

Junior and Senior Summer Reading Assignment 2021-2022

Parents:

Research has firmly established the correlation between time spent reading and reading achievement. Furthermore, the effects of reading extend into quality of life: high levels of leisure reading and reading proficiency are associated with greater academic, financial, professional, and civic benefits (National Endowment for the Arts, 2007). The Notre Dame Academy English department is committed to encouraging our students to become lifelong readers. As such, we have opened up our summer reading assignment to encourage autonomy and student choice in the reading process. The primary objective of this assignment is to allow students to choose and read books that interest them. With the volume of books available, we will not know the details of every book students might select. In the spirit of the Sisters of Notre Dame, who encourage transformation through education, it is important to know that we will not place a tight filter on selections. What we want is to nurture each student's willingness to read – for pleasure, for knowledge, for understanding – so that they choose to read beyond assigned reading, beyond what is compulsory for class. We encourage parents to be involved in this selection process as they see fit. Consider looking over your daughter's selection to ensure that you feel the content of the novel is appropriate for your child. If you have objections, have your student choose another book from the list. As Katherine Patterson notes, "it is not enough to simply teach children to read; we have to give them something worth reading. Something that will stretch their imaginations—something that will help them make sense of their own lives and encourage them to reach out toward people whose lives are quite different from their own."

-NDA English Department

Students:

Your assignment is to select ONE book from the list beginning on page 5 based on your grade level for the 2021-22 school year. You should choose any text that interests you and that you have not previously read, and then share your book selection and the information on the previous page with your parents. You must purchase a clean copy of your chosen book (there should be no writing in the book when you buy it). The specific assignment is explained on page 3 of this document. The grading rubric is on page 4.

-NDA English Department

2021-2022 Summer Reading Annotation Guide

Annotating your Selected Book

Begin by selecting a book from your grade level reading list. For this assignment your book will need to be a physical copy (no ebooks) and should have no writing in it. Put your name and grade level inside the book with a sharpie.

Your summer assignment is to read and carefully annotate your book. Your book should be read and your annotations completed by the first day back to school. Please bring the book with you on that day!

WHAT ARE ANNOTATIONS?

Think of annotation as a way to read closely and actively interact with the book you are reading. Instead of simply reading and turning the page, think about what you read and then share those thoughts on the pages of the book! Highlighted passages that have no notes to explain why they are highlighted are not considered annotation.

You DO NOT need to annotate on every page. Your annotations should be spread out throughout the book and should show a thoughtful and engaged reading of the text.

Aim for approximately 25-30 quality annotations per 100 pages.

SO WHAT DO I LOOK FOR AS I ANNOTATE?

IN GENERAL consider annotating for things like

- Brief summaries of what is happening (plot) in the text. *It's especially helpful to paraphrase difficult passages!*
- Questions about what you don't understand.
- Emotional reactions you may have to what you read!
- Connections you see to other parts of the book.
- Connections you see to real life, especially to your own life experience.
- Connections to other works of literature, to movies, to songs, to current events...
- Passages that describe or reveal the book's characters.
- Literary techniques you recognize (like symbolism, types of conflict, irony, etc)
- Historical context or traditions/social customs that are used in the book.

IN SPECIFIC you should focus on the following based on your grade level:

Incoming Seniors: Historical/cultural connection and Tone

Incoming Juniors: Historical/cultural connection and point of view

Name:

Class:

Date:

Annotation Rubric

A

- Text is marked throughout - approximately 25-30 annotations per 100 pages.
- Words and phrases are marked and commentary/notations appear in the margins that indicate a response to the words/phrases marked
- Marginalia (comments in the margin) reflect applications of literary terms, questioning, summarizing, analysis.
- Annotations demonstrate a high level of analysis and interpretation – thinking beyond the surface level of the text and insight beyond classroom terminology. Thoughtful connections made to other texts, or other events throughout the novel with in-depth analysis.
- Marginalia is relevant to your grade level focus

