

Long Branch High School
English Department
Grade 12 Summer Reading List

All students are required to read two books during the summer. In addition to reading, students are responsible for completing a reading response journal as they read throughout the summer. These reading response journals should be written in a notebook and will be collected and graded the first week of school. In September each student will give an oral presentation based on their journal entries and the books they read.

Directions for Reading Response Journals:

You will be required to complete a reading response journal for the summer reading book(s) of your choice. Each entry should have a heading which includes the date, the title of the work under discussion, and the section/page numbers of the work. Topics for responses can center on, but are not limited to:

- What parts of the book did you find interesting or confusing in the reading?
- Explain a character's thoughts or actions at key points in the story.
- Describe any characters you can personally relate to.
- Connect themes or characters to other books or stories you have read.
- Describe any characters you can relate to a real world context.
- Write diary entries from a major character's point of view.
- Discuss any social relevance you discover in the themes or events of the play.
- Respond to key developments of the plot.
- Predict a conflict's resolution.

Your responses should begin to reflect informed opinions about the book(s) being read and should use passages from the text to support your opinions. It will be important to discuss in your responses various literary techniques and elements including, but not limited to, structure, diction, syntax, tone, figurative language, and poetic and rhetorical devices.

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe

Chinua Achebe's first novel portrays the collision of African and European cultures in people's lives. Okonkwo, a great man in Igbo traditional society, cannot adapt to the profound changes brought about by British colonial rule. Yet, as in classic tragedy, Okonkwo's downfall results from his own character as well as from external forces.

Tuesday with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Maybe it was a grandparent, or a teacher, or a colleague. Someone older, patient and wise, who understood you when you were young and searching, helped you see the world as a more profound place, gave you sound advice to help you make your way

through it. For Mitch Albom, that person was Morrie Schwartz, his college professor from nearly twenty years ago.

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

Wuthering Heights, Emily Bronte's only novel, is one of the pinnacles of the 19th Century English literature. It's the story of Heathcliff, an orphan who falls in love with a girl above his class, loses her, and devotes the rest of his life to wreaking revenge on her family.

The Da Vinci Code by Dan Brown

While in Paris on business, Harvard symbolist Robert Langdon receives an urgent late-night phone call; the elderly curator of the Louvre has been murdered inside the museum. Near the body, police have found a baffling cipher. While working to solve the enigmatic riddle, Langdon is stunned to discover it leads to a trail of clues hidden in the works of Da Vinci-clues visible for all to see-yet ingeniously disguised by the painter.

The Stranger by Albert Camus

Through the story of an ordinary man unwittingly drawn into a senseless murder on an Algerian beach, Camus explored what he termed "nakedness of man faced with the absurd".

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad

In Conrad's haunting tale, Marlow a seaman and wanderer, recounts his physical and psychological journey in search of the enigmatic Kurtz. Traveling to the heart of the African continent, he discovers how Kurtz has gained his position of power and influence over the local people. Marlow's struggle to fathom his experience involves him in a radical questioning of not only his own nature and values but of his society.

The Hours by Michael Cunningham

In *The Hours*, Michael Cunningham is widely praised as one of the most gifted writers of his generation, draws inventively on the life and work of Virginia Woolf to tell the story of a group of contemporary characters struggling with the conflicting claims of love and inheritance, hope and despair. The narrative of Woolf's last days before her suicide in World War II counterpoints the fictional stories of Richard, a famous poet whose life has been shadowed by his talented and troubled mother, and his lifelong friend Clarissa, who strives to forge a balanced and rewarding life in spite of the demands of friends, lovers, and family.

Serpent by Clive Cussler

When Kurt Austin, the leader of a courageous National Underwater & Marine Agency exploration team, rescues beautiful marine archaeologist Nina Kirov off the coast of Morocco, he becomes the next target of Texas industrialist Don Halcon. A madman bent on carving a new nation out of the southwester United States and Mexico, Halcon's scheme hinges on Nina's recent discovery involving treasure buried in the battered remains of the sunken Italian luxury liner *Andrea Doria*.

Like Water For Chocolate by Laura Esquivel

Earthy, magical, and utterly charming, this tale of family life in the turn-of-the-century Mexico became a best-selling phenomenon with its winning blend of poignant romance and bittersweet wit.

The Rainmaker by John Grisham

In this courtroom thriller, a young man barely out of law school finds himself taking on one of the most powerful, corrupt, and ruthless companies in America—and exposing a complex, multibillion-dollar insurance scam.

Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson

In 1954 a fisherman from San Piedro Island in Puget Sound is found suspiciously drowned, and a Japanese-American is charged with his murder. The trial is haunted by memories of what happened to the Japanese residents during World War II when the entire community was sent into exile.

For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway

This masterpiece of time and place tells a profound and timeless story of courage and commitment, love and loss, that takes place over a fleeting 72 hours. Drawing on Hemingway's own involvement in the Spanish Civil War, *For Whom Bell Tolls* reflects his passionate feelings about the nature of war and the meaning of loyalty.

Siddhartha by Herman Hesse

Siddhartha is a powerful book. It is focused on one individual's spiritual journey through life. It is a book about illumination of self-discovery, learning the lessons and meaning of life through our individual experiences. It is a journey that teaches us the importance of finding, as contrary to simply seeking.

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

Brave New World is a novel in which capitalist civilization has been reconstituted through the most efficient scientific and psychological engineering, where people are genetically designed to be passive, consistently useful to the ruling class.

The Perfect Storm by Sebastian Junger

It was the storm of the century—a tempest created by so rare a combination of factors that meteorologists deemed it “the perfect storm.” *The Perfect Storm* is a real-life thriller, a stark and compelling journey into the dark heart of nature that leaves listeners with a breathless sense of what it feels like to be caught helpless in the grip of a force beyond understanding and control.

The Bean Trees by Barbara Kingslover

Clear-eyed and spirited, Taylor Greer grew up poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when she heads was with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker

Celie is a poor black woman whose letters tell the story of 20 years of her life, beginning at age 14 when she is being abused and raped by her father and attempting to protect her sister from the same fate, and continuing over the course of her marriage to “Mister,” a brutal man who terrorizes her. Celie eventually learns that her abusive husband has been keeping her sister’s letters from her and the rage she feels, combined with an example of love and independence provided by her close friend Shug, pushes her finally toward an awakening of her creative and loving self.

Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf

Heralded as Virginia Woolf’s greatest novel, this is a vivid portrait of a single day in a woman’s life. When we meet her, Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway is preoccupied with the last-minute details of party preparation while in her mind she is something much more than a perfect society hostess. As she readies her house, she is flooded with remembrances of faraway times. And, met with the realities of the present, Clarissa reexamines the choices that brought her there, hesitantly looking ahead to the unfamiliar work of growing old.