

Summer Reading 2022: Grade 9

All incoming 9th graders will read the following book:

- *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, Ishmael Beah (ISBN-13: 978-0374531263)

***Please be advised that this is the true story of a child soldier. There are some disturbing images and content about the civil war in Sierra Leone. We encourage you to acknowledge and consider the role that violence (often beyond an individual's control) can play in a person's life, but we hope that you will not lose sight of the incredible fortitude and spirit demonstrated by Mr. Beah throughout his journey and recovery.*

A Long Way Gone is a true story of a young man who was forced to become a child soldier. In the early 1990s, Ishmael Beah's home of Sierra Leone broke into civil war. As he journeyed through his war-torn homeland, looking for his family and seeking safety, Beah was conscripted into the government's army and committed numerous acts of violence. Beah was eventually forced to confront his ability to commit horrific acts in order to regain his humanity.

Memoir:

A memoir is a form of narrative writing in which the writer explores a particular part of his/her life. It is a collection of memories that someone writes about his or her own life. While the memories can be public or private—and are often a mix of the two if the memoirist is a famous person—a memoir is understood to be as factual as memory permits.

A memoir describes the events and then shows, either directly or indirectly, why they are significant (using descriptive language). Subjects of a memoir may include events, people, places, success and failures, but memoirs are also focused in time and don't cover a great span of years—that's an autobiography (or biography if written by someone other than the subject).

During your summer reading journey:

- A. Make some critical annotations about the protagonist's identity as it changes in response to difficulties he encounters.**
- B. Note the problems the protagonist is confronted with and, most importantly, how he reacts to or deals with those problems.**
- C. Note any major themes and symbols you find within the text and their overall meaning to the memoir.**

Upon your return to school in August, your teacher will collect your annotations for a grade. For the first few weeks of school, you will be writing an essay based on the above ideas, as well as being quizzed on the text.

Some notes about annotating:

- 1. Annotate without adding significant time to your reading or interfering with your enjoyment of the reading! Good annotation can be achieved quickly with a few extra seconds to underline/highlight and write a brief (1-4 word) notation in the margin about why you underlined/highlighted.**
- 2. Don't summarize the plot (we all read the book so we all know the plot).**