B

- Text is marked throughout but with less than 25-30 annotations per 100 pages
- Commentary/notations in margins appear less frequently or don't respond directly to the passage annotated.
- Marginalia may be primarily summary or paraphrase with some attempt at analysis.
- Annotations demonstrate analysis and interpretation – thinking beyond the surface level of the text. Thoughtful connections made to other texts or events.
- Marginalia is mostly relevant to your grade level focus

C

- Text is not consistently marked throughout
- Some random passages appear to be marked; passages selected often have no real significance
- Little/no marginalia or marginalia that is characterized by plot level questions or simplistic summary
- Annotations demonstrate some analysis and interpretation – thinking somewhat beyond the surface level of the text. Attempts at making connections.
- Marginalia is somewhat relevant to your grade level focus

D

- Text is only partially annotated
- Annotations are highlights only. Marginalia is minimal or non-existent
- Random passages appear to be marked; passages selected have no real significance
- Marginalia is not relevant to your grade level focus.

F

- Annotated text not submitted or annotations are plagiarized or student submits a text they have read previously for school or summer reading

Junior/Senior Book List (summaries from goodreads.com and amazon.com)

The Complete Persepolis #1-4 by Marjane Satrapi

Persepolis is the story of Satrapi's unforgettable childhood and coming of age within a large and loving family in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution; of the contradictions between private life and public life in a country plagued by political upheaval; of her high school years in Vienna facing the trials of adolescence far from her family; of her homecoming--both sweet and terrible; and, finally, of her self-imposed exile from her beloved homeland. It is the chronicle of a girlhood and adolescence at once outrageous and familiar, a young life entwined with the history of her country yet filled with the universal trials and joys of growing up.

The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted. In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor—engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel. In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.

Ready Player One by Ernest Cline

In the year 2044, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines, puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them. But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win—and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi

Ghana, eighteenth century: two half sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery.

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer

Nine-year-old Oskar Schell is an inventor, amateur entomologist, Francophile, letter writer, pacifist, natural historian, percussionist, romantic, Great Explorer, jeweller, detective, vegan, and collector of butterflies. When his father is killed in the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Centre, Oskar sets out to solve the mystery of a key he discovers in his father's closet. It is a search which leads him into the lives of strangers, through the five boroughs of New York, into history, to the bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima, and on an inward journey which brings him ever closer to some kind of peace.

The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood

Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. She must lie on her back once a month and pray that the Commander makes her pregnant, because in an age of declining births, Offred and the other Handmaids are valued only if their ovaries are viable. Offred can remember the years before, when she lived and made love with her husband, Luke; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all of that is gone now . . .

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates by Wes Moore

Two kids with the same name lived in the same decaying city. One went on to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated combat veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader. The other is serving a life sentence in prison. Here is the story of two boys and the journey of a generation.

In December 2000, the Baltimore Sun ran a small piece about Wes Moore, a local student who had just received a Rhodes Scholarship. The same paper also ran a series of articles about four young men who had allegedly killed a police officer in a spectacularly botched armed robbery. The police were still hunting for two of the suspects who had gone on the lam, a pair of brothers. One was named Wes Moore.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey

Tyrannical Nurse Ratched rules her ward in an Oregon State mental hospital with a strict and unbending routine, unopposed by her patients, who remain cowed by mind-numbing medication and the threat of electric shock therapy. But her regime is disrupted by the arrival of McMurphy – the swaggering, fun-loving trickster with a devilish grin who resolves to oppose her rules on behalf of his fellow inmates. His struggle is seen through the eyes of Chief Bromden, a seemingly mute half-Indian patient who understands McMurphy's heroic attempt to do battle with the powers that keep them imprisoned. Ken Kesey's extraordinary first novel is an exuberant, ribald and devastatingly honest portrayal of the boundaries between sanity and madness.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

