

Summer Reading: 2019-2020

ENGLISH 12 CP

Students enrolled in English 12 CP **MUST** read two works from the titles listed below. Students are encouraged to select one work of fiction and also a work of nonfiction, but this is not required.

A writing assessment will be given to students in first semester classes on one novel by the end of September 2019. Other assessment(s) will be given by mid-October 2019 and will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher. These assessments could be in the form of a review, literary analysis, discussion, project, or objective test.

For students in 2nd semester classes, a similar assessment schedule will be announced at that time. Since you will not be tested until January or February of the 2019-20 school year, you might want to wait until the holiday break to read the literature you wish to use for testing.

FICTION

(New) *The Art of Racing in the Rain* – Garth Stein -- A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty, and hope--a captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life . . . as only a dog could tell it. *The Art of Racing in The Rain* has everything: love, tragedy, redemption, danger, and--most especially--the canine narrator Enzo. This old soul of a dog has much to teach us about being human. You will love this book.

As I Lay Dying – William Faulkner – Faulkner's harrowing account of the Bundren family's odyssey across the Mississippi countryside to bury Addie, their wife and mother. Told in turns by each of the family members - including Addie herself - the novel ranges in mood from dark comedy to the deepest pathos

The Bell Jar – Sylvia Plath -- Sylvia Plath's shocking, realistic, and intensely emotional novel about a woman falling into the grip of insanity. Esther Greenwood is brilliant, beautiful, enormously talented, and successful, but slowly going under—maybe for the last time. Plath draws the reader into Esther's breakdown with such intensity that her insanity becomes palpably real, even rational—as accessible an experience as going to the movies. A deep penetration into the darkest and most harrowing corners of the human psyche, *The Bell Jar* is an extraordinary accomplishment and a haunting American classic.

Death of a Salesman – Arthur Miller -- In the person of Willy Loman, the aging, failing salesman who makes his living riding on a smile and a shoeshine, Arthur Miller redefined the tragic hero as a man whose dreams are at once insupportably vast and dangerously insubstantial. He has given us a figure whose name has become a symbol for a kind of majestic grandiosity—and a play that compresses epic extremes of humor and anguish, promise and loss, between the four walls of an American living room.

A Farewell to Arms – Ernest Hemingway – the unforgettable story of an American ambulance driver on the Italian front and his passion for a beautiful English nurse. Hemingway's frank portrayal of the love

between Lieutenant Henry and Catherine Barkley, caught in the inexorable sweep of war, glows with an intensity unrivaled in modern literature, while his description of the German attack on Caporetto—of lines of fired men marching in the rain, hungry, weary, and demoralized—is one of the great moments in literary history. A story of love and pain, of loyalty and desertion, *A Farewell to Arms*, written when Hemingway was thirty years old, develops a new romanticism.

Life of Pi—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. 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?

1984 – George Orwell – Written in 1948, *1984* was Orwell's chilling prophecy about the future. And while 1984 has come and gone, Orwell's narrative is timelier than ever. *1984* presents a startling and haunting vision of the world, so powerful that it is completely convincing from start to finish. No one can deny the power of this novel, its hold on the imaginations of multiple generations of readers, or the resiliency of its warning. It's legacy seems only to grow with the passage of time.

The Secret Life of Bees –Sue Monk Kidd—Set in South Carolina in 1964, *The Secret Life of Bees* tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. A Southern coming-of-age tale.

Siddhartha—Hermann Hesse-- a young man, leaves his family for a contemplative life, then, restless, discards it for one of the flesh. He conceives a son, but bored and sickened by lust and greed, moves on again. Near despair, Siddhartha comes to a river where he hears a unique sound. This sound signals the true beginning of his life -- the beginning of suffering, rejection, peace, and, finally, wisdom. This wonderful book captures the power of Buddha consciousness.

The Stranger—Albert Camus – Camus writes in an American style, terse and detached. Camus believed in "absurd freedom," life has no inner value and is futilely cut short, but it is up to us to determine our life in such uncertainty. If one doesn't interpret life, emotion doesn't exist. But society's values will incriminate you if you don't conform. They make you strange. They take no account of individuality. That is the peril of the main character after a bizarre series of events on a sun drenched beach. The power of Camus is that even though he creates such a bleak, hopeless human situation the characters still go on as best they can, perhaps even attaining happiness. "One must imagine Sisyphus happy," to quote *The Myth of Sisyphus*. That is also the power and beauty of mankind.

A Tale of Two Cities – Charles Dickens -- Against the backdrop of the French Revolution, Dickens unfolds a masterpiece of drama, adventure, and courage featuring Charles Darnay, a man falsely accused of treason. He bears an uncanny resemblance to the dissolute, yet noble Sydney Carton — a coincidence

that saves Darnay from certain doom more than once. Brilliantly plotted, the novel culminates in a daring prison escape in the shadow of the guillotine.

