

Mater Dei Catholic High School

Grade Level Summer Reading Assignments & Fall Novels

Overview

One of the four Integral Student Outcomes at MDCHS challenges students to become “life-long self-directed learners.” With this goal in mind, students entering grades 9, 10, and 12 will participate in a summer reading assignment prior to the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

Summer is the perfect time to explore new ideas, perspectives, and stories beyond the classroom. This summer, you’ll dive into a thought-provoking book that will challenge your thinking, expand your vocabulary, and keep your critical reading skills sharp. Whether you’re on a road trip, at the beach, or relaxing at home, your summer reading will help you start the next school year with confidence and insight.

Due Date

It is expected that you’ve completed your summer reading assignment **before** the first day of the new school year. Please bring your book and any notes with you, and come in ready to discuss, analyze, and connect the book to real-world themes when we return in the fall!

Please read the WHOLE DOCUMENT to see what novels and plays teachers for each grade have assigned. Scroll to page 4 to learn more!

Incoming Freshman Summer Reading Assignment (Grade 9)

Select at least one book from the list below and read it prior to the first day of school. You may read more than one book from the list, but only one is required.

While reading, select ten quotations that you either connect with on a personal level or allow you to think about your world in a different way. You can highlight these quotations, keep track of them with sticky notes, or write them down in a handwritten document.

In the first weeks of the school year, your freshman English teacher will ask you to write about this book in class. Therefore, you will need to read this book to gain a full understanding of the plot, characters, and important ideas. For this assignment, you will be required to bring your book and ten quotations. This assignment will be worth 25 points in the essay/project category of your first quarter grades.

In class, your teacher will ask you to reflect on ideas similar to the following question: *Choose one character from your summer reading book. What can readers learn from that character's journey and how can you apply it to your own life as you embark on your high school journey?*

Book Options for Incoming Freshmen:

Title	Author
<i>Farewell to Manzanar</i>	Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston
<i>Monster</i>	Walter Dean Myers
<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i>	Mark Haddon
<i>Refugee</i>	Alan Gratz
<i>Between Shades of Gray</i>	Ruta Sepetys
<i>Dry</i>	Neal Shusterman

Incoming Sophomore Summer Reading Assignment (Grade 10)

Select at least one book from the list below and read it prior to the first day of school. You may read more than one book from the list, but only one is required. While you read, annotate your book to track your thinking.

In the first weeks of the school year, your sophomore English teacher will ask you to write about this book in class. Therefore, you will need to read this book to gain a full understanding of the plot, characters, and important ideas. For this assignment, you will be required to bring both your book and annotations on the first day of class. This assignment will be worth 25 points in the essay/project category of your first quarter grades.

For your annotations, you can mark in your book (if it belongs to you), keep track of them with sticky notes, or write them down in a hand-written document. This document may **not** be typed. Use the thematic questions below to guide your annotations while reading.

In class, your teacher will ask you to reflect on one the following questions, all of which are thematic questions from each unit of English 2:

- *What has this work taught you about portrayals of fear?*
- *What have you learned about the nature of being an outsider from this work?*
- *What has this work taught you about power and freedom?*
- *What have you learned about greed and/or materialism from this work?*
- *What have you learned about forgiveness from this work?*
- *What have you learned about seeing and knowing from this work?*

Book Options for Incoming Sophomores

Title	Author
<i>Angela's Ashes</i>	Frank McCourt
<i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>	Rudolfo Anaya
<i>Lord of the Flies</i>	William Golding
<i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i>	Julia Alvarez
<i>The Book Thief</i>	Markus Zusak
<i>I Am Malala</i> (note: please use one of the ISBNs below)	Malala Yousafzai
ISBN-10 0316322423	
ISBN-13 978-0316322423	
<i>Patron Saints of Nothing</i>	Randy Ribay
<i>The Distance Between Us: A Memoir</i> (note: please use one of the ISBNs below):	Reyna Grande
ISBN-10 1451661789	
ISBN-13 978-1451661781	

Incoming Junior Summer Reading Assignment (Grade 11)

Please Note: Social Studies will not require students to read a book over the summer for the 2026-2027 school year.

Incoming Senior Summer Reading Assignment (Grade 12)

Please Note: This assignment is to be completed for your Religious Studies course. Please direct all questions to the Religious Studies Department.

When you return to school for the 2026 Fall semester, you will be enrolled in a Catholic Social Teaching Theology course for seniors. This summer you are required to read *Beautiful Mercy* in preparation for this course. You will be assessed on the content of the book during the first week of school. Expect test questions on the material from each chapter of the book. Be advised; read attentively and carefully and take good notes. This will ensure that you capture the main points of each chapter. The themes and concepts from the book will be applied to the curriculum throughout the semester. *Beautiful Mercy: Experiencing God's Love So We Can Share It with Others* by Pope Francis, Matthew Kelly, Dr. Scott Hahn, et al (ISBN: 978-1-942611-50-9) available through Amazon.

