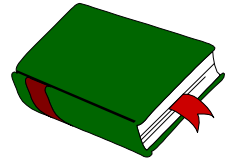


## WALT WHITMAN HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST FOR GRADE 12 2009-2010



If you are entering 12th grade **regular level** English, we expect you to have read the following by the first day of school:

1. **The Metamorphosis Franz Kafka** This short novella explores the peculiar transformation of a man, and how he and those around him respond to this dramatic change. Text is available online. Google: The Metamorphosis text
- and**
2. **One** selection from the 12th Grade Reading List

If you are entering 12th grade **honors level** English, we expect you to have read the following by the first day of school:

1. **The Metamorphosis Franz Kafka** This short novella explores the peculiar transformation of a man, and how he and those around him respond to this dramatic change. Text is available online. Google: The Metamorphosis text
- and**
2. **The Stranger Albert Camus** Considered the classic post-WW II existential novella that brought Camus to fame, this tale of a disturbing murder is framed by the issues that would later change the political geography of North Africa. Text is available online. Prior to reading this selection, students should research *existentialism* for an understanding of this literary concept. Google: The Stranger text
3. **One** selection from the 12th Grade Reading List

If you are entering **AP Literature and Composition**, please refer to the AP list.

### *Regular and Honor Classes*

*The **required** text(s) will be assessed through classroom activities and writing during the first six weeks of school. The **"choice"** selections will be assessed in the first week of school.*

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading List**

**Dust Tracks on the Road Zora Neale Hurston** Z.N. Hurston's imaginative and exuberant account of her rise from childhood poverty in the rural South gives her a prominent place among the artists and intellectuals of the Harlem Renaissance.

**The Fountainhead Ayn Rand** A novