature. AR: 10

### **Shirley Jackson**

*The Haunting of Hill House*: Touted as the greatest haunted house story ever written and hailed as a perfect work of unnerving terror. Jackson was the master of creating horror through atmosphere and suggestion rather than through explicit descriptions or gore. 11

### **Toni Morrison**

*Beloved*: Confronts directly the institution of slavery. At one level, this book is a powerful account of the slave experience, an intimate re-creation of suffering and struggle. On a deeper level, it is a lyrical, mythic narrative, a ghost story with echoes of Greek tragedy, and an angry, anguished testament. AR: 15

### **Margaret Mitchell (1900-1949)**

*Gone with the Wind*: Mitchell's famed story of the Old South before, during, and after the Civil War; is one of the best-loved books of the twentieth century and a highly entertaining read. A Pulitzer-Prize winner. AR: 71

**Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)**

*The Bell Jar*: Autobiographical novel about this intensely personal Confessional Poet and her struggles with life, depression, relationships, and suicide. AR: 11

**Ayn Rand (1905-1982)**

*The Fountainhead*: Novel which created a public furor and a worldwide interest in its brilliant author. Here, Ayn Rand first introduced the daringly original philosophy that won her international fame and gave rise to a new intellectual movement. In a novel of both excitement and impact, she poses one of the most challenging and controversial ideas ever presented in contemporary fiction: that man's ego is the fountainhead of human progress. Great characterization, romance, and suspense are incorporated. AR: 53

**Amy Tan (1952- )**

*The Joy Luck Club* by Tan: Presents the interlocking stories of four Chinese women and their American daughters. Each mother/daughter relationship is filled with sadness, anger, and joy. AR: 14

*The Kitchen God's Wife*: A Chinese woman who survived an abusive arranged marriage in China tries to repair her relationship with her estranged daughter by revealing the secrets of her past. AR: 24

**Alice Walker (1944-)**

*The Color Purple*: Widely acclaimed Pulitzer-Prize winner. Presents the author's familiar yet fresh themes—survival and redemption—in epistolary (letter) form. Alice Walker said of it: "It's my happiest book. . . I had to do all the other writing to get to this point. . . Let's hope people can hear Celie's voice. There are so many people like Celie who make it, who come out of nothing. People who triumph." AR: 9

**Edith Wharton (1862-1937)**

*Ethan Frome*: Set against the frozen waste of a harsh New England winter, Edith Wharton's Ethan Frome is a tale of despair, forbidden emotions, and sexual tensions. Ethan Frome works his unproductive farm and struggles to maintain a bearable existence with his difficult, suspicious, and hypochondriac wife, Zeenie. But when Zeenie's vivacious cousin enters their household as a 'hired girl', Ethan finds himself obsessed with her and with the possibilities for happiness she comes to represent. In one of American fiction's finest and most intense narratives, Edith Wharton moves this ill-starred trio toward their tragic destinies. Different in both tone and theme from Wharton's other works, Ethan Frome has become perhaps her most enduring and most widely read novel. AR: 6

## Nonfiction Classics

**Maya Angelou/*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*:** Poet Maya Angelou recounts a youth filled with disappointment, frustration, tragedy, and finally hard-won independence. Marvelously told, with Angelou's "gift for language and observation," this "remarkable autobiography by an equally remarkable black woman from Arkansas captures, indelibly, a world of which most Americans are shamefully ignorant." AR: 13

**Truman Capote/*In Cold Blood*:** "Until one morning in mid-November of 1959, few Americans--in fact, few Kansans--had ever heard of Holcomb. Like the waters of the river, like the motorists on the highway, and like the yellow trains streaking down the Santa Fe tracks, drama, in the shape of exceptional happenings, had never stopped there." If all Truman Capote did was invent a new genre--journalism written with the language and structure of literature--this "nonfiction novel" about the brutal slaying of the Clutter family would be remembered as a trail-blazing experiment that has influenced countless writers. But Capote achieved more than that. He wrote a true masterpiece of creative nonfiction. AR: 21

**Helen Keller/*The Story of My Life*:** When she was 19 months old, Helen Keller (1880–1968) suffered a severe illness that left her blind and deaf. Not long after, she also became mute. Her tenacious struggle to overcome these handicaps—with the help of her inspired teacher, Anne Sullivan—is one of the great stories of human courage and dedication. In this classic autobiography, first published in 1903, Miss Keller recounts the first 22 years of her life, including the magical moment at the water pump when, recognizing the connection between the word "water" and the cold liquid flowing over her hand, she realized that objects had names. 12

