

Class of 2025 Summer Reading Assignment

Rationale for Summer Reading:

Welcome, St. X Sophomores! Whether you're headed to the beach, the ball field, the lake, or your own backyard, we encourage you to carve out time to read. The act of reading has tremendous intellectual, emotional, and psychological benefits, and becoming a better reader will change your personal, educational, and work lives for the better. Also, reading can be just plain fun. Let this summer reading allow you to escape into your imagination—to "travel without moving your feet" (Jhumpa Lahiri). Happy reading!

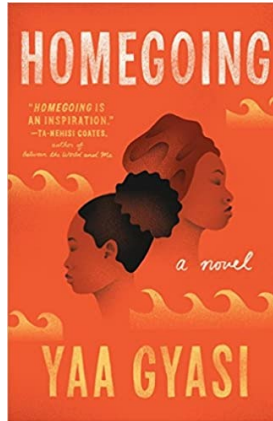
Directions/ English Department Expectations:

1. Choose ONE novel from the list below.
2. Purchase a **hard copy** of your choice; a digital copy **is not** permitted (audio books may be used in conjunction with a hard copy). We have provided links to Joseph Beth Bookstore, but you may use the retailer of your choice. **Please be sure to use the provided ISBN identification code**, so that you obtain the correct edition of your book.
3. Read and annotate your novel.
4. One first day of school, bring your annotated book to class for your teacher to collect.
5. Annotations should reflect your personal conversation with the book, as well as
 - Cover the entirety of the reading and be well dispersed, ***but not so numerous as to become a burden to your reading***
 - Contain words and phrases in the margins (not just underlining or highlighting); unfamiliar vocabulary is defined
 - Varied in type and purpose (ex: personal response, summary, questions, predictions, connections within or outside the text, observations about literary elements/patterns, etc.)
 - Demonstrate deep thinking about the selected reading, going beyond the surface of the text

[Click Here For More Annotating Ideas](#)

A Note to Students and Parents: The reading choices may include sensitive topics, or content that may be considered sensitive. Before choosing any text, please read reviews of the work and look up the topics it explores. This will help you decide whether you are comfortable with the content, and whether it is appropriate for your reading level and interest.

Homegoing



<https://www.josephbeth.com/book/9781101971062>

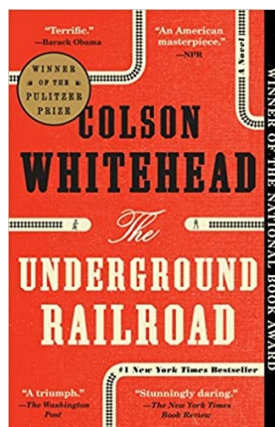
ISBN: 978-1101971062

Description

A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK • Ghana, eighteenth century: two half-sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery.

One of Oprah's Best Books of the Year and a PEN/Hemingway award winner, *Homegoing* follows the parallel paths of these sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi's extraordinary novel illuminates slavery's troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

Underground Railroad



<https://www.josephbeth.com/book/9780345804327>

ISBN: 978-0345804327

Description

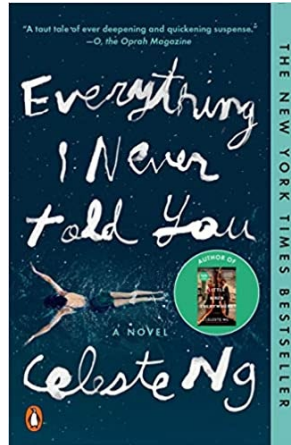
Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, this #1 *New York Times* bestseller chronicles a young slave's adventures as she makes a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South. The basis for the acclaimed original Amazon Prime Video series directed by Barry Jenkins.

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. An outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is on the cusp of womanhood—where greater pain awaits. And so when Caesar, a slave who has recently arrived from Virginia, urges her to join him on the Underground Railroad, she seizes the opportunity and escapes with him.

In Colson Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor: engineers and conductors operate a secret network of actual tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora embarks on a harrowing flight from one state to the next, encountering, like Gulliver, strange yet familiar iterations of her own world at each stop.

As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the terrors of the antebellum era, he weaves in the saga of our nation, from the brutal abduction of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. *The Underground Railroad* is both the gripping tale of one woman's will to escape the horrors of bondage—and a powerful meditation on the history we all share.

Everything I Never Told You



<https://www.josephbeth.com/book/9780143127550>

ISBN: 978-0143127550

Description

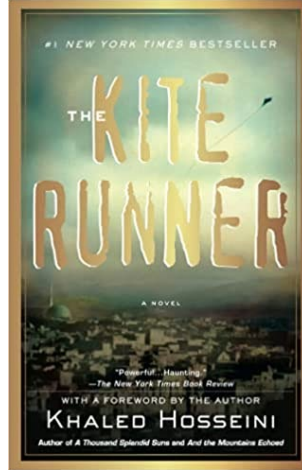
The acclaimed debut novel by the author of *Little Fires Everywhere*.

“A taut tale of ever deepening and quickening suspense.” —O, the Oprah Magazine

“Explosive . . . Both a propulsive mystery and a profound examination of a mixed-race family.” —*Entertainment Weekly*

“Lydia is dead. But they don’t know this yet.” So begins this exquisite novel about a Chinese American family living in 1970s small-town Ohio. Lydia is the favorite child of Marilyn and James Lee, and her parents are determined that she will fulfill the dreams they were unable to pursue. But when Lydia’s body is found in the local lake, the delicate balancing act that has been keeping the Lee family together is destroyed, tumbling them into chaos. A profoundly moving story of family, secrets, and longing, *Everything I Never Told You* is both a gripping page-turner and a sensitive family portrait, uncovering the ways in which mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and husbands and wives struggle, all their lives, to understand one another.

The Kite Runner



<https://www.josephbeth.com/book/9781594631931>

ISBN: 978-1594631931

Description

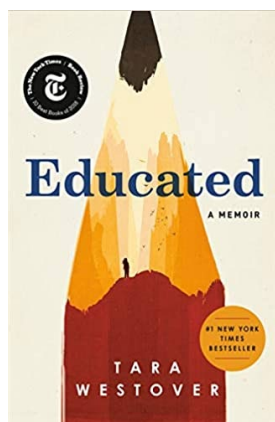
The #1 *New York Times* bestselling novel beloved by millions of readers the world over.

“A vivid and engaging story that reminds us how long his people [of Afghanistan] have been struggling to triumph over the forces of violence—forces that continue to threaten them even today.” –*New York Times Book Review*

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father’s servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, *The Kite Runner* transports readers to Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

Since its publication in 2003 *Kite Runner* has become a beloved, one-of-a-kind classic of contemporary literature, touching millions of readers, and launching the career of one of America’s most treasured writers.

Educated



<https://www.josephbeth.com/book/9780399590504>

ISBN: 978-0399590504

Description

#1 NEW YORK TIMES, WALL STREET JOURNAL, AND BOSTON GLOBE BESTSELLER • One of the most acclaimed books of our time: an unforgettable memoir about a young woman who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a PhD from Cambridge University

“Extraordinary . . . an act of courage and self-invention.”—*The New York Times*

NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW* • ONE OF PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA’S FAVORITE BOOKS OF THE YEAR • BILL GATES’S HOLIDAY READING LIST • FINALIST: National Book Critics Circle’s Award In Autobiography and John Leonard Prize For Best First Book • PEN/Jean Stein Book Award • *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her 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. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she’d traveled too far, if there was still a way home.