

10th Grade ELA Summer Assignment

Below you will find the **Summer Reading List** for 10th Grade ELA. Your task over the summer is to read one of the following books (or a novel of similar length) and then write a reader response to it that is at least **300 words long**. In your response, be sure to include a brief summary of the story and its characters as well as what your overall reaction to the book was.

Some questions you might want to consider:

- What was the overall theme or purpose of the story? In other words, **why** did the author write it?
- What parts of the story were most memorable and why?
- Which characters really stood out to you and why?
- Why did/didn't you like the story?
- Why would/wouldn't you recommend this book to other readers?

Please **PROOFREAD** your responses for **spelling and grammar**. Responses will be due on the **first day of class**, but you can email your responses earlier if you like. You can reach me at dmicevic@q2l.org.

Contact me if you have any questions about the assignment.

Have a great summer,
David Micevic

Summer Reading List

Cat's Cradle – Kurt Vonnegut (1963)

Told with deadpan humour & bitter irony, Kurt Vonnegut's cult tale of global destruction preys on our deepest fears of witnessing Armageddon &, worse still, surviving it ...

Dr Felix Hoenikker, one of the founding 'fathers' of the atomic bomb, has left a deadly legacy to the world. For he's the inventor of 'ice-nine', a lethal chemical capable of freezing the entire planet. The search for its whereabouts leads to Hoenikker's three eccentric children, to a crazed dictator in the Caribbean, to madness. Felix Hoenikker's Death Wish comes true when his last, fatal gift to humankind brings about the end, that for all of us, is nigh...

Things Fall Apart – Chinua Achebe (1958)

Things Fall Apart tells two overlapping, intertwining stories, both of which center around Okonkwo, a “strong man” of an Ibo village in Nigeria. The first of these stories traces Okonkwo's fall from grace with the tribal world in which he lives, and in its classical purity of line and economical beauty it provides us with a powerful fable about the immemorial conflict between the individual and society.

The second story, which is as modern as the first is ancient, and which elevates the book to a tragic plane, concerns the clash of cultures and the destruction of Okonkwo's world through the arrival of aggressive, proselytizing European missionaries. These twin dramas are perfectly harmonized, and they are modulated by an awareness capable of encompassing at once the life of nature, human history, and the mysterious compulsions of the soul. Things Fall Apart is the most illuminating and permanent monument we have to the modern African experience as seen from within.

Annihilation – Jeff Vandermeer (2014)

Area X has been cut off from the rest of the world for decades. Nature has reclaimed the last vestiges of human civilization. The first expedition returned with reports of a pristine, Edenic landscape; the second expedition ended in mass suicide, the third in a hail of gunfire as its members turned on one another. The members of the eleventh expedition returned as shadows of their former selves, and within weeks, all had died of cancer. In Annihilation, the first volume of Jeff VanderMeer's Southern Reach Trilogy, we join the twelfth expedition.

The Kite Runner - Khaled Hosseini (2004)

Amir is the son of a wealthy Kabul merchant, a member of the ruling caste of Pashtuns. Hassan, his servant and constant companion, is a Hazara, a despised and impoverished caste. Their uncommon bond is torn by Amir's choice to abandon his friend amidst the increasing ethnic, religious, and political tensions of the dying years of the Afghan monarchy, wrenching them far apart. But so strong is the bond between the two boys that Amir journeys back to a distant world, to try to right past wrongs against the only true friend he ever had.

Tales of the City – Armistead Maupin (1989)

San Francisco, 1976. A naïve young secretary, fresh out of Cleveland, tumbles headlong into a brave new world of laundromat Lotharios, pot-growing landladies, cut throat debutantes, and Jockey Shorts dance contests. The saga that ensues is manic, romantic, tawdry, touching, and outrageous - unmistakably the handiwork of Armistead Maupin.

Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy – Douglas Adams (1979)

Seconds before the Earth is demolished to make way for a galactic freeway, Arthur Dent is plucked off the planet by his friend Ford Prefect, a researcher for the revised edition of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy who, for the last fifteen years, has been posing as an out-of-work actor.

A Wrinkle in Time – Madeleine L'Engle (1963)

Out of this wild night, a strange visitor comes to the Murry house and beckons Meg, her brother Charles Wallace, and their friend Calvin O'Keefe on a most dangerous and extraordinary adventure - one that will threaten their lives and our universe.

Life of Pi - Yann Martel (2001)

Life of Pi is a fantasy adventure novel by Yann Martel published in 2001. The protagonist, Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, a Tamil boy from Pondicherry, explores issues of spirituality and practicality from an early age. He survives 227 days after a shipwreck while stranded on a boat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.

Our Man in Havana – Graham Greene (1959)

First published in 1959, Our Man in Havana is an espionage thriller, a penetrating character study, and a political satire that still resonates today. Conceived as one of Graham Greene's 'entertainments,' it tells of MI6's man in Havana, Wormold, a former vacuum-cleaner salesman turned reluctant secret agent out of economic necessity. To keep his job, he files bogus reports based on Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare and dreams up military installations from vacuum-cleaner designs. Then his stories start coming disturbingly true.

