

## Beacon Summer Reading for English 2008

In the interest of forming a sense of community through the summer reading, **all students from each grade level must read a "Grade-Wide Book"** (for seniors, this will be specific to the English course being taken in the fall semester). Upon our return to school in the fall, the English department will offer activities that will foster discussion within each grade level. While you do not have a written assignment for summer reading, you will be held accountable for your reading during the first week of classes. Make sure you read and are prepared to reflect or report on your reading the first day of classes in September.

In addition to reading the "Grade-Wide Book," all students are encouraged to read a variety of other books as well. The English department has put together a selection of books that represent a variety of subjects, styles, and levels, and that includes books that have been read and enjoyed by Beacon students in the past. Please see the back of this page for the list.

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### GRADE-WIDE BOOKS:

Rising 9<sup>th</sup> Graders: *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt

Rising 10<sup>th</sup> Graders: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

Rising 11<sup>th</sup> Graders: *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides

Rising 12<sup>th</sup> Graders: Each senior should read the book that is specific to the course s/he is taking in the fall. Check your schedule online in late June/early July to see what course you are registered for.

The Short Story: *Suite Francaise* by Irene Nemirovsky

Sports Literature: *Friday Night Lights* by H.G. Bissinger

The Philosophical Journey: *Way of the Peaceful Warrior* by Dan Millman

Literature & Media Theory: *Sex, Drugs & Cocoa Puffs: A Low Culture Manifesto* by Chuck Klosterman

Contemporary British Literature: *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali

Hip-Hop & Literature: *All the Rage: The Boondocks Past and Present* by Aaron McGruder  
(for this class, also purchase *Can't Stop, Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation* by Jeff Chang to be read in the fall)

Modern American Drama: *Angels in America: Millenium Approaches* by Tony Kushner

### **Be an Active Reader!**

Consider the following as you read:

- Themes and motifs
- Context (time, place, setting, historical background)
- Characterization
- Narrative structure
- Language (tone, style, perspective...)

Helpful Reading Strategies to use as you read:

- **Visualize** (Make the movie in your mind!)
- **Predict** (Before turning the page, think about what might happen next.)
- **Question** (Talk to the book. Ask questions as you read to keep yourself engaged and active.)
- **Review** (Now and then, summarize a section you just read to check that you're reading attentively.)
- **Connect** (Make connections from text to text, text to self, text to others.)

## SUGGESTED SUMMER READING

In addition to the required grade-level book, you are encouraged to select books from the list below to read over the summer. The books below represent an array of content, genres, and reading levels, so read about the selections online and/or browse through them at your local bookstore or library to get a better idea of the styles and themes.

*Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister* by Gregory Maguire  
*Flying over 96<sup>th</sup> Street: Memoir of an East Harlem White Boy* by Thomas Webber  
*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison  
*The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende  
*Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez  
*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker  
*On the Road* by Jack Kerouac  
*Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* by Tom Robbins  
*Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* by Anna Deavere Smith  
*Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown  
*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* by Michael Chabon  
*A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway  
*The Alienist* by Caleb Carr  
*White Teeth* by Zadie Smith  
*Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell  
*Blindness* by Jose Saramago (Giovanni Pontiero, translator)  
*Metamorphoses: A Play* by Mary Zimmerman  
*Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri  
*Life of Pi* by Yann Martel  
*A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini  
*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte  
*Catch-22* by Joseph Heller  
*Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel  
*Annie John* by Jamaica Kincaid  
*A Passage to India* by E.M. Forster  
*The Yiddish Policemen's Union* by Michael Chabon  
*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen  
*In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote  
*Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen  
*The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera  
*Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro  
*Waiting* by Ha Jin  
*The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath  
*As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner  
*The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver

### Some ideas for making summer reading interesting and relevant:

- Read the same book as a friend or family member so you have someone with whom to discuss your reactions and questions
- Start a mini book club with your friends and meet up to discuss the books you are reading
- Read a fictional book that connects to your history summer reading book and make connections
- Read a book that has been adapted for stage or screen, then see the adaptation and make comparisons

This is just a small selection of literature that is out there for your enjoyment over the summer. Visit your local bookstore or library to browse and get suggestions. Happy Reading!