

G.W. Hewlett High School

English Department
Summer Reading 2026

For Students Entering Grade 9

9R: For the summer reading assignment, you will be responsible for reading at least one book from the list and complete the accompanying assignment.

9H: Select and read at least one book from the list below and complete the accompanying assignment. In addition, please complete the **Supplemental Summer Assignment for English 9H.**

****Please avoid reading any of these assigned texts in the ninth grade curriculum:** *Animal Farm; Anthem; The Catcher in the Rye; The Cage; Heroes, Gods, and Monsters; Lord of the Flies; Romeo and Juliet; Twelve Angry Men; Acceleration; All My Sons; To Kill a Mockingbird*

Parents, please note: Works of literature may contain mature language or content. However, these works have been recommended based on their literary merit and relevant themes. These selections have been included in summer reading assignments in well-regarded school districts across Long Island. Parents may wish to assist their children in making an appropriate selection. Students may confer with their current teacher in making a selection.

Assignment: *ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS*

As you read your book, take notes based on the prompts below. Be sure that you follow the correct prompts for your type of book (fiction or nonfiction). On the first day of school in September, your teacher will check these notes as a homework assignment. After teacher- directed discussions, there will be an assignment.

Reader Response Prompts for Fiction

1. Give an overall summary of the book: setting, plot, characters, conflicts, etc.
2. Describe and explain why you would/would not like to have lived in the time or place of the story. Cite textual evidence in reasoning.
3. Pick a scene in which you disagreed with how a character handled a situation/person and rewrite it.
4. Who is the narrator? Describe this character/traits. Is this the best person to tell it? Why? Cite textual evidence in reasoning.
5. How do the main character's actions affect other people in the story? Explain one action that affected someone else and elaborate.
6. How does the author provide information or details to make the story seem realistic? Cite evidence from the text.
7. Do you have any unanswered questions about the story? Explain.
8. Copy an interesting/confusing/important/enjoyable passage and explain why you chose it.

Reader Response Prompts for Nonfiction

1. Summarize your book based on the 5W's using textual details: Who? What? When? Where? Why?
 - a. Who is driving the story? Who is it about? Who is affected? Who benefits? Who loses?
 - b. What has happened? What are the consequences?
 - c. When did it happen (time of day, day, month, year)?
 - d. Where is this taking place (building, neighborhood, city, country)?
 - e. Why did this event take place? Why is this important in the big picture? Why should readers care?
2. Copy a short passage (at least 2 paragraphs) that you found to be interesting, startling, or important. Explain what made it interesting for you.
3. Identify & Explain some of the things (a minimum of three) that you have learned from your reading that you are not likely to forget in the near future.
4. Write to inform us about the author. What other articles and/or books has the author written? What surmises can you make about the author based on your reading? What's good/bad about his/her writing? Can he/she be one of your favorite authors, and if so, why/ why not?
5. What ideas might you have for turning this work of nonfiction into a work of fiction? Give a brief summary of what your story might be like. (ie. Will it be set in the past/future? In what location? How can it be dramatized? What can you create /add/ enhance/elaborate on & when? What names or personalities will you change/add?)

Book List on the next page.

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Incoming 9th Grade Book List

Copies of these books are available in the school library; sign one out! OR, sign-in to CLASSLINK and click on Library Resources. In Library Resources, click on Overdrive Sora. Go to the search bar and type in the book. It will come up and all you have to do is click the check-out button. Additional copies will be available at the public library.

FICTION SELECTIONS:

1. *Code Talker: A novel about the Navajo Marines of World War Two* by Joseph Bruchac:

Throughout World War II, in the conflict fought against Japan, Navajo code talkers were a crucial part of the U.S. effort, sending messages back and forth in an unbreakable code that used their native language. They braved some of the heaviest fighting of the war, and with their code, they saved countless American lives. Yet their story remained classified for more than twenty years. But now Joseph Bruchac brings their stories to life for young adults through the riveting fictional tale of Ned Begay, a sixteen-year-old Navajo boy who becomes a code talker.

2. *Look Both Ways* by Jason Reynolds

This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy—Talking about boogers. Stealing pocket change. Skateboarding. Wiping out. Braving up. Executing complicated handshakes. Planning an escape. Making jokes. Lotioning up. Finding comfort. But mostly, too busy walking home. Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

4. *Solo* by Kwame Alexander

Blade never asked for a life of the rich and famous. In fact, he'd give anything not to be the son of Rutherford Morrison, a washed-up rock star and drug addict with delusions of a comeback. Or to no longer be part of a family known most for lost potential, failure, and tragedy. The one true light is his girlfriend, Chapel, but her parents have forbidden their relationship, assuming—like many—that Blade will become just like his father. In reality, the only thing Blade has in common with Rutherford is the music that lives inside them.

4. *Craven Manor* by Darcy Coates

Daniel is desperate for a job. When someone slides a note under his door offering him the groundskeeper's position at an old estate, it seems too good to be true. Alarm bells start ringing when he arrives at Craven Manor. The mansion's front door hangs open, and leaves and cobwebs coat the marble foyer. It's clear no one has lived there in a long time.

5. *The Scythe Book #1* (From The Arc of the Scythe Series) by Neal Schusterman

A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery. Humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now scythes are the only ones who can end life— and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control. Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the “art” of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own.

