

# Secondary Novel Review Committee

Welcome!  
The sign in sheet will be coming around shortly.

November 17, 2022  
5:00-7:00 PM

# AGENDA



1. Introductions
2. Review purpose, norms
3. Review of October 6 Minutes
4. Small group presentations and recommendations of books followed by whole group discussion
5. Individual recommendations
6. Round 2 book assignment and small group meeting

# Introductions:



**Profession: Dentist**

**What would be the  
worst thing a person  
in this profession  
would say?**

# Purpose

- a) To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and Arizona Standards, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and maturity levels of the students.
- b) To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge and literary appreciation.
- c) To provide materials so that young people may have an opportunity to practice critical analysis and make informed judgments in their daily lives.
- d) To assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the school community.

\*(adapted from American Library Association)

# Norms



*What is needed to be successful as a committee?*

- Be genuine with each other about ideas, challenges, and feelings
- Listen to understand
- Practice being open minded
- Be mindful of how often and how long you speak in consideration of hearing all feedback
- Ask questions for clarification
- Support the group's recommendation after consensus is reached

# Responsibilities and Expectations

## Upcoming Meetings and Due dates

### Small group meeting:

Book #1 discussion: Week of September 26

Book #2 discussion: Week of November 7

★ Book #3 discussion: Week of December 12

Book #4 discussion: Week of February 6

Book #5 discussion: Week of March 6

Book #6 discussion: Week of April 17

### Whole group meeting:

Meeting #1: August 25

Book #1 discussion: October 6

★ Book #2 discussion: November 17

Book #3 discussion: January 5

Book #4 discussion: February 16

Book #5 discussion: March 23

Book #6 discussion: April 27

### Completion of rubric:

Book #1: September 26

Book #2: November 7

★ Book #3 December 12

Book #4: February 6

Book #5: March 6

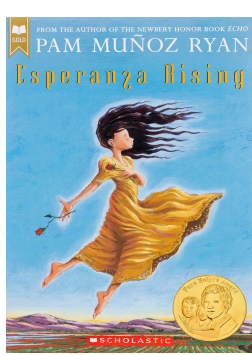
Book #6: April 17

## October 6th Minutes

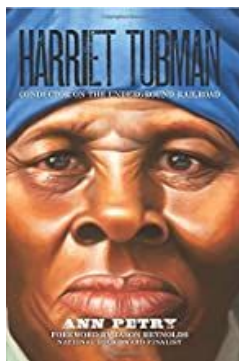
1. Should the results of the recommendations for novels be included in the minutes or as a separate document?
2. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie: Perspective of Sheila Cepress, Native American Ed. Program Coordinator:

The language was uncomfortable for her as she read the novel. However, the situation the protagonist is in, is realistic for a young Native American.

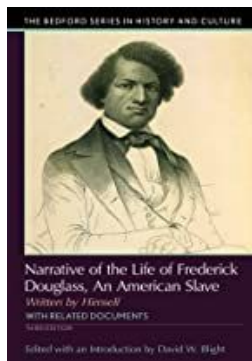
# Small Group Novels



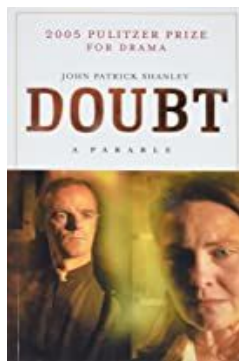
Grade 6:  
*Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan



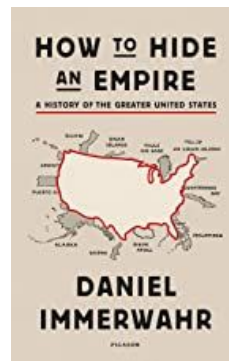
Grade 7: *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* by Ann Petry



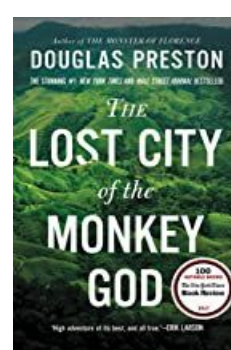
Grade 8:  
*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass



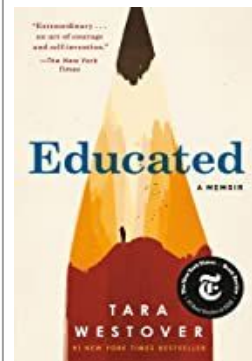
Grade 11:  
*Doubt: A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley



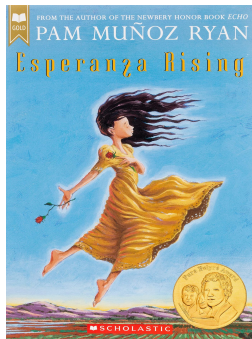
AP US History -  
Grade 11: *How to Hide an Empire* by Daniel Immerwahr