**Malcolm X/*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*:** Malcolm X's searing memoir belongs on the small shelf of great autobiographies. The reasons are many: the blistering honesty with which he recounts his transformation from a bitter, self-destructive petty criminal into an articulate political activist, the continued relevance of his militant analysis of white racism, and his emphasis on self-respect and self-help for African Americans. And there's the vividness with which he depicts black popular culture--try as he might to criticize those lindy hops at Boston's Roseland dance hall from the perspective of his Muslim faith, he can't help but make them sound pretty wonderful. These are but a few examples. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* limns an archetypal journey from ignorance and despair to knowledge and spiritual awakening. When Malcolm tells coauthor Alex Haley, "People don't realize how a man's whole life can be changed by one book," he voices the central belief underpinning every attempt to set down a personal story as an example for others. Although many believe his ethic was directly opposed to Martin Luther King Jr.'s during the civil rights struggle of the '60s, the two were not so different. Malcolm may have displayed a most un-Christian distaste for loving his enemies, but he understood with King that love of God and love of self are the necessary first steps on the road to freedom. AR: 32

**Frank McCourt/*Angela's Ashes*:** The author chronicles his impoverished childhood in Limerick, Ireland, in the 1930s and 1940s, describing his father's alcoholism and talent for storytelling and also the challenges and tragedies his mother faced, including the loss of three children. Says one reader, "What a ride! You'll laugh, cry, exhilarate, and despair—all on the same page. Trapped in childhood of extreme poverty in Limerick, Ireland, Frank McCourt not only survives but thoroughly conquers. In the depths of even this much misery,

however, there are small mercies and kindnesses, and they are not lost on him. This is what gives the book its humanity—the ability to withstand horrific circumstances through humor, determination, and forgiveness—and triumph with soul intact. And the people! They seem more alive in ink than most of us seem in flesh.” AR: 23

**Anne Moody/*Coming of Age in Mississippi*:** This classic autobiography shares the personal story of a young African-American woman growing up poor and black in 1940s and 1950s Mississippi. This is an unforgettable personal story—the truth as a remarkable young woman named Anne Moody lived it. To read her book is to know what it is to have grown up black in Mississippi in the forties and fifties—and to have survived with pride and courage intact. AR: 22

**Richard Rodriguez/*Hunger for Memory*:** The author, a disadvantaged Mexican American, writes of feelings of alienation from his family as he learned English and earned a Ph.D. Here is the poignant journey of a “minority student” who pays the cost of his social assimilation and academic success with a painful alienation — from his past, his parents, his culture — and so describes the high price of “making it” in middle-class America. AR: 9

### **Great American Drama:**

*Our Town* by Thornton Wilder: *Our Town* was first produced and published in 1938 to wide acclaim. This Pulitzer Prize-winning drama of life in the small village of Grover's Corners, an allegorical representation that illuminates which is extraordinary about the ordinary aspects of daily life, has become a classic. It is Thornton Wilder's most renowned and most frequently performed play. AR: 3

*The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams: This play is a tender, despairing portrait of two women, one lost in the past, the other in herself. Sometimes, the most important and influential characters are those that never come forth and make an appearance. This is the case in this play. The absent father serves as an explanation for and a foreshadowing of why his wife, Amanda; his daughter, Laura; and his son, Tom, behave as they do. This is a play about real life, a dysfunctional family who wants only the happiness that they cannot achieve. AR: 3

*Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller: A not-too-successful traveling salesman rears his sons on platitudes to his and their undoing. As author Joyce Carol Oates said, “Nearly fifty years after its composition, *Death of a Salesman* strikes us as the most achingly contemporary of our classic American plays. . . Arthur Miller has written the tragedy that illuminates the dark side of American success—which is to say, the dark side of us.” AR: 5

*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry: This play is a drama about the hopes and aspirations of a struggling, working-class, black family living on the South Side of Chicago. Sacrifice, trust, and love among the Younger family and their heroic struggle to retain dignity in a harsh and changing world form a searing and timeless document of hope and inspiration. Winner of the NY Drama Critic's Award as Best Play of the Year, it has been hailed as a "pivotal play in the history of the American Black theatre" by *Newsweek* and "a milestone in the American Theatre" by *Ebony*. AR: 6

Reviews drawn largely from **amazon.com** and **barnesandnoble.com**

