

Statement on Book Selection and Objectionable Material

The Runnels English faculty has as its first mission to teach novels that engage, inspire, inform, uplift, and above all educate our students. While our first consideration is always the merit of an assigned novel, sometimes those books could contain material that some may find objectionable. In fact, almost every classic novel has been challenged at some point, and modern books are even more frequently challenged because of objectionable content. As Runnels is a school that embraces those of many faiths, cultures, and value systems, content that is deemed to be offensive will vary from family to family. As educators, we have made every effort to give students choices in their summer reading assignments, as we understand that student engagement strongly correlates with the ability to have ownership over reading choices. Please be aware, however, that this list includes books with language, themes, or situations that some students or families may find offensive. Therefore, in the spirit of academic freedom, we leave it up to each student and his or her family to make the reading selections that best fit their unique value system and interests for summer reading.

Summer Assignments

Summer Reading is a long tradition in many schools including Runnels. Research has shown conclusively that continued reading over long breaks keeps students from falling behind in reading skills. Because students will be expected to retain key information from their summer reading, many teachers assign corresponding work to help students remember what they read and to provide guidance and scaffolding for how to read the book closely. These assignments are mandatory. All English teachers in Junior and Senior High will require summer assignments for the summer of 2018. Additional copies of the assignments will be available through a link the Runnels Web Page at www.runnels.org. Teachers will be available (via email) over the summer to answer questions concerning their assignments. English teachers will also meet with currently enrolled students before the end of the 2018-2019 school year to discuss the requirements for these assignments. Students who are new to Runnels should contact the administration and/or Norma Marsh, Dept. Head, English and Social Studies, at n.marsh@runnels.org for more information. All students are to have completed these assignments upon their return to school for the 2018-2019 school year—August 15, 2018.

American Studies

Welcome to American Studies, a unique class where we learn about American literature, history, art, and culture. This is a course for students who love to read and love the challenge of learning and inquiry. I hope you enjoy the choices I have provided you for the summer. Please explore the list before making a choice—it will be time well spent. Why so many choices? I want you have greater ownership and greater choice to read what interests you. Have a great summer, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I check my email frequently, and although I may sleep a few hours later in the summer, I am still working most days so expect an answer back within several days at the latest.

Norma Marsh
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11th Grade Summer Reading
Mrs. Marsh--American Studies
English III Honors: 3 Books Total

Required: *The Help* — Kathryn Stockett

Classic Novels: choose 1 from this column

- *A Lesson Before Dying* — Ernest Gaines
- *Go Tell It on the Mountain* — James Baldwin
- *My Antonia* — Willa Cather
- *The Big Sleep* — Raymond Chandler
- *The Sound and the Fury* — William Faulkner
- *This Side of Paradise* — F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *The Maltese Falcon* — Dashiell Hammett
- *Little Women* — Louisa May Alcott
- *Catch 22* — Joseph Heller
- *A Farewell to Arms* — Ernest Hemingway
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* — Zora Neale Hurston
- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* — John Irving
- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* — Ken Kesey
- *The Bluest Eye* — Toni Morrison
- *The Catcher in the Rye* — J.D. Salinger
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* — Betty Smith
- *The House of Mirth* — Edith Wharton
- *The Age of Innocence* — Edith Wharton
- *The Glass Menagerie* — Tennessee Williams
- *Black Boy* — Richard Wright
- *Revolutionary Road* — Richard Yates
- *On the Road* — Jack Kerouac
- *The Awakening* — Kate Chopin
- *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* — Carson McCullers
- *Moby Dick* — Herman Melville

Contemporary Fiction: choose one from this section or Non-Fiction

- *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* — Sherman Alexie
- *Little Brother* — Cory Doctorow
- *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café* — Fannie Flagg
- *The Stand* — Stephen King
- *Lonesome Dove* — Larry McMurtry
- *Monster* — Walter Dean Myers
- *Where Things Come Back* — John Cory Whaley
- *The Joy Luck Club* — Amy Tan
- *The Right Stuff* — Tom Wolfe
- *The Natural* — Bernard Malamud
- *Olive Kitteridge* — Elizabeth Strout
- *Before We Were Yours* — Lisa Wingate
- *The Alice Network* — Kate Quinn