Beautiful Mercy features contributions from more than 24 Catholic authors and is a guide to experiencing God's unconditional love and sharing it with others. It offers practical, short reflections on the 7 Spiritual and 7 Corporal works of mercy. The book inspires readers to bring God's love into daily life through concrete actions. Thank you, and God Bless you as you read!

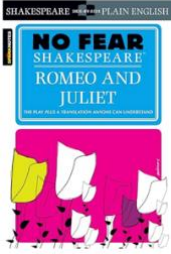
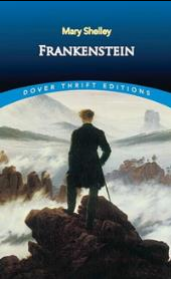
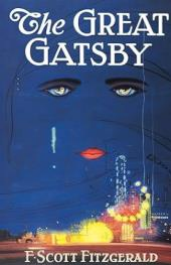
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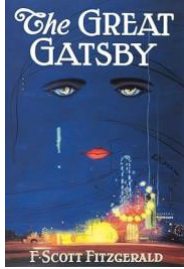
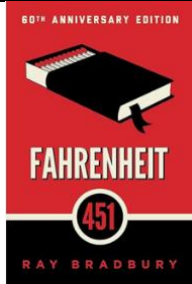
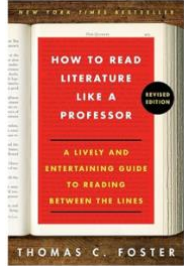
English Course Fall Novels

Overview

Beginning next school year, students will be responsible for purchasing their own copies of the novels assigned in English courses. This shift is designed to enhance the learning experience and promote deeper engagement with literature, as it allows students to annotate major texts freely, keep their books for future reference, and engage more deeply with the texts during assessments. A list of required novels will be provided at the start of each course, along with recommended editions to ensure consistency during class discussions, so please refer to your course syllabus in the fall for this information. The school will continue to provide access to any textbook connected to the course as well as all supplemental texts, including short stories, essays, poems, and other materials used throughout the year.

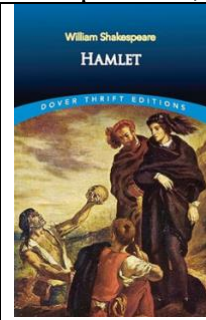
To help get you started, find your English course below to see which novel(s) you'll need to have purchased for the beginning of the fall semester. Please note that you are required to purchase printed copies of these texts!

Course	Text & ISBN	Amazon Link
English 1 English 1 Language Academy English 1 Honors	<i>Romeo & Juliet</i> : No Fear Shakespeare ISBN-13:9781586638450	 Link to text!
English 2 English 2 Language Academy	Please check your syllabus in the fall for more information!	
English 2 Honors	<i>Frankenstein</i> , by Mary Shelley ISBN-13: 978-0486282114	 Link to text!
English 3	Your first novel is choice-based. Please check your syllabus in the fall for more information! <i>The Great Gatsby</i>, by F. Scott Fitzgerald Any edition Suggested Publication: Scribner	

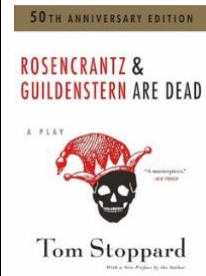
	ISBN-10 : 1982149485 ISBN-13 : 978-1982149482	Link to text!
AP Language & Composition	<i>The Crucible</i>, by Arthur Miller Penguin Classics ASIN : B008EAW5K6 <i>The Great Gatsby</i>, by F. Scott Fitzgerald Any edition Suggested Publication: Scribner ISBN-10 : 1982149485 ISBN-13 : 978-1982149482 Your final text is choice based – see unit in the Spring for titles!	  Link to text! Link to text!
World Fiction	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i>, by Ray Bradbury ISBN-13: 978-1451673319 Please check the course syllabus in the fall for other novels and plays to be purchased!	 Link to text!
English 4	Please check your syllabus in the fall for more information!	
ERWC	Please check your syllabus in the fall for more information!	
AP Literature	<i>How to Read Literature Like a Professor</i> Revised Edition by Thomas C. Foster ISBN-13: 978-0062301673	 Link to text!

Hamlet by William Shakespeare (Dover Thrift Edition)
ISBN-13: 978-0486272788

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead by Tom Stoppard
ISBN-13: 978-0802126214



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