The son of a zookeeper, Pi Patel has an encyclopedic knowledge of animal behavior and a fervent love of stories. When Pi is sixteen, his family emigrates from India to North America aboard a Japanese cargo ship, along with their zoo animals bound for new homes. The ship sinks. Pi finds himself alone in a lifeboat, his only companions a hyena, an orangutan, a wounded zebra, and Richard Parker, a 450-pound Bengal tiger. Soon the tiger has dispatched all but Pi, whose fear, knowledge, and cunning allow him to coexist with Richard Parker for 227 days while lost at sea. When they finally reach the coast of Mexico, Richard Parker flees to the jungle, never to be seen again. The Japanese authorities who interrogate Pi refuse to believe his story and press him to tell them "the truth." After hours of coercion, Pi tells a second story, a story much less fantastical, much more conventional--but is it more true?

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues. As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. At the center of his study are the amoral young killers Perry Smith and Dick Hickcock, who, vividly drawn by Capote, are shown to be reprehensible yet entirely and frighteningly human. *In Cold Blood* is a seminal work of modern prose, a remarkable synthesis of journalistic skill and powerfully evocative narrative.

[*The Trouble With Goats and Sheep* by Joanna Cannon](#)

England, 1976. Mrs. Creasy is missing and the Avenue is alive with whispers. The neighbors blame her sudden disappearance on the heat wave, but ten-year-olds Grace and Tilly aren't convinced. As the summer shimmers endlessly on, the girls decide to take matters into their own hands. Inspired by the local vicar, they go looking for God—they believe that if they find Him they might also find Mrs. Creasy and bring her home. Spunky, spirited Grace and quiet, thoughtful Tilly go door to door in search of clues. The cul-de-sac starts to give up its secrets, and the amateur detectives uncover much more than ever imagined. As they try to make sense of what they've seen and heard, a complicated history of deception begins to emerge. Everyone on the Avenue has something to hide, a reason for not fitting in. In the suffocating heat of the summer, the ability to guard these differences becomes impossible. Along with the parched lawns and the melting pavement, the lives of all the neighbors begin to unravel. What the girls don't realize is that the lies told to conceal what happened one fateful day about a decade ago are the same ones Mrs. Creasy was beginning to peel back just before she disappeared.

[*Becoming* by Michelle Obama](#)

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America—the first African American to serve in that role—she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, dramatically changing the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, and standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments. Along the way, she showed us a few dance moves, crushed Carpool Karaoke, and raised two down-to-earth daughters under an unforgiving media glare. In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it—in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same.

[*The Last Queen: Elizabeth II's Seventy Year Battle to Save the House of Windsor* by Clive Irving](#)

A timely and revelatory new biography of Queen Elizabeth (and her family) exploring how the Windsors have evolved and thrived, as the modern world has changed around them. Clive Irving's stunning new narrative biography *The Last Queen* probes the question of the British monarchy's longevity. In 2021, the Queen Elizabeth II finally appears to be at ease in the modern world, helped by the new generation of Windsors. But through Irving's unique insight there emerges a more fragile institution, whose extraordinarily dutiful matriarch has managed to persevere with dignity, yet in doing so made a Faustian pact with the media. *The Last Queen* is not a conventional biography—and the book is therefore not limited by the traditions of that genre. Instead, it follows Elizabeth and her family's struggle to survive in the face of unprecedented changes in our attitudes towards the royal family, with the critical eye of an investigative reporter who is present and involved on a highly personal level.

[*Middlemarch* by George Eliot](#)

Taking place in the years leading up to the First Reform Bill of 1832, *Middlemarch* explores nearly every subject of concern to modern life: art, religion, science, politics, self, society, human relationships. Among her characters are some of the most remarkable portraits in English literature: Dorothea Brooke, the heroine, idealistic but naive; Rosamond Vincy, beautiful and egoistic; Edward Casaubon, the dry-as-dust scholar; Tertius Lydgate, the brilliant but morally-flawed physician; the passionate artist Will Ladislaw; and Fred Vincy and Mary Garth, childhood sweethearts whose charming courtship is one of the many humorous elements in the novel's rich comic vein.