

Grade 9 Summer Reading Requirements

The following reading selections present issues and themes that are addressed in the ninth grade curriculum. This list is offered to help prepare you for next year's studies. The faculty and administration believe that it is very important for students to continue reading during the summer months. In September, teachers in Language Arts classes will provide opportunities for students to discuss their summer reading and will use the required material as a springboard to assignments for the course. *To this end, your teachers will test you on your knowledge and understanding of the required reading. It is strongly recommended that you take detailed notes about plot, characters, your questions, and your reactions as you read, and that you review your notes carefully before the first day of class.*

NINTH GRADE REQUIRED READINGS

Students in Language Arts Honors must read TWO books.

1. They must read
 - **Yann Martel *Life of Pi***
A young Indian boy survives on a life raft with a huge Bengal tiger for 227 days. This is an award-winning adventure story/ allegory that provides some thought-provoking twists.
2. In addition, students in the Honors level must read one of the following four books:
 - **Mark Haddon *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***
This insightful (and often humorous) novel focuses on 15-year old, autistic Christopher, who is brilliant at math but terrible at understanding human interaction, as he struggles to solve a series of inter-connected mysteries.
 - **Jane Austin *Emma***
This novel is a comedy of manners from the author best known for *Pride and Prejudice*. Emma Woodhouse is beautiful, clever, and witty, but her meddling ways and often infuriating air of superiority get her into trouble throughout the story.
 - **George Orwell *1984***
This is one of the most influential novels of the 20th century. Published in 1949, it presents an imaginary future where a totalitarian state controls every aspect of life, even people's thoughts.

Honors Required Reading Choices (con't)

- **E. Lockhart *The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks***
This novel explores gender roles and expectations through its story of the title character's sophomore year at her boarding school. Frankie begins the year with a bang by winning a popular senior as her boyfriend, but her restless, sharp, scheming mind pushes her to risk her new popularity by challenging a secret male-only club.

Students in Language Arts College Prep (CP) must read the following book:

- **E. Lockhart *The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks*** (See description in Honors section above)

Students in Career/College Prep (CCP) must read the following book:

- **Jordan Sonnenblick *Notes from the Midnight Driver***
What was he thinking? Alex didn't even have his license, so why did he take his mom's car for a joy ride in the middle of the night? To find out, hop in and take a ride with the "Midnight Driver"...if you dare!

Ninth Grade RECOMMENDED Readings

Reading for pleasure is a habit that has tremendous payoffs. Good readers generally have a better vocabulary, a better knowledge base, and better writing skills than those who rarely read for pleasure. The faculty and administration urge you to make time to find and read books that you enjoy. Here are some **recommended books** to consider for pleasure reading:

- **Sherman Alexie *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian***
Arnold Spirit makes the choice to leave his reservation school and transfer to the upscale public high school 22 miles away. He recounts his struggles with disarming humor, evidenced in his words and supplementary cartoons. Although some sporadic crude humor appears, it is more than counterbalanced by this novel's positive messages.

- **Joyce Carol Oates *Big Mouth and Ugly Girl***
Big Mouth is Matt Donaghy, whose jokes backfire when he is accused of planning to blow up his school. Ugly Girl is Ursula Riggs, athletic and alienated, who is the only student willing to act to clear him.
- **Clive Barker *Abarat***
A fantasy/adventure book set in a strange world of 25 islands, each one full of magical, sometimes menacing, creatures. The vivid illustrations help the reader experience the heroine's odyssey.
- **Sue Monk Kidd *The Secret Life of Bees***
Set in South Carolina in 1964, this novel tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed.
- **Tracy Kidder *Mountains Beyond Mountains***
The true story of a modern hero—Paul Farmer—a Harvard-educated physician who has devoted his life to the causes of public health and social justice.
- **Isabel Allende *Zorro: A Novel***
An intriguing retelling of the Zorro legend, this book is a well-written page turner with vivid characters—a great summer read!
- **Alice Sebold *The Lovely Bones***
Fourteen-year old Susie Salmon narrates this story from heaven, as she relates the events that follow her death and watches over her family and friends as they try to solve her murder.
- **Neil Gaiman *Stardust***
A young man undertakes a remarkable quest into a dark and miraculous world to fetch his love a star that has fallen to Earth.
- **Terence Chang *Sons of Heaven***
Two brothers are caught up in the political tensions and upheaval in China in the time of the Tiananmen Square massacre.
- **Sampson Davis *The Pact***
The true story of three African-American youths who support each other as they overcome the obstacles of poverty and the challenges of college on their way to becoming successful doctors.

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