6. *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo

With a daughter to care for and her abuela to support, high school senior Emoni has to make the tough decisions, and do what must be done. The one place she can let her responsibilities go is in the kitchen, where she adds something magical to everything she cooks, turning her food into straight-up goodness. Still, she knows she doesn't have enough time for her school's new culinary arts class and doesn't have the money for the class's trip to Spain. But anything can happen when Emoni cooks

9. *Sarah's Key* by Tatiana de Rosnay

Paris, July 1942: Sarah, a ten year-old girl, is brutally arrested with her family by the French police in the Vel' d'Hiv' roundup, but not before she locks her younger brother in a cupboard in the family's apartment, thinking that she will be back within a few hours.

Paris, May 2002: On Vel' d'Hiv's 60th anniversary, journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article about this black day in France's past. Through her contemporary investigation, she stumbles onto a trail of long-hidden family secrets that connect her to Sarah.

10. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon

A bestselling modern classic—both poignant and funny—about a boy with autism who sets out to solve the murder of a neighbor's dog and discovers unexpected truths about himself and the world.

11. *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

Told in a series of vignettes – sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous – it is the story of a young Latina girl growing up in Chicago, inventing for herself who and what she will become. Few other books in our time have touched so many readers.

12. *The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier

A surreal portrait of an all-boys prep school and its hierarchy. A new student must submit to the bizarre rituals of his peers and the expectations of the school's administration by selling chocolates.

13. *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse

Out of the Dust tells the story of a girl named Billie Jo, who struggles to help her family survive the dust-bowl years of the Depression. This gripping story, written in sparse first- person, free-verse poems, tells of Billie Jo's stoic courage, as she learns to cope with the loss of her mother and her grieving father's slow deterioration.

NONFICTION SELECTIONS:

1. *The Young Champion's Mind: How to Think, Train, and Thrive Like and Elite Athlete* by Jim Afremow

Sports psychologist Jim Afremow has earned accolades from Olympians to professional athletes for his insightful approach to training the mind, body, and spirit of a competitor. Now this award-winning coach is turning his talents to student athletes in the new young adult edition of his highly praised *The Champion's Mind*. It covers such topics as how to get in a "zone," thrive on a team, and how to progress within a sport.

2. *It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* by Trevor Noah

The host of The Daily Show, Trevor Noah, tells the story of growing up half black, half white in South Africa under and after apartheid in this young readers' adaptation of his bestselling adult memoir *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*. Trevor Noah shares his story of growing up in South Africa, with a black South African mother and a white European father at a time when it was against the law for a mixed-race child like him to exist. But he did exist-and from the beginning, the often misbehaved Trevor used smarts and humor to navigate a harsh life.

3. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine: The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, which are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years.

4. *Falling Through the Earth: A Memoir* by Danielle Trussoni

A daughter's unforgettable memoir of her wild and haunted father, a man whose war never really ended. From her charismatic father, Danielle Trussoni learned how to rock and roll, outrun the police, and never shy away from a fight. Spending hour upon hour trailing him around the bars and honky-tonks of La Crosse, Wisconsin, young Danielle grew up fascinated by stories of her dad's adventures as a tunnel rat in Vietnam, where he'd risked his life crawling head first into narrow passageways to search for American POWs.

5. *A Home on the Field* by Paul Cuadros

A Home on the Field is about faith, loyalty, and trust. It is a parable in the tradition of *Stand and Deliver* and *Hoosiers*—a story of one team and their accidental coach who became certain heroes to the whole community. After an uphill battle, the Jets soccer team at Jordan-Matthews High School was born. Suffering setbacks and heartbreak, the majority Latino team, in only three seasons and against all odds, emerged poised to win the state championship.

6. *Lies My Teacher Told Me* (young reader's version) by James Loewen

Americans have lost touch with their history, and in *Lies My Teacher Told Me* Professor James Loewen shows why. After surveying eighteen leading high school American history texts, he has concluded that not one does a decent job of making history interesting or memorable. Marred by an embarrassing combination of blind patriotism, mindless optimism, sheer misinformation, and outright lies, these books omit almost all the ambiguity, passion, conflict, and drama from our past.

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Supplemental Summer Assignment for English 9H
to be completed **in addition** to the 9th grade assignment attached

Complete the assignment below for “[St. Lucy’s Home for Girls Raised by Wolves](#)” by Karen Russell. **This text is available on the high school site or can be accessed online.**

1. **Annotate** for at least 10 different **literary devices** used to convey meaning. (Examples include: characterization, conflict, imagery, diction (word choice), metaphor, simile, irony, language use, point-of-view, setting, structure, symbolism, theme, tone (connotation), etc.) Briefly identify the device AND what it conveys in the margins as it appears in the text.
2. **On a separate sheet of paper/document**, identify the central idea of the text. A central idea must be a complete sentence. It is usually a warning or a moral to be gained from the text.
3. **On this same separate sheet of paper/document**, support **your** central idea by **quoting at least 2 examples using textual citations**. Then explain how each of the quotations in examples develops the central idea.

***You may print a hard copy of your work with a heading, or you may complete the work on a Google doc or Kami doc to be submitted/uploaded to our Schoology classroom on day one.

**The Reader Response prompts on your book of choice
AND this assignment
are due on the first day of class.**