

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Assignment for WRIT English 12

Select one of the following books and read it sometime over summer break.

In addition to reading the book, find FIVE quotes and write/type them out completely, including page numbers. For each quote, write/type two-three sentences about the quote. You may write about the quote's significance, its meaning, what it says about the book as a whole. Also include a brief statement with your overall reaction to the book.

Your quotes and responses will be due on the first day of school.

If you have any questions or you are interested in reading a book not on this list, please feel free to contact Mr. Cusick ([jcusick@c-dh.org](mailto:jcusick@c-dh.org))

Enjoy your summer,

### 12th Grade Nonfiction

***The Pact : Three young men make a promise and fulfill a dream*** Author: Davis, Sampson. Riverhead Books, 2003. 263 pages

Summary: A national bestseller by Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt with Lisa Frazier Page, is the true story of how three young men join forces to beat the odds and become doctors. They grew up on the streets of Newark, facing city life's temptations, pitfalls, even jail. But one day these three young men made a pact. They promised each other they would all become doctors, and stick it out together through the long, difficult journey to attain that dream. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt are not only friends to this day-they are all doctors. This is a story about the power of friendship. Of joining forces and beating the odds. A story about changing your life, and the lives of those you love most-together.

***The Blood of Emmett Till*** by Timothy Tyson. Simon and Schuster, 2017. 304 p. New York Times Bestseller.

Booklist starred review: Although much has been written about the death of Emmett Till in 1955 Mississippi, Tyson offers new perspectives in this searing account, which is especially relevant today. This features an interview with Carolyn Bryant, the white woman at the center of the case, who was interviewed by Tyson. Court transcripts and thorough research help Tyson make a direct link between Till's murder and anger over the Supreme Court's case *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision.

## **12 Grade Fiction**

***Station Eleven*** by Emily St. John Mandel. Vintage, 2015. 352 p. A National Book Award Finalist and PEN/Faulkner Award Finalist.

Amazon review: A flight from Russia lands in middle America, its passengers carrying a virus that explodes “like a neutron bomb over the surface of the earth.” In a blink, the world as we know it collapses. “No more ballgames played under floodlights,” Emily St. John Mandel writes in this smart and sober homage to life’s smaller pleasures, brutally erased by an apocalypse. “No more trains running under the surface of cities ... No more cities ... No more Internet ... No more avatars.” Survivors become scavengers, roaming the ravaged landscape or clustering in pocket settlements, some of them welcoming, some dangerous. What’s touching about the world of *Station Eleven* is its ode to what survived, in particular the music and plays performed for wasteland communities by a roving Shakespeare troupe, the Traveling Symphony, whose members form a wounded family of sorts. The story shifts deftly between the fraught post-apocalyptic world and, twenty years earlier, just before the apocalypse, the death of a famous actor, which has a rippling effect across the decades. It’s heartbreaking to watch the troupe strive for more than mere survival. At once terrible and tender, dark and hopeful, *Station Eleven* is a tragically beautiful novel that both mourns and mocks the things we cherish.

***The Sun is Also a Star*** by Nicola Yoon. Delacourte Press, 2016. 384 p. A National Book Award Finalist, 2017 Michael L. Printz Honor Book, *New York Times* Notable Book.

*School Library Journal* review: It is Natasha's last day in New York City, where she has lived for 10 years. Her family, living as undocumented immigrants in a small Brooklyn apartment, are being deported to Jamaica after her father's arrest for drunk driving. Natasha is scouring the city for a chance to stay in the United States legally. She wants the normal teen existence of her peers. Meanwhile, poetic Daniel is on his way to an interview as part of his application process to Yale. He is under great pressure to get in because his parents (who emigrated from South Korea) are adamant that he become a doctor. Events slowly conspire to bring the two leads together. When Daniel and Natasha finally meet, he falls in love immediately and convinces her to join him for the day. They tell their stories in alternating chapters. Additional voices are integrated into the book as characters interact with them. Both relatable and profound, the bittersweet ending conveys a sense of hopefulness that will resonate with teens.

***Go Tell it on the Mountain*** by James Baldwin. Vintage International, 2013(1953). 272 p

"*Mountain*," Baldwin said, "is the book I had to write if I was ever going to write anything else." *Go Tell It On The Mountain*, first published in 1953, is Baldwin's first major work, a novel that has established itself as an American classic. With lyrical precision, psychological directness, resonating symbolic power, and a rage that is at once unrelenting and compassionate, Baldwin chronicles a fourteen-year-old boy's discovery of the terms of his identity as the stepson of the minister of a storefront Pentecostal church in Harlem one Saturday in March of 1935. Baldwin's rendering of his

protagonist's spiritual, sexual, and moral struggle of self-invention opened new possibilities in the American language and in the way Americans understand themselves.

*All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. Scribner, 2015. 544 p.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, a *New York Times Book Review* Top Ten Book, National Book Award finalist, more than two and a half years on the *New York Times* bestseller list.

Starred review from Booklist: A novel to live in, learn from, and feel bereft over when the last page is turned, Doerr's magnificently drawn story seems at once spacious and tightly composed. It rests, historically, during the occupation of France during WWII, but brief chapters told in alternating voices give the overall—and long—narrative a swift movement through time and events. We have two main characters, each one on opposite sides in the conflagration that is destroying Europe. Marie-Louise is a sightless girl who lived with her father in Paris before the occupation; he was a master locksmith for the Museum of Natural History. When German forces necessitate abandonment of the city, Marie-Louise's father, taking with him the museum's greatest treasure, removes himself and his daughter and eventually arrives at his uncle's house in the coastal city of Saint-Malo. Young German soldier Werner is sent to Saint-Malo to track Resistance activity there, and eventually, and inevitably, Marie-Louise's and Werner's paths cross. It is through their individual and intertwined tales that Doerr masterfully and knowledgeably re-creates the deprived civilian conditions of war-torn France and the strictly controlled lives of the military occupiers.

*Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi. Knopf 2016. 320p.

Review First published [May 1, 2016 \(Booklist\)](#):

This sometimes painful novel by Ghanaian author Gyasi has garnered much prepublication attention, including a blurb by Ta-Nehisi Coates. It traces, through the stories of two main families in alternating chapters proceeding chronologically, the history of Ghanaian and American civilization from the eighteenth century to the present, in Africa (where one branch of the family initially stays) and America (where the other goes). It opens with the horrors wrought by British enslavement of the Africans, especially the women, and goes through each stage efficiently. The author has done her research, and though the book occasionally reads like a historical overview (each element—the beginning of cocoa cultivation in Ghana, the Fugitive Slave Act, and, later, the convict-lease system in America—feels summarized rather than dealt with dramatically), it has power and beauty, thanks to Gyasi's commanding style. Expect the novel to attract considerable attention and to appeal to readers of multigenerational sagas.

— *Mark Levine*