

Honors British Literature Summer Reading

Over the summer, you will read two novels:

- ***Piranesi*, by Susanna Clarke**
- One book of your choice from the list below

Choice Books:

- ***The Midnight Library*, Matt Haig**
Nora Seed's life is full of regrets. Her attempted suicide lands her in the Midnight Library, a place between life and death where she is able to visit the many versions of her life she might have lived, and which she can still live, if she chooses—but if she cannot find a life she truly finds worth living before she loses her last shred of desire to live, this last chance will be gone forever.
- ***Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley**
Huxley imagines a dystopia in which people have become content to be passive, peaceful, productive, and unquestioning cogs in the political machine. Any unpleasant thoughts or feelings are happily drugged away, and even positive human feelings are dampened. State psychologist, Bernard Marx, all too familiar with the conditioning performed on citizens of the World State, is becoming increasingly discontent with this blandly happy community.
- ***The Once and Future King*, T.H. White**
Mingling fantasy and philosophy, a fascination for the medieval and his own discouragement over the political developments in Europe in the lead-up to and duration of WWII, White tells the story of King Arthur from his childhood as an animal-loving underdog to his final stand as a king whose ideals have failed to last in a world of broken human beings.
- ***Till We Have Faces*, C.S. Lewis**
This retelling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche is a complaint against the injustice of the gods by the unreliable narrator Orual, the jealous older sister of Psyche. It is a meditation on human and divine justice, the value of beauty, and the stories we tell ourselves.
- ***A Rising Man*, Abir Mukherjee**
Sam Wyndham, a former Scotland Yard detective, arrives in Calcutta looking for a fresh start after the trauma of the Great War and the loss of his wife to the flu epidemic. He quickly finds himself investigating a complicated murder case in a city that is a political powderkeg.
- ***All the Light We Cannot See*, Anthony Doerr**
The novel follows two main characters during World War II: the blind French girl Marie-Laure and the poor German boy Werner. Marie-Laure and Werner's stories intersect in the German-occupied French town of Saint-Malo. It is also a bit of a love-letter to the technology of radio.

Assignments:

1. At the start of the school year, we will be discussing *Piranesi* in class and writing an essay on it.
2. **Dialectic Journals (both novels) – DUE the FIRST DAY of school**

Dialectic Journal - Directions

- Purchase a spiral bound notebook or composition book OR create a computerized response journal. (You do not need to purchase two separate journals - use one the same one for each text.)
- Make a note of the number of pages in your novel.
- Divide your novel into ten (10) equal sections and write a response for every section. (e.g.: 253 pages ... $253/10= 25$. This example shows you should write a response every 25 pages.)
- Draw a vertical line down the middle of the page
- Label the left column TEXT and the right column RESPONSE
- In the TEXT column, copy passages word for word from the novel, including quotations marks and page numbers; you should have TEN.

How do you choose what passages to write down?

Passages become important if

- i. Details in the passage seem important to you.
- ii. You learn something significant about a character
- iii. You recognize a pattern (recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols, descriptions, details, etc.)
- iv. You agree or disagree with something a character says or does
- v. You find an interesting or potentially significant quotation
- vi. You notice something important or relevant about the author's writing style
- vii. You notice effective use of literary devices
- viii. You think that the passage contributes to or reveals a theme in the novel

In the RESPONSE column, write about the passages. DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE THE PLOT OR RESTATE THE PASSAGE IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

Each RESPONSE must be at least 50 words.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Shaull shaulle@countryday.net.