Non-Fiction: Choose one from Non-fiction or Contemporary Fiction

- *Warriors Don't Cry* — Melba Pattillo Beals
- *Manhunt: the Twelve-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer* — James L. Swanson
- *The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game* — Michael Lewis
- *A Walk in the Woods* — Bill Bryson
- *The Devil in the White City* — Erik Larson
- *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat: and other Clinical Tales* — Oliver Sacks
- *Outliers: The Story of Success* — Malcolm Gladwell
- *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* — John Berendt
- *In Cold Blood* — Truman Capote
- *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* — Eric Schlosser
- *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* — Laura Hillenbrand
- *Empire of the Summer Moon: Quanah Parker and the Rise and Fall of the Comanches, the Most Powerful Indian Tribe in American History* — S. C. Gwynne

Major Works Data Sheet Directions

Please select the appropriate Major Works Data Sheet, either fiction or non-fiction. Complete one MWDS for *The Help*, one for your classic novel choice, and one for *either* the contemporary *or* the non-fiction novels. This means you will read **three** books total and complete the assignments for each.

You will complete the following chart using significant detail and complete sentences where appropriate. The **MWDS** presumes an understanding of the various elements of literature required. *Should* you choose a non-fiction book for your second book choice, you will complete the Major Works Data Sheet (Non-fiction). Please do not use this for the fiction titles as points will be deducted for using the incorrect graphic organizer.

Scoring:

The sheets will be scored on level of detail, correctness, and originality. The MWDS should reflect *your* reading of the work, not what websites say you should think. In fact, it is in your best interests to avoid consulting *Schmoop*, *Litnotes*, and other literary analysis websites. To read another's work and present it as your own is plagiarism. Your teachers are very familiar with these websites, and they are just as readily available to us as to you—so be original and show us what you think about the text. Every box should be completed, fully, in your own words.

Please email me if you have any questions, and I would be happy to email you a sample A+ data sheet if you would like more guidance.

Glossary

Context: This term refers to plot (what is happening in the story at the point in discussion). For instance, citing the famous quotation “I meant what I said, and I said what I meant. An elephant is faithful one-hundred percent!” comes from *Horton Hatches the Egg*; its context is that Mayzie the bird, who is quite lazy, has asked Horton to sit on her egg while she flies south. Horton promises her he will take care of the egg, and he faithfully tends the whole winter while Mayzie fails to live up to her promise to return for the egg.

Significance: Understanding significance means to analyze an event or aspect of the novel for its importance. If you are asked to provide the significance, you should only briefly mention plot. The significance of the Horton quotation is that Horton, a perfect stranger, demonstrates more devotion to Mayzie's offspring than she herself shows. Horton is demonstrating loyalty and dependability, while Mayzie is taking advantage of his kindness.

Symbols: Symbols are objects that stand or represent something more meaningful, reflecting themes, motifs, or insights into characters and circumstances. In *Horton Hatches the Egg*, the egg symbolizes responsibility. Horton takes on the responsibility for Mayzie, because he is reliable and steadfast.

Theme: “Theme is an element of a story that binds together various other essential elements of a narrative. It is a truth that exhibits universality and stands true for people of all cultures. Theme gives readers better understanding of the main character's conflicts, experiences, discoveries and emotions as they are derived from them. Through themes, a writer tries to give his readers an insight into how the world works or how he or she views human life.” (Literarydevices.net/theme).

Genre: a category of literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter. Poetry, mystery, fiction, non-fiction, essay, biography, horror, romance, etc. are all examples of literary genre.

