These summer reading selections represent authors and issues that are addressed in the tenth 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 or January, 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 their course. To this end, your teachers will test you on your knowledge and understanding of the required readings. 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. A caution: viewing available films based on these books should not be considered a replacement for reading the texts.

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**TENTH GRADE REQUIRED READINGS** This year you will explore many views of the American Dream and the American Experience in both fiction and non-fiction. Please be alerted that some of the options below have mature content and we strongly recommend you obtain parental permission regarding your selection.

**CP and Honors Language Arts students must read ONE of the following books:**

- **George Dawson and Richard Glaubman  *Life is So Good***
  George Dawson, a 103-year-old slave’s grandson who learned to read at age 98, reflects on his life and offers valuable lessons in living, and a fresh, firsthand view of America during the 20th century. His story inspires readers with the message that – through it all – has sustained him: “Life is so good. I do believe it’s getting better.”

- **Jeanette Walls  *The Glass Castle: A Memoir***
  In this memoir of her childhood, the author recounts her life with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity present her with major challenges. Despite their father’s struggle with alcoholism and their parents’ persistent homelessness, the Walls children love, protect, and raise each other, in their effort to live prosperous lives.

- **David Sedaris  *Me Talk Pretty Someday***
  This bestselling collection of essays by the American humorist is a “before and after” memoir about the author’s move to Normandy, France, including stories about speech therapy as a child and his hilarious effort to learn French as an adult.

- **Cheryl Strayed  *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail***
  After a series of disappointments and family tragedies, the author sets out on a three-month solo hike of the Pacific Crest Trail. The journey takes her through despair and exhilaration to a renewed sense of self.

- **Michael Finkel  *The Stranger in the Woods: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit***
  In 1986, twenty-year-old Christopher Knight decided to leave modern life and disappeared into the woods of Maine. He would not talk to another person for twenty-six years. Journalist Michael Finkel traces Knight’s methods of survival and the challenges of his return to society in a story that asks readers to reexamine what makes life meaningful.

- **M.K. Asante  *Buck***
  The author, born in Zimbabwe to American parents, grows up in North Philadelphia, where he has to navigate a world of sex, drugs, violence, and a self-destructing family. He seeks out his own education in both the streets and in books, and his study of culture and literature helps him negotiate the dangers of his urban life.

**In addition, Honors Language Arts students must read:**

- **John Steinbeck  *East of Eden***
  Even 100 years ago, people were “California Dreamin’”—viewing the West as the quintessential land of opportunity. Steinbeck shows his readers not only “the dream,” but his take on “the reality” as well. This very readable novel is both a family saga and a modern retelling of the biblical story of Cain and Abel. Through the intertwined fates of two families, the Trasks and the Hamiltons, Steinbeck explores the mystery of identity and the inexplicability of love.
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 read books that you enjoy. For your consideration, here are some recommendations for pleasure reading:

**Sara Gruen  Water for Elephants**
An elderly man recalls memories of his early life, when he was suddenly orphaned and joined a traveling circus. Gruen humanizes the gritty characters of the circus, including an elephant named Rosie, in this romantic coming-of-age novel taking place during The Great Depression.

**Steve Lopez  The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music**
This is a true story of the remarkable bond between a journalist and a homeless, classically trained musician.

**Kuwana Haulsey  Angel of Harlem**
This novel is based on the true story of May Edward Chinn, who became the first female physician of Harlem. Weaving scenes from Civil War battlefields, where May’s father escaped from slavery, to Harlem kitchen tables, where May is sometimes forced to operate on her patients, this story provides a vivid portrait of a woman who changed the face of medicine.

**Mark Salzman  True Notebooks: A Writer’s Year at Juvenile Hall**
The author chronicles his first year teaching at Central Juvenile Hall, a lockup for Los Angeles’s most violent teenage offenders, and examines what his students taught him about life.

**Dan Brown  The Lost Symbol**
A thriller with secrets, ancient rituals, and hidden symbols from the author of The Da Vinci Code.

**Ken Silverstein  The Radioactive Boy Scout: The Frightening True Story of a Whiz Kid and His Homemade Nuclear Reactor**
This is the story of David Hahn, the Michigan teenager who built a nuclear breeder reactor in his backyard in 1994, endangering the residents of his Michigan hometown and raising the ire of the federal government.

**H.G. Bissinger  Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream**
This is a true story of a Texas oil town’s high school football team, and how the Permian Panthers became more than a simple Friday night diversion.

**Maria Semple  Where’d You Go, Bernadette?**
Fifteen-year-old Bee Fox sets out to find her agoraphobic mother after she disappears. This fictional story is part comedy, part tragedy, and part detective novel.

**David Grann  Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI**
After oil was discovered beneath the Osage Nation in Oklahoma, a series of mysterious murders of tribe members led a young J. Edgar Hoover to investigate a chilling conspiracy.

**Alex Haley  The Autobiography of Malcolm X**
This book is the result of a unique collaboration between Malcolm X and Alex Haley, whose own search for his African past, inspired by an encounter with Malcolm X, led him to write the celebrated bestseller Roots. The book has since been adapted into a feature film by Spike Lee.

**Jennifer Finney Boylan  I’m Looking Through You – Growing Up Haunted: A Memoir**
This memoir chronicles the author’s experience growing up in a haunted house on the Main Line in the Philadelphia suburbs, coming to terms with her identity as a transgender person, and making peace in troubling family relationships.

**John Steinbeck  Journal of a Novel: The East of Eden Letters**
If you have wondered what the dedication in East of Eden means or what Steinbeck originally called the book, this is the place to find the answer. This book recounts the frustrations and musings of Steinbeck during the composition of East of Eden.