The Haunting of Hill House – Shirley Jackson (1959)

First published in 1959, Shirley Jackson's The Haunting of Hill House has been hailed as a perfect work of unnerving terror. It is the story of four seekers who arrive at a notoriously unfriendly pile called Hill House: Dr. Montague, an occult scholar looking for solid evidence of a "haunting"; Theodora, his lighthearted assistant; Eleanor, a friendless, fragile young woman well acquainted with poltergeists; and Luke, the future heir of Hill House. At first, their stay seems destined to be merely a spooky encounter with inexplicable phenomena. But Hill House is gathering its powers—and soon it will choose one of them to make its own.

Angela's Ashes – Frank McCourt (1996)

"When I look back on my childhood I wonder how I managed to survive at all. It was, of course, a miserable childhood: the happy childhood is hardly worth your while. Worse than the ordinary miserable childhood is the miserable Irish childhood, and worse yet is the miserable Irish Catholic childhood."

So begins the luminous memoir of Frank McCourt, born in Depression-era Brooklyn to recent Irish immigrants and raised in the slums of Limerick, Ireland. Frank's mother, Angela, has no money to feed the children since Frank's father, Malachy, rarely works, and when he does he drinks his wages. Yet Malachy — exasperating, irresponsible, and beguiling — does nurture in Frank an appetite for the one thing he can provide: a story. Frank lives for his father's tales of Cuchulain, who saved Ireland, and of the Angel on the Seventh Step, who brings his mother babies.

Frankenstein – Mary Shelley (1818)

Mary Shelley began writing Frankenstein when she was only eighteen. At once a Gothic thriller, a passionate romance, and a cautionary tale about the dangers of science, Frankenstein tells the story of committed science student Victor Frankenstein. Obsessed with discovering the cause of generation and life and bestowing animation upon lifeless matter, Frankenstein assembles a human being from stolen body parts but; upon bringing it to life, he recoils in horror at the creature's hideousness. Tormented by isolation and loneliness, the once-innocent creature turns to evil and unleashes a campaign of murderous revenge against his creator, Frankenstein.

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay – Michael Chabon (2001)

Joe Kavalier, a young Jewish artist who has also been trained in the art of Houdini-esque escape, has just smuggled himself out of Nazi-invaded Prague and landed in New York City. His Brooklyn cousin Sammy Clay is looking for a partner to create heroes, stories, and art for the latest novelty to hit America - the comic book. Drawing on their own fears and dreams, Kavalier and Clay create the Escapist, the Monitor, and Luna Moth, inspired by the beautiful Rosa Saks, who will become linked by powerful ties to both men. With exhilarating style and grace, Michael Chabon tells an unforgettable story about American romance and possibility.

The Remains of the Day – Kazuo Ishiguro (1988)

In 1956, Stevens, a long-serving butler at Darlington Hall, decides to take a motoring trip through the West Country. The six-day excursion becomes a journey into the past of Stevens and England, a past that takes in fascism, two world wars, and an unrealised love between the butler and his housekeeper. Ishiguro's dazzling novel is a sad and humorous love story, a meditation on the condition of modern man, and an elegy for England at a time of acute change.

Black Boy – Richard Wright (1945)

Black Boy is a classic of American autobiography, a subtly crafted narrative of Richard Wright's journey from innocence to experience in the Jim Crow South. An enduring story of one young man's coming of age during a particular time and place, Black Boy remains a seminal text in our history about what it means to be a man, black, and Southern in America.

The Bluest Eye – Toni Morrison (1970)

The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel, a book heralded for its richness of language and boldness of vision. Set in the author's girlhood hometown of Lorain, Ohio, it tells the story of black, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove. Pecola prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be as

beautiful and beloved as all the blond, blue-eyed children in America. In the autumn of 1941, the year the marigolds in the Breedloves' garden do not bloom. Pecola's life does change- in painful, devastating ways.

What its vivid evocation of the fear and loneliness at the heart of a child's yearning, and the tragedy of its fulfillment. *The Bluest Eye* remains one of Tony Morrisons's most powerful, unforgettable novels- and a significant work of American fiction.

The Road – Cormac McCarthy (2006)

A father and his son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. It is cold enough to crack stones, and when the snow falls it is gray. The sky is dark. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing; just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food—and each other.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time – Mark Haddon (2003)

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow.

Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, for fifteen-year-old Christopher everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning. He lives on patterns, rules, and a diagram kept in his pocket. Then one day, a neighbor's dog, Wellington, is killed and his carefully constructive universe is threatened. Christopher sets out to solve the murder in the style of his favourite (logical) detective, Sherlock Holmes. What follows makes for a novel that is funny, poignant and fascinating in its portrayal of a person whose curse and blessing are a mind that perceives the world entirely literally.

The Fault in Our Stars – John Green (2012)

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.