

Senior Summer Reading:

2014-2015

Dear Colts and Colt Parents,

With summer upon us and another school year right around the bend, the English Department wishes to remind you to include summer reading in your vacation activities. Because summer reading is an integral part of the English curriculum, the English Department has gone to great lengths to select works of literary merit which prepare students for their studies next year.

While you read, it is expected that you will complete the attached assignment. You will also be tested over the assigned summer reading once you return to class in August. These assessments are important grades that will follow you all year, so please, *take them seriously and return to school with your work complete.*

These books are all available at local bookstores, at the public library (call for availability), and online. **Please make your summer reading a priority—it is an important and mandatory part of your education!**

All seniors not enrolled in Honors or AP English IV must read one of the following novels:

- **The Kite Runner** by Khaled Hosseini
 - o This book, which has gained worldwide attention since its publication, tells the story of Amir, a young boy from Kabul, who befriends Hassan, the son of his father's Hazara servant. The story is set in the very tumultuous time period between the fall of the monarchy of Kabul, through the Soviet invasion, and into the rise of the Taliban. Frighteningly realistic and poignant, it is a true must-read.
- **Things Fall Apart** by Chinua Achebe
 - o Concerning the life of Okonkwo, a leader and local wrestling champion in Umuofia, this novel takes place in Nigeria and deals with issues like Okonkwo's three wives, children, and the influences of the British and Christianity in his traditional community around the turn of the twentieth century.

All seniors not enrolled in Honors or AP English IV must also read one of the following novels:

- **Deadline** by Chris Crutcher
 - o Given the medical diagnosis of one year to live, high school senior Ben Wolf decides to fulfill his greatest fantasies, ponder his life's purpose and legacy, and converse through dreams with a spirit guide named "Hey-soos."
- **Into thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster** by Jon Krakauer
 - o This book is a riveting first-hand account of a catastrophic expedition up Mount Everest. Despite the expertise of Hall and the other leaders, by the end of summit day eight people were dead. Krakauer's book is at once the story of the ill-fated adventure and an analysis of the factors leading up to its tragic end.
- **Funny How Things Change** by Melissa Wyatt
 - o Remy, a talented seventeen-year-old auto mechanic, questions his decision to join his girlfriend when she starts college in Pennsylvania, after a visiting artist helps him realize what his family home in a dying West Virginia mountain town means to him.

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All seniors enrolled in AP or Honors English IV must read both of the following novels:

- ***Native Son*** by *Richard Wright*
 - This entire book is about cruel fates. Broken up into three parts, Wright's *Native Son* tells the story of Bigger Thomas, an angry and foolish young black man from 1940's Chicago. He is powerfully built but weak-minded because he didn't have a proper education. He had big dreams of becoming an aviator but lack of opportunity forced him to live in a rat-infested room with his mother and two siblings. He just wanted to be left alone but his suffocating world would soon torture him with relentless attention. He was one of many young black men like this during the age of evil prejudice, withheld freedoms and spirit-breaking segregation.
- ***The Road*** by *Cormac McCarthy*
 - Set sometime in the future after a global catastrophe, *The Road* chronicles a father and a son—maybe the last of the “good guys”—as they tread along a forsaken patch of highway peopled by marauders and cannibals. Winner of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize, it is Cormac McCarthy's most accessible novel.