

# Values Symposium

## Summer Reading Assignment 2020

For questions, contact the CDH English Department Chair, Mr. Steven Tacheny [stacheny@c-dh.org](mailto:stacheny@c-dh.org).

Please read through all 3 pages of this assignment.

### **Reading Choices**

The following is a list of nine books recommended for summer reading from the nine Values teachers. Choose **one** title from the list below to read over summer break. You can read more than one (please do!), but choose one in particular from this list to do the quote assignment, explained below.

1. *Between Shades of Gray*

historical fiction

A novel by Ruta Sepetys written in 2011. It is written at a ninth-tenth grade reading level with 350 pages—a perfect challenge for summer reading for those who enjoy reading and can find inspiration in a WWII novel about the strength of the human spirit and human endurance. The story centers around 15-year-old Lina who, along with her mother and brother, are deported to Siberia during the Holocaust and face relentless and unimaginable challenges. The novel can be downloaded here:

<http://rutasepetys.com/books/between-shades-of-gray/>

2. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

fantasy fiction

by L. Frank Baum, was first published in 1900. This is not a hard read, but it is over 250 pages long. Maybe you have seen the 1939 movie of this fantasy fiction story with Judy Garland and can recall the dazzling storyline of the Kansas farm girl Dorothy Gale on a wild adventure over the rainbow through the world of Oz. However, you've got to read the original to see just how different it is from the movie. Find out what color Dorothy's slippers really were. The book is not difficult to read because, even though the original text has 260 pages, there are many wonderful sketches! The story is fun, and it provides a nice escape for summer daydreams. The book can be read in full here:

[https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Wonderful\\_Wizard\\_of\\_Oz/qbV65PabTEYC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Wonderful_Wizard_of_Oz/qbV65PabTEYC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover)

3. *We Were Liars*

psychological thriller fiction

This book by E. Lockhart is 256 pages, for grades 9 and up. Cadence Sinclair Easton comes from an old-money family, headed by a patriarch who owns a private island off of Cape Cod. Each summer, the extended family gathers at the various houses on the island, and Cadence, her cousins Johnny and Mirren, and friend Gat (the four “liars”), have been inseparable since age eight. During their fifteenth summer however, Cadence suffers a mysterious accident. She spends the next two years—and the course of the book—in a haze of amnesia, debilitating migraines, and painkillers, trying to piece together just what happened. Lockhart writes in a somewhat sparse style filled with metaphor and jumps from past to present and back again—rather fitting for a main character struggling with a sudden and unexplainable life change. The story, while lightly touching on issues of class and race, more fully focuses on dysfunctional family drama, a heart-wrenching romance between Cadence and Gat, and, ultimately, the suspense of what happened during that fateful summer. The ending is a stunner that will haunt readers for a long time to come.

4. *Charlotte's Web*

fiction

This E.B. White's 1952 classic has 192 pages and is at a 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. And though it seems like just a children's book, there is much more to this story. A runt (smallest) pig who is almost euthanized (killed on purpose), is saved both by a girl and then a spider. Set in the United States in the 1950's, this is a story of incredible relationships and views on living a meaningful life. E.B White is a celebrated American essayist and reading this story would open the door to his other works in 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

5. *Touching Spirit Bear*

fiction

This 240-page book by Ben Mikaelson was first published in 2001. It is about a Minneapolis boy named Cole Matthews whose uncontrollable rage and anger land him in trouble with the law after he severely injures a fellow student. Rather than go to prison, Cole elects to be banished to a remote Alaskan island for one year as part of Circle Justice, a Native American tradition that provides healing for criminal behavior. While there, he encounters a mysterious bear who leaves him mauled and alone. As he struggles to survive, he looks back upon his life and the decisions that landed him in his current predicament. He evaluates his anger, his abusive parents, and his helpless victim as he gets to the roots of his violent ways. This book tailors to grades 8 and up. If you would like to pick up a school copy, there are some available in the main office to borrow (come during school office hours.) It is available for less than \$4 in eBook versions and can be found for \$5 or less online and at used book sellers. (FYI - There is a sequel if this one leaves you wanting more).