AP Language & Composition:  
*The Lost City of the Monkey God* by Douglas Preston



AP Language & Composition:  
*Educated* by Tara Westover



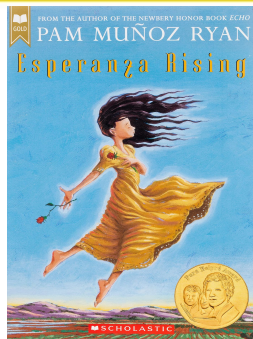
Grade 6:

## ***Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 6 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 6 is "True to Yourself," and the Essential Question for this unit is: "Which qualities of character matter most?"

## Summary

Esperanza is a young girl who lives in Mexico during the 1920s. She thought she'd always be wealthy and live with her family on their ranch in Mexico. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California during the Great Depression, and to settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard labor, financial struggles, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When their new life is threatened, Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances – Mama's life, and her own, depend on it.



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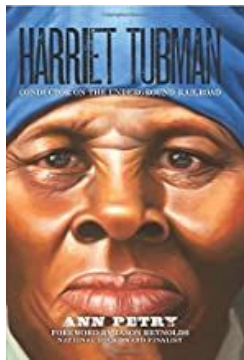
### **Positives**

- Explores a part of history that isn't usually studied or discussed.
- Tenacity, high ethics, patience, perseverance, value of sacrifice, and family are words and themes shown through the book and main character's actions.
- Protagonist's perspective of life makes positive changes through her life experiences.
- Esperanza means "hope".
- Enlightening "Afterwards" with author's biography.

### **Concerns**

- Low lexile level - 750L - for 6th grade (recommended 6th grade Lexile is 925L-1070L).
- The book is a 5th grade Units of Study approved novel.

**Recommendation:** The group highly recommends this text.



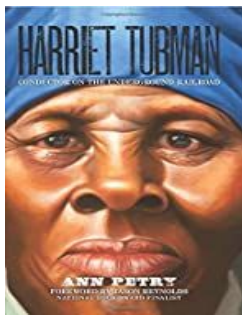
## Grade 7:

### ***Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* by Ann Petry**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 3 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 3 is "Chasing the Impossible," and the Essential Question for this unit is: "What makes a dream worth pursuing?"

## Summary

*Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* is a 1955 biography by American author Ann Petry. This book takes the reader on a journey through Harriet Tubman's life, from her birth to enslaved parents on a Maryland plantation to her death as a free woman in New York in 1913. Tubman is a well-known figure in American history and is best known for her heroic actions as a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad. After escaping from slavery, she helped over 300 Black Americans flee southern plantations by guiding them through the Underground Railroad network. Petry's book remains a valuable resource about Tubman's life and the experiences of enslaved Black Americans in the 19th century. *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* received the ALA Notable Book Award from the American Library Association and was named Outstanding Book by the New York Times.



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#### **Positives**

- Easy, enjoyable read
- End of chapter tidbits (what else was going on in the nation) were interesting and gave context
- Comprehensive study of her life and the topic of the Underground Railroad
- Showed strong will, determination, grit, followed dreams/faith
- Answers essential question
- Shows good and evil of mankind - balance of perspectives explored in novel

#### **Concerns**

- Author does not cite sources if considered nonfiction
- Fictionalized dialogue
- Does not fit well into the writing prompt created by StudySync

**Recommendation: Yes**

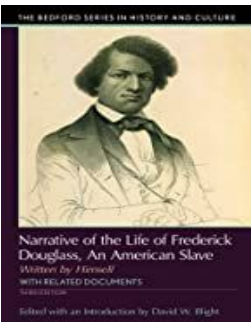
## Grade 8:

### ***Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglass***

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 3 of the StudySync ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 3 is "No Risk, No Reward," and the Essential Question for this unit is: "Why do we take chances?"

## Summary

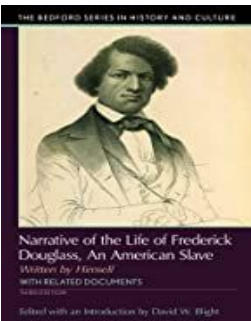
Published in 1845, this is a memoir and treatise on abolition written by the famous author and former slave Frederick Douglass. It is generally considered to be the most famous of a number of abolition narratives written by former slaves in the same era. The narrative describes the events in Douglass's life over 11 chapters, as a slave and his ambition to become a free man. It contains two introductions by well-known white abolitionists: a preface by William Lloyd Garrison, and a letter by Wendell Phillips, both arguing for the veracity of the account and the literacy of its author.



