



SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY

Summer Reading Program

During the summer, Saint Thomas Academy students are required to complete assigned reading as part of each English class and most social studies classes. This will take the form of two or three books for each grade.

The English department values summer reading as a way to keep students at least partially focused on reading before they return to us in the fall. In addition, when students have all read the same books before they even set foot in the classroom, we are able to begin the year by practicing discussion, writing, and reasoning techniques that will become foundational principles of the course. Classes on average spend the first 3 weeks of class studying, discussing, and writing about the summer reading.

The Social Studies department believes that summer reading offers students a chance to learn about the “big ideas” in the courses they are about to take. The novels and non-fiction selections are intended to engage students in discussions about exploration, cultural exchange, the relationship between government and citizens, and the human spirit. Students will improve their ability to learn from non-fiction texts using these examples of engaging historical writing.

Summer Reading Selection Process

When selecting summer reading, the English Department considers the following factors and reasons:

- **Academic Value:** Chosen works should reflect enough complexity to hold up to analysis-based discussion and writing.
- **Readability:** As students encounter these texts with minimal guidance, we look for works that are engaging and understandable. Often this means works tend toward the contemporary as works that reflect a more recent world as well and are written in a more contemporary style speak more easily to students’ experience.
- **Diversity:** As much as possible, texts reflect a diversity of voice and experience in order to introduce students to different perspectives.