



2026-27 Upper School Required Summer Reading

Summer is a wonderful time to relax and engage with stories you do not have time to read during a busy school year. Reading builds vocabulary, improves memory and teaches good writing. It can also be a lot of fun; books transport you places you may have never been and possibly never will be able to go. While we hope you will be voracious readers this summer, we ask that you read at least two books and be prepared to have something to say and write about them!

English 9

Students entering Grade 9 should read and annotate:

- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

And one book of their choice:

- The book should be one that students have not previously read, fiction or nonfiction.
- The book should be at least 130 pages.

English 10

Students entering Grade 10 should read and annotate:

- *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde (any edition, no ebooks)

And one book of their choice:

- The book should be one that students have not previously read, fiction or nonfiction.
- The book should be at least 130 pages.

English 11

Students entering Grade 11 should read two books they have not previously read, fiction or nonfiction. Follow these guidelines:

- One of the two books can be young-adult fiction.
- Together, the book choices should span at least 250 pages.
- One of the books should be carefully annotated with notes and highlighting; choose the one that best lends itself to literary analysis.

Since students will need to annotate ONE of the two books, we encourage you to purchase hard copies of the summer reading texts. However, if students decide to read the books electronically, please highlight the text (most e-readers and apps allow for this) and take notes on a separate piece of paper.

English 12

Students entering Grade 12 should read two teacher-approved novels they have chosen for the Novel Project.

- **Each book must be a true novel:** fiction (not a memoir or nonfiction), longer than 130 pages and not of the young-adult genre.
- **Annotate both books thoroughly:** you will create a quote outline in the fall, and good annotations will make the process go smoothly.

Summer Reading Tips

1. **Avoid Study Guides:** Do not use online study guides, summaries or analyses. We are interested only in your personal interpretations and thoughts.
2. **Reflect While Reading:** During and after reading, take time to write down questions, comments and reactions in the back of your book or on a separate piece of paper.
3. **Annotate Strategically:** Highlight and annotate as you read. Make note of significant details or passages, and write short responses or questions in the margins. Look for:
 - Anything related to character development (introduction of new characters, descriptions, feelings, conflicts, changes, realizations)
 - Unfamiliar words
 - Questions/confusion
 - Repetition of words, ideas, images
 - First and last lines (with some commentary on their possible significance)
 - Instances of conflict
 - Setting details (weather, season, mood, time period)
 - Symbols, motifs
 - Repeated larger themes

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