Summer 2026 Reading Assignments

The summer is an ideal time for Blair students to read beyond the required texts of our curriculum. Short stories, novels, plays, poetry, narrative non-fiction, and newer forms of literature, such as the graphic novel, offer the opportunity to follow one's curiosity, strengthen reading and writing skills, develop a greater understanding of the human condition, and, of course, have some fun.

Students should read a minimum of five books over the summer months, including titles of their choosing in addition to those required by their teachers, and depending upon their courses, they may also have associated assignments and/or assessments to complete.

Titles for 2026 summer reading assignments are listed below. New and returning students enrolled in certain language courses for the 2026-2027 academic year must also complete summer work. Details about the summer work for language courses are linked in the list below.

Requirements for Selected Courses (listed by department) for 2025-2026:

English

The English Department expects Blair students to read **at least two books** during the summer.

All students will read the All-School Read, *What Stands In A Storm*, by Kim Cross.

Additionally, students should read the following based upon their English course for the fall

English 1 *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* (Bradley)
English 2 *Sunrise on the Reaping* (Collins)
American Studies and Rhetoric *Into the Wild* (Krakauer)
The Meaning of Life *Oedipus Rex* (Sophocles)

For the following advanced English electives for juniors and seniors, **please wait until August to purchase and read the summer assignment** as enrollments for English courses do change and adjust in July.

ADVSem African American Literature 1 *The Man Who Lived Underground* (Richard Wright)
ADVSem The Human Arena : (Available on August 1st)
ADVSem Memoir: *Brown Girl Dreaming* (Jacqueline Woodson)
ADVSem Postmodernism : *Ficciones (Jorge Luis Borges)*
ADVSem Nuns, Guns and Roses : *A Room of One's Own* (Woolf)
ADVSem The Odyssey: *The Song of Achilles* (Madeline Miller)

ADVSem Philosophy and Literature : *How to Be a Stoic* (*Penguin Great Ideas*) - (Dobbin, Costa et al.)
ADVSem Reel Reading 1: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Tennessee Williams)
ADVSem Science Fiction and Fantasy : Read the wikipedia page "Three Laws of Robotics" in its entirety for discussion on AI to start the year. Found here.
ADVSem Comparative Genre: "A Modest Proposal" (Jonathan Swift). This can be accessed online without needing a particular text. Read for details and prepare to discuss satire upon return in the fall.

All classes will address the summer reading during the first week of school in September; students should expect to write on or make a presentation about their summer reading during that period. **Students must return to campus with a hard copy (not screen-based) of the All School Read and their class-specific summer reading book unless otherwise instructed by the teacher.**

History

Modern European History: Please read the article shared here. The second page has a writing assignment to complete and bring with you for the start of school. All work is due at the first class meeting.

Advanced Survey US History: Read this selection from Charles Mann's *1491*: here. Annotate as you read, write down three to five main ideas from the reading and develop a discussion question to guide our talk about the reading on day one.

Fine Arts

Advanced Survey Art History: *The Story of Art Without Men* by Katy Hessel
Summer assignment: Read the introduction through Part I, Paving the Way (Painting Herself Into the Canon up to page 51).

Advanced Seminar Art Portfolio: Click here for the assignment from Mrs. Sykes, Mrs. Trish, Mr. Trish, Mr. King, and Ms. James

Language

Summer work in language courses differs by grade level and language studied. Please review the below requirements closely and click on the appropriate link.

Spanish 3/3H: Click here for the assignment from Mr. Coronado and Dr. Mundo
Spanish 4 Regular: Click here for the assignment from Dr. Mundo.
Advanced Seminar Spanish-American Film & Culture: Click here for the assignment from Dr. Mundo

Advanced Survey: Spanish Language: Click here for the assignment from Mr. Devaney.
All Chinese students entering level 2 or higher: Click here for the assignment from Mrs. Wang.

Mathematics

ADVSem Precalculus H/Calculus A: Mr. Molteni and Mr. Link will share an assignment with enrolled students to be completed in August in advance of the first day of classes. This will be a study guide assignment which reviews key building block concepts for the fall term.

Advanced Survey Integral Calculus & Sequences and Series: Your teacher will share an assignment with enrolled students to be completed in August in advance of the first day of classes. This will be a study guide assignment which reviews key building block concepts for the fall term.

Advanced Survey Multivariable Calculus: Ms. Chen will share a summer assignment with enrolled students to be completed in August in advance of the first day of classes. This study guide assignment will review key building block concepts required for Multivariable Calculus.

Science

Advanced Survey: Biology: Read this book: Riddled with Life- Marlene Zuk. Answer the following as you read: Assignment- Supplemental questions. Link to buy book on amazon. Link to book to buy on thriftbooks.

Advanced Survey Physics I: Your teacher will share an assignment with enrolled students to be completed in August in advance of the first day of classes. This assignment will cover the math skills for physics, including measurement, vectors, and graphical relationships.