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#### **Positives**

- Good first-hand account
- Explains his thought process for seeking freedom
- Interesting misconceptions - northerners were NOT living in poverty
- Overcoming obstacles
- Not too terribly graphic even in describing whippings

#### **Concerns**

- Gruesome nature of how slave owners treated their slaves
  - \*lack of proper clothing
  - \*insufficient food

**Recommendation:** We recommend this novel.

**Grade 11:*****Doubt: A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley**

This novel is recommended for use in Unit 5 of the myPerspectives ELA curriculum. The theme of Unit 5 is "Facing Our Fears" and the Essential Question for this unit is: "How do we respond when challenged by fear?"

## Summary

*Doubt* is set in a Bronx Catholic school in 1964, where a strong-minded woman wrestles with conscience and uncertainty as she is faced with concerns about one of her male colleagues. It opens with a sermon by Father Flynn, a parish priest, addressing the importance of uncertainty. The school's principal, Sister Aloysius, insists upon constant vigilance. Sister Aloysius and Father Flynn are put into direct conflict when she learns from Sister James that the priest met one-to-one with Donald Muller, a student. Aloysius confronts Flynn with her suspicions that sexual misconduct occurred, which he angrily denies any wrongdoing. Flynn eventually transfers to a nearby parochial school, leaving Aloysius to wonder if the doubt is in either herself or the Church. With no proof that Father Flynn is or is not innocent, the audience is left with its own doubt.

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**Positives**

- Principal of the school standing up for what was right despite institutional pressures.
- Well written.
- Introduces a different type of fear (outcast in a social structure, leadership, speaking out)
- Pulitzer prize winner.

**Concerns**

- Would need to provide the explicit content letter.
- Dynamic between boy and priest.
- Parent condones the relationship between the boy and priest.
- Could be a trigger for students.

**Recommendation:** Not recommended

**HOW TO HIDE  
AN EMPIRE**

A HISTORY OF THE GREATER UNITED STATES

**DANIEL  
IMMERWAHR**

PULVER

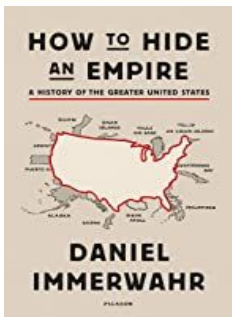
**AP U.S. History - grade 11:*****How to Hide an Empire* by Daniel Immerwahr**

This book would be used as a supplement to the textbook. It would be used as a literacy circle text. Because the book content takes place over the course of more than 100 years, it will allow students to slowly read through the book and connect to a wide range of topics rather than one specific moment in time.

**Summary**

*How to Hide an Empire* is a non-fiction book by Daniel Immerwahr telling the story of the United States as an empire. The book argues that the country's imperial possessions—including the Philippines at one time, Puerto Rico, Guam, and others—have influenced the trajectory of the country's economic and political power in the world. The book is broken into two parts, with the first titled "The Colonial Empire" and the second titled "The Pointillist Empire."

Though the book moves seamlessly between the different locations within the American empire, it follows American history in a roughly chronological fashion. In the introduction to the book, Immerwahr recounts his belief that "the history of the Greater United States" can be told in roughly three acts: (1) westward expansion and the displacement of Native Americans; (2) acquisition of non-contiguous territories, including Alaska, Hawai'i, the Philippines, and so forth; and (3) the country's decision, following the Second World War, to distance itself from empire. The book follows roughly this schema, focusing mostly on the second and third "Acts" described above.



## AP U.S. History - grade 11:

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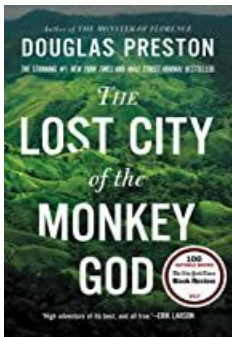
#### Positives

- Used as a yearlong history book
- Can use some of the chapters during the year - don't need to use entire book
- Written well - doesn't read like a textbook
- Extra knowledge - gives edge to AP exam - more material to test
- Hits AP standards
- Different perspective on US History

#### Concerns

- Not as a Lit Study - too much to get through
- Maybe more beneficial in a college class
- In today's world might be controversial

**Recommendation:** Used appropriately would be a good resource.



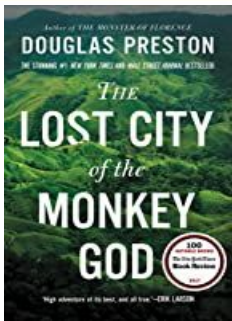
## AP Language & Composition

### ***The Lost City of the Monkey God* by Douglas Preston**

This text will be used in literature circles to allow students to analyze rhetorical strategies that Preston uses to persuade his audience of the importance of such a discovery. This novel will be used to practice rhetorical analysis, synthesis skills, and argumentative writing from the perspective of a unique voice.

## Summary

In 2012, Doug Preston joined a team of scientists on a groundbreaking new quest - to find the Lost City of the Monkey God - a lost city of immense wealth hidden somewhere in the Honduran interior. In an unexplored valley ringed by steep mountains, Preston found an unmistakable image of a sprawling metropolis, tantalizing evidence of not just an undiscovered city but an enigmatic, lost civilization. This is a true, eyewitness account of one of the greatest discoveries of the 21st century combined with a story of curses, technology, culture, and mystery.



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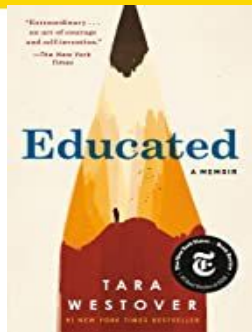
#### Positives

- Discussion of the debate about who has the right to explore “lost lands” - Who tells the story?- Important in the research process
- Use of rhetorical devices to make case
- Interesting topic
- Could spark curiosity about Anthropology/Archaeology

#### Concerns

- Not a concern, but description of erection on a statue would trigger parent permission form under the law
- Not a concern, but mentions drug cartels, violence, and relates a moment of drug use

**Recommendation: The book is recommended for AP Language & Composition only.**

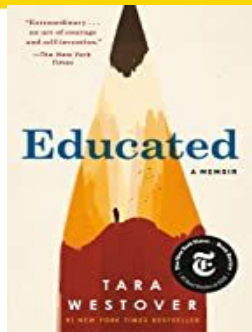


## AP Language & Composition: *Educated* by Tara Westover

This book is a memoir and explores the impact of family on upbringing. It provides the ability to complete practice in each of the three essays for the AP exam: synthesis, rhetorical analysis, and argumentative.

### SUMMARY

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was 17 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.



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### Positives

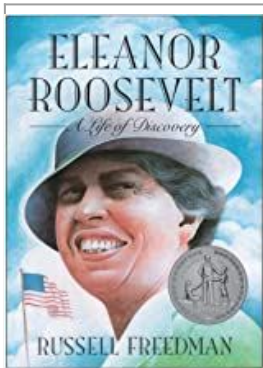
- Unique perspectives
- Demonstrating grit - times when she almost gave up but decided to believe in herself and pursue her education
- Written well, but not so complicated that a reader loses interest
- Tara's eyes were opened to the realization that the Mormon religion is not viewed in the same manner as her father had led her to believe while growing up

### Concerns

- Teachers need to be careful not to stereotype the Mormon religion
- Abusive brother
- Whole chapter where the n-word is used
- Different viewpoints of family
- Mom is selfish
- Killing of the dog

**Recommendation:** We recommend this novel this novel for AP Language & Composition.

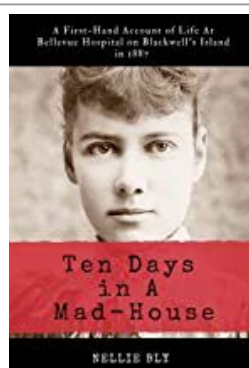
# Small Group Novels



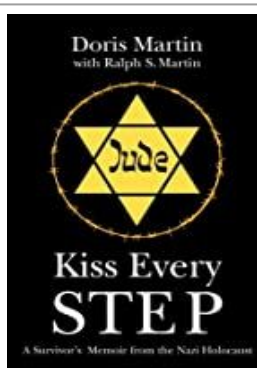
Grade 6:  
*Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery* by Russell Freedman



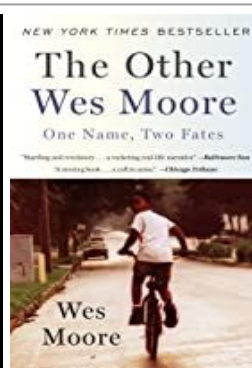
Grade 7: *Barrio Boy* by Ernesto Galarza



Grade 8: *Ten Days in a Mad-House* by Nellie Bly



Grades 10-12  
Holocaust/Genocide Class: *Kiss Every Step* by Doris Martin



AP Language & Composition:  
*The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore



AP Language & Composition/  
Grade 11: *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky



Grades 9-10  
Science: *Double Helix* by Nancy Werlin

*Thank  
you*

Next whole group meeting date:

**January 5, 2023**  
**5pm, MDA**

