

Philosophy

Summer reading is a **key component** to the educational development of all students. Over the summer, all incoming freshmen and upperclassmen are required to complete one or more books (depending on their scheduled English course for the fall). Please read through this packet carefully.

Requirement/s

All seniors are required to read ONE book from NCAHS Grade 12 Summer Reading List. **Students assigned to English 141 for the fall** are required to read **TWO** books from the 12th grade Summer Reading list. The list of book titles is in this packet.

Assessment

Students will answer an MCAS-type essay prompt in their English classes **on the Friday of the first full week of school**. On the day of the essay assessment, students will be allowed to bring into class a 3 x 5 index card with information pertaining to their summer reading book/s. This information can be used to write the essay in class. A list of MCAS-type assessment prompts can be found on the main Summer Reading page on the Aggie website at the beginning of August.

Extra Credit Activity

In addition, students may choose one assignment from any of the extra credit activities - also listed on the main Summer Reading page - to do for an Extra Credit grade. Only **one** extra credit activity (per summer) is allowed. A student's English teacher will determine when the extra credit will be due for his/her class and how much credit will be awarded. The list of Extra Credit activities are also attached to the end of this packet.

Book Reading Levels

Students should be aware of the reading levels, genre, and subject matter when choosing his/her book/s for his/her independent summer reading. Students may find these books at local libraries, Borders Books, or Barnes and Noble stores.

Note to Parents

Parents are encouraged to review the recommended selections prior to their son-daughter reading their book/s. Some young adult literature often deals with subjects that are controversial and realistic. Any questions concerning the summer reading assignments may be directed to the principal, Mrs. Suzanne Green.

Grade 12 Summer Reading List (p. 1 of 2)

Realistic Fiction

- Cider House Rules, John Irving, more challenging

Dr. Wilber Larch, administrator of a Maine orphanage, and unwanted orphan Homer Wells, struggle through the complexities of life, moral obligation, and life and death decisions in this popular—and sometimes controversial—novel.

- If I Die in a Combat Zone: Box Me Up and Ship Me Home, Tim O'Brien, grade level

Part historical fiction, part memoir, part fiction—this is the author's raw look at the Vietnam experience through the eyes of a foot soldier. This is a graphic and powerful novel examining the confusion, fear, and realism of a difficult war.

- Catalyst, Laurie Halse Anderson, less challenging

Kate Malone is a straight-A science and math geek, distance runner, and minister's daughter who *seems* to have it all together. She has applied to MIT and has her life planned; that is, until a series of events forces her to look more closely at her "perfect" life. Can this type-A senior learn to let go?

- The Great Santini, Pat Conroy, more challenging

A gripping novel--based on Conroy's own youth--about the incredible tension between a hard-core Marine father and his teenage son. Bull Meecham is absolute ruler of his family. Ben, his oldest and a born athlete, never seems able to satisfy him. Ben is forced to stand up and fight back against a man who never gives in—ever.

Historical Fiction

- Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, Dee Brown, grade level

This book tells the story of the Native Americans from their perspective--beginning with the Long Walk of the Navajos in 1860 and ending with the Wounded Knee Sioux massacre thirty years later. This is one harsh look at U.S. history through the Native American eye.

- Snow Falling on Cedars, David Guterson, grade level

Set on a rural island in Puget Sound, the main plot deals with the 1954 trial of a high school classmate accused of murder over a land dispute. However, underneath this is also an historical exploration of the Japanese internment camps of the 1940s and the cultural racism that destroyed so many families.

- The Jungle, Upton Sinclair, more challenging

Set in the slums of 1906, this is a shocking story of a Lithuanian immigrant who seeks the American dream, only to end up in near slave labor at a Chicago meat-packing plant. There he discovers what greed and capitalism are "packaged" to be—you may never eat meat again after reading this one!

