



Dear Seniors,

This summer, your required reading is Barbara Kingsolver's Pulitzer-Prize-winning novel *Demon Copperhead*, a retelling of Charles Dickens's classic coming-of-age novel *David Copperfield* set in contemporary Appalachia. Like Dickens's novel, *Demon Copperhead* has a memorable first-person narrator and tells the story of a resourceful young man navigating a world that has given him little chance of making it out of poverty. Readers follow Demon from the single-wide trailer where he is born through the hardscrabble world he grows up in, as he tries to come to terms with what it means to come from a place and people that feel left behind. Make sure to annotate your book diligently (see details below) and bring it to class during the first week of school.

In addition, you are expected to read one additional novel from the lists below and to do some writing of your own. See details below.

Required: *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver

Choice: Choose one from these 11th/12th Lists:

- *White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- *The Devil's Highway* by Luis Alberto Urrea
- *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie
- *Under a White Sky* by Elizabeth Kolbert
- *Prophet Song* by Paul Lynch
- *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz

And, if you are looking for more, here's another list of suggestions:

- *The Hour of the Star* by Clarice Lispector
- *Every Day Is For the Thief* by Teju Cole
- *A Very Large Expanse of Sea* by Tahereh Mafi
- *Lincoln in the Bardo* by George Saunders
- *The Friend* by Sigrid Nunez
- *Mona in the Promised Land* by Gish Jen
- *Leave the World Behind* by Rumaan Alam
- *A Burning* by Megha Majumdar
- *A Long Petal of the Sea* by Isabel Allende
- *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey

Engagement with the reading through writing:

1. You must bring your **annotated** copy of **both** summer reading texts to class the first week of school. Annotation means making notes in the margin of the book: these can be comments, questions, personal reactions, or even a rough sketch. This is not necessary on every page; generally speaking, we might say 1/3 of the pages should have some form of written engagement.
2. In addition, **write a review** (at least one page double-spaced) of your **choice reading book** (not *Demon Copperhead*). In your review, give your assessment of the book and address at least two of the following elements: characters, plot, setting, dialogue, descriptive writing. For instance, perhaps you found the characters compelling but the plot boring, or vice versa. Perhaps descriptions of the setting were beautiful, but the dialogue felt clunky. Perhaps everything was great. You must compose your review in one Google Doc without using any outside sources: you will be expected to show your work, including annotations that reflect your review. Support your opinions with at least **two quotations** from the book.

Wishing you a healthy and happy summer and looking forward to seeing you in the new school year,

Daniel Bush

English Department Chair