**2016 Summer Reading**

**English IV AP**

In her book, *Reading for Themselves,* Deborah Appleman writes,

“Connections between our books and our worlds engage us and reassure us of the value of what we have learned, and these connections come only with years of reading. The recognition of cultural importance is crucial. It informs our decisions and it shapes our aspirations, but this kind of literacy does not come with mere exposure and memorization. It comes with deep experience…” (12).

Because we want every student to have these deep experiences with books, each summer the Westlake High School English Department assigns summer reading with the belief that reading good literature provides enjoyment, develops insight into human behavior, promotes language development, fosters good writing, educates the mind and imagination, and allows readers to discover new ideas.

Our department also recognizes the importance of choice in creating these deep experiences. As Mike Anderson writes in his book *Learning to Choose, Choosing to Learn,*

“When students have more choice about their learning, they can find both ways of learning that match their personal needs and engage with work more powerfully, building skills, and work habits that will serve them well as lifelong learners” (3).

As you make your choices about summer reading, use the **specific criteria selected for your grade level and course for the required book**. You will find this criteria on the back of this handout. In addition, please try to read as much as possible and keep track of the things you read in some way. Are you reading blogs, magazines, fictional books, newspapers, poems, non-fiction books, essays, or other? As you read, here are a few ideas to consider.

Over the summer….

1. the funniest thing I read…
2. the most shocking thing I read…
3. the most inspirational thing I read…
4. the most entertaining thing I read…
5. the most challenging thing I read…
6. the most captivating thing I read…
7. the most thought-provoking thing I read…
8. the best page-turner I read…
9. the most romantic/suspenseful/confusing thing I read…
10. the most encouraging/annoying/outrageous thing I read…

And why read? The International Reading (now Literacy) Association pointed out in their 1999 position statement on Adolescent Literacy (and reiterated in the 2012 update of this statement): “Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read can be crucial” (4).

*“I cannot live without books.”* – Thomas Jefferson

**What should you read?**

This year, we’re asking you to read **two short novels**.

The **first** is *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck.

For your **second** book, please choose one title from the list of short novels below.

*Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton

*Chronicles of a Death Foretold* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

*The Stranger* by Albert Camus

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

*Notes from the Underground* by Fyodor Dostoevsky

*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

*A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean

**Why do we have summer reading?**

We want you to choose and enjoy some great literature and make connections to previous selections and experiences. We also want to have a common basis as we begin our study of literature.

**Why are these the books on the list?**

All of the short novel choices are works of literary merit that students have enjoyed reading in the past. The narrative structure and literary techniques employed by the authors are relevant to the analytical skills we are building in a college-level literature course.

**What should you do while you read?**

1. Enjoy your book!
2. Mark interesting or important parts or quotes.
3. Pay attention to diction, imagery, symbolism, figurative language, characterization, and theme. What did you notice about the author’s unique style of writing?

**What should you expect when the school year starts?**

Teachers will use a variety of methods and strategies to explore both books, including small group work, discussions, writing, and individual activities. Please plan to bring both books to class right away.



**Remember to enjoy**

**your summer reading!**

If you have any questions about the summer reading assignment, please contact Valerie Taylor, Instructional Partner for Humanities, at [vtaylor@eanesisd.net](mailto:vtaylor@eanesisd.net).