Grade 12 Summer Reading List (p. 2 of 2)

Mystery

- Early Autumn, Robert Parker, less challenging

A bitter divorce and custody battle results in the kidnapping of a 15 year old; or so detective Spenser thinks; a real twist of a kidnapping caper set in the Maine woods.

- The Afterlife, Gary Soto, less challenging

Chuy, a 17-year-old, is killed in the first pages only to be given the opportunity to explore his short life and achieve many of the things he didn't when he was alive. Part fantasy, part mystery, this book is an interesting look at "looking back" from the grave.

Science Fiction/Fantasy

- On the Beach, Neville Chute, grade level

What would life be like if you knew that you would die soon due to the result of nuclear fallout? The setting is Australia after a nuclear war and radiation is killing off the planet. The question remains--who will survive and how?

- Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Douglas Adams, grade level

Join Douglas Adam's hapless hero Arthur Dent as he travels the galaxy with his pal Ford Prefect; they find themselves in horrible messes and wreaking hilarious havoc. This is very funny science fiction that is full of satire, wit, and adventure—a cult classic!

- A Wizard of Earthsea, Ursula K. LeGuin, grade level

This is a stunning fantasy that quickly pulls the reader into many imaginary realms. The first in a trilogy, in Earthsea, the protagonist Sparrowhawk experiences a rite of passage, discovers his true name, and battles a monster that may be his own shadow.

Non-fiction

- Go Ask Alice, Anonymous, less challenging

This classic diary-story by an anonymous teen often has a profound impact on readers. Lonely, awkward, and under pressure from her "perfect" parents, the narrator swings between optimism and despair. When she is given a drink spiked with LSD, she spirals out of control into a world of drug abuse.

- Between a Rock and a Hard Place, Aron Ralston, grade level

In a moving account of strength in the face of adversity, Ralston presents the full story of the 2003 event that became worldwide news: his self-amputation of his right arm after a horrible accident on a routine hike in the Utah Canyons.

- Silent Spring, Rachel Carson, more challenging

This book, released in 1962, touched off the environmental awareness movement. Carson focuses on poisons from insecticides and weed killers that were used in agriculture, exposing humans to deadly chemicals. A classic read for budding environmentalists, or anyone interested in saving the planet.

NCAHS SUMMER READING EXTRA CREDIT

A list of 12 possible extra credit activities is provided here for students. Extra credit will be due on or around the time of the Summer Reading Assessment Essay. Only **one** extra credit project is allowed per student per summer. ***The amount of extra credit awarded and due date will be determined by the student's English teacher during the first week of school.***

1. Write a letter to the author expressing your opinion of the book. Include references to specific characters, events, and ideas (300 word minimum).
2. Draw a picture of the most important moment in the book. Include a well-developed paragraph explaining why it is such a vital scene (drawing quality factors into the grade).
3. Write a poem about one of the book's themes. Explain the theme and how it is reflected in the poem (poem must be at least 14 lines in length).
4. Predict what you think would happen if there were a sequel to the book (300 word minimum).
5. Compare a character or situation in the book to someone you know or something you have experienced (300 word minimum).
6. Write an interview with one of the characters that reveals an understanding of the character and the book's conflicts or themes (300 word minimum).
7. Compare and contrast your book to another book, movie, or an article of similar subject (300 word minimum).
8. Choose 3 songs that relate to your book. Copy the lyrics and write a fully-developed paragraph explaining how each relates to the book.
9. Write three journal entries as if you are one of the main characters. Demonstrate an understanding of the characters, their conflicts, and the story (300 word minimum).
10. Pretend you are the book's author. Explain which part of the book was easiest to write and which was the most difficult. Demonstrate some knowledge of the author and his/her life or career (300 word minimum).
11. Make the front page of a newspaper in which all the articles, pictures, and advertisements relate to your book, the characters, and its themes.
12. Create a jacket cover for your book. It should include attractive artwork, a reflection of the book's subject, and a summary of the book (quality of artwork will be factored into the grade).