NONFICTION

(New) *Eleven Rings: The Soul of Success* – Phil Jackson -- This is the story of a preacher's kid from North Dakota who grew up to be one of the most innovative leaders of our time. In his quest to reinvent himself, Jackson explored everything from humanistic psychology and Native American philosophy to Zen meditation. In the process, he developed a new approach to leadership based on freedom, authenticity, and selfless teamwork that turned the hypercompetitive world of professional sports on its head. In *Eleven Rings*, Jackson candidly describes how he learned the secrets of mindfulness and team chemistry while playing for the champion New York Knicks in the 1970s; managed Michael Jordan, the greatest player in the world, and got him to embrace selflessness, even if it meant losing a scoring title; forged successful teams out of players of varying abilities by getting them to trust one another and perform in sync; inspired Dennis Rodman and other "uncoachable" personalities to devote themselves to something larger than themselves; and transformed Kobe Bryant from a rebellious teenager into a mature leader of a championship team

The Art of War – Sun Tzu – *The Art of War* is among the greatest classics of military literature ever written. Sun Tzu warfare is as applicable today as when the book was written some 2,500 years ago.... As a reflection of the Chinese mind, this little work is as relevant as any Confucian classic.

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All American Meal -- Eric Schlosser—Schlosser's exposé revealed how the fast food industry has altered the landscape of America, widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and transformed food production throughout the world. The book changed the way millions of people think about what they eat and helped to launch today's food movement.

The Human Condition –Hannah Arendt— In her study of the state of modern humanity, Arendt considers humankind from the perspective of the actions of which it is capable. The problems Arendt identified then—diminishing human agency and political freedom, the paradox that as human powers increase through technological and humanistic inquiry, we are less equipped to control the consequences of our actions—continue to confront us today. A classic in political and social theory, *The Human Condition* is a work that has proved both timeless and perpetually timely.

Outliers: The Story of Success – Malcolm Gladwell -- Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"--the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band.

The Prince –Nicolo Machiavelli – Machiavelli can still engage our attention with remarkable immediacy, and this cannot be explained solely by the appeal of his ironic observations on human behavior. Perhaps the most important thing is the way he can compel us to reflect on our own priorities and the reasoning behind them; it is this intrusion into our own defenses that makes reading him an intriguing experience. As a scientific exponent of the political art, Machiavelli may have had few followers; it is as a provocative rhetorician that he has had his real impact on history

A Room of One's Own -- Virginia Woolf -- While this extended essay in fact employs a fictional narrator and narrative to explore women both as writers of and characters in fiction, the manuscript for the delivery of the series of lectures, titled "Women and Fiction", and hence the essay, are considered non-fiction. The essay is generally seen as a feminist text, and is noted in its argument for both a literal and figural space for women writers within a literary tradition dominated by patriarchy.

Silent Spring – Rachel Carson-- Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was first published in three serialized excerpts in the New Yorker in June of 1962. The book appeared in September of that year and the outcry that followed its publication forced the banning of DDT and spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. Carson's passionate concern for the future of our planet reverberated powerfully throughout the world, and her eloquent book was instrumental in launching the environmental movement. It is without question one of the landmark books of the twentieth century.

Walden* and *Civil Disobedience –Henry David Thoreau – *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau is part personal declaration of independence, social experiment, voyage of spiritual discovery, satire, and manual for self-reliance. First published in 1854, it details Thoreau's experiences over the course of two years, two months, and two days in a cabin he built near Walden Pond, amidst woodland owned by his friend and mentor Ralph Waldo Emerson, near Concord, Massachusetts. *Civil Disobedience* is an essay in which Thoreau argues that individuals should not permit governments to overrule or atrophy their consciences, and that they have a duty to avoid allowing such acquiescence to enable the government to make them the agents of injustice.

Son of the Morning Star: Custer and the Little Bighorn—Evan S. Connell -- Custer's Last Stand is among the most enduring events in American history--more than one hundred years after the fact, books continue to be written and people continue to argue about even the most basic details surrounding the Little Bighorn. Connell makes good use of his meticulous research and novelist's eye for the story and detail to re-create the heroism, foolishness, and savagery of this crucial chapter in the history of the West.

Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith – Jon Krakauer – At the core of Krakauer's book are brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a commandment from God to kill a blameless woman and her baby girl. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this appalling double murder, Krakauer constructs a multi-layered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, polygamy, savage violence, and unyielding faith. Along the way he uncovers a shadowy offshoot of America's fastest growing religion, and raises provocative questions about the nature of religious belief.

The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration—Isabel Wilkerson-- From 1915 to 1970, this exodus of almost six million people changed the face of America. Wilkerson compares this epic migration to the migrations of other peoples in history. She interviewed more than a thousand people, and gained access to new data and official records, to write this definitive and vividly dramatic account of how these American journeys unfolded, altering our cities, our country, and ourselves.

What They Fought For 1861-1865 – James M. McPherson – An analysis of the Civil War, drawing on letters and diaries by more than one thousand soldiers, gives voice to the personal reasons behind the war, offering insight into the ideology that shaped both sides.

A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes – Stephen Hawking--A landmark volume in science writing, Hawking's book explores such profound questions as: How did the universe begin—and what made its start possible? Does time always flow forward? Is the universe unending—or are there boundaries? Are there other dimensions in space? What will happen when it all ends? Told in language we all can understand, *A Brief History of Time* plunges into the exotic realms of black holes and quarks, of antimatter and “arrows of time,” of the big bang and more. With exciting images and profound imagination, Stephen Hawking brings us closer to the ultimate secrets at the very heart of creation.