Special Note: We English teachers love to have a common frame of reference so we can find analogies to help our students understand our explanations. One way to do that is to have books that we have **all** read (or movies in a pinch). To that end, I frequently use the *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling to explain a point, and often use *The Wizard of Oz* by Frank L. Baum. If you have an opportunity to do so, please read the books or if time does not permit to read the books, watch some or all of the movies. My favorite of the Harry Potter series is Book 5: *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. If you have seen the movies, but never read one of the books, then any of the books, but especially the later ones, are rich in detail that you will have missed by watching the movies. Your understanding of the series would certainly be enriched by reading one. And just for fun, you could have a get together to watch one of the movies with your classmates.

Major Works Data Sheet

Name: _____

<p>Title: Author: Date of Publication: Genre:</p>	<p>Biographical information about the author</p>
<p>Historical information about period of publication</p>	<p>Characteristics of the genre</p>
<p>Plot summary. Explain at least five major plot items/events that happened in the story.</p> <p>1.</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">Style</p> <p>Describe the author's style: to adequately explain style examine diction, imagery, tone, organization (shifts in time, etc.), irony, attitude, use of figurative language, etc.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Examples that demonstrate style</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Memorable quotations. Minimum of 3 quotations here. Write out the quotation w/ pg. #</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Significance of quotations/Explain why it is meaningful or significant</p>
<p>1.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	

Characters

Name/Description	Role in story	Significance	Adjectives

Setting: Be specific—time, place, and a vivid description of the major settings and the images they evoke.

Symbols: *Do not leave blank.* Identify at least 2 symbols or motifs and explain what they represent. A motif can be almost anything: an idea, an object, a concept, a character archetype, the weather, a color, or even a statement

First & Last Lines: Quote the first and last lines here and explain their significance.

Possible themes & Topics of discussion: Provide at least two higher-order questions for discussion.

MAJOR WORKS DATA SHEET (Non-Fiction)

<p>Title: _____ Author: _____ Date of Publication: _____ Genre: _____</p>	<p>Biographical Information about the Author Who is the author? Include the author’s birth/death (if applicable) dates, educational background, occupation, awards, etc. What are the author’s qualifications for writing on the subject? Is the author an authority in the subject area? How does the author present the subject and his/her expertise?</p>
<p>Historical Information about the period of publication</p>	
<p>Plot Summary Identify the five major plot elements (introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution).</p>	

Quotations – Your choices should be *significant* and *representative* of the book, and your explanation should include analysis of this significance. Include literary devices and explanations. Provide page #s. For E-Books, provide the location and abbreviation of the E-Book platform (ex: Kindle 514)

Memorable Quotations

5-10 Important Quotations

Identify the speaker of the quotation and explain its context and significance

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Major Figures in the Story

Name	Role in the Story	Figure's significance to the plot or theme

Style and Language – Non-fiction

Discuss the author's style and use of language. Include the following: Is the language level appropriate? Is there clarity to the style of writing? Is the material fairly easy to follow and understand? Does the author avoid stereotypes and generalizations? Does the author avoid didactic and condescending language? Discuss the author's syntax, as well as his/her use of tone, diction, and form (how does he/she develop the story).

Give an example that demonstrates this style, and explain how it does so – cite w/page #.

Setting	
Describe the setting(s) and the mood the setting(s) create	Describe the significance of the OPENING scenes from the text.
	Describe the significance of the CLOSING scenes from the text.

Themes – Purpose

Explain the author’s purpose in telling this story. Why is he/she telling it? Is there some greater motive? What is it? Additionally, what are you supposed to get out of this work? What are the overall themes developed in this work? (Use quotations to support your themes. Themes should be written as “messages” in sentence form).

Themes	Explain how this theme ties to the book

Possible Questions for Discussion (create at least 5): These questions should be critical thinking questions and open-ended to promote discussion. Simple questions and yes or no questions will receive point deductions. Example: Why did Erik Larson title his book Devil in the White City, and what theme does this title suggest?

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