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Touching\\_Spirit\\_Bear.html?id=KmyagpEHznAC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Touching_Spirit_Bear.html?id=KmyagpEHznAC)

6. *This Tender Land*

fiction

By William Kent Krueger is a 464-page novel published in 2019. Set in 1932 Minnesota—the Lincoln School is a pitiless place where hundreds of Native American children, forcibly separated from their parents, are sent to be educated. It is also home to an orphan named Odie O'Banion, a lively boy whose exploits earn him the superintendent's wrath. Forced to flee, he and his brother Albert, their best friend Mose, and a brokenhearted little girl named Emmy steal away in a canoe, heading for the mighty Mississippi and a place to call their own. Over the course of one unforgettable summer, these four orphans will journey into the unknown and cross paths with others who are adrift, from struggling farmers and traveling faith healers to displaced families and lost souls of all kinds. With the feel of a modern classic, this novel is an enthralling, big-hearted epic that shows how the magnificent American landscape connects us all, haunts our dreams, and makes us whole.

7. *The Outliers*

non-fiction

In Malcolm Gladwell's 336-page non-fiction book, published in 2011, readers are taken on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. Gladwell asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band.

8. *Long Way Down*

fiction

A 2019 novel by Jason Reynolds with 320 pages. This electrifying novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes Will to decide whether or not he's going to murder the guy who killed his brother. Revenge. That's what Will's after, with a gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, the gun that was his brother's gun. He gets on the elevator, seventh floor, stoked. He knows who he's after. And so it goes, the whole long way down, as the elevator stops on each floor, and at each stop someone connected to his brother gets on to give Will a piece to a bigger story than the one he thinks he knows. A story that might never know an END...if Will gets off that elevator. 2019 Told in short, fierce staccato narrative verse, this book is a fast and furious, dazzlingly brilliant look at teenage gun violence, as can only be told by Jason Reynolds.

9. *Ishmael*

philosophical fiction

This 263-page novel by Daniel Quinn was published in 1995. What's most unusual is that this novel scarcely is one: beneath a thin narrative glaze, it's really a series of Socratic dialogues between man and ape, with the ape as Socrates. The nameless male narrator answers a newspaper ad ("teacher seeks pupil...") that takes him to a shabby office occupied by a giant gorilla. The ape begins to talk to him telepathically. Over several days, the ape, Ishmael, as gruff as his Greek model, drags the man into a new understanding of humanity's place in the world. In a nutshell, Ishmael argues humanity has evolved two ways of living: there are the "leavers," or hunter-gatherers, who live in harmony with the rest of life; and there are the "takers" (our civilization), who arose with the agricultural revolution, aim to conquer the rest of life, and are destroying it in the process. This book will get you thinking.

## **Quote Assignment**

1. As you read the book you chose from the list, note and keep track of 5 quotes you like, or that strike you, for whatever reason. Jot down the page numbers where the quotes are found.
2. Type up the 5 quotes, in the sequential order they come in the book. Make sure to cite the page number with each quote. See the example below.
3. After you type up the quote, and triple check it for accuracy, explain in 3-8 sentences why you chose this particular quote. Why is it meaningful for you?
4. Do your best to spread the quotes throughout the book, not just from the first two chapters.

**Example Quote:** use this for formatting.

1. "What he had seen, he knew, might be a reflection, a piece of flat shell accidentally drifted in or a complete illusion. In this Gulf of uncertain light there were more illusions than realities" (Steinbeck 19).

Note the author of the quote is inside the parenthesis along with the page number with no additional punctuation except for the period outside the second parenthesis.

### **Formatting:**

Please type your quotes if you can (handwriting is okay if you don't have access typing). Double space. Use Times New Roman 12-point font and put this at the top left corner of your paper as your heading:

Your Name

Values

September 1, 2020

### **Getting Ready for your First Day of Ninth Grade:**

Review your book so you can talk about it confidently with others in the class. Have your 5-quote assignment ready for turn-in on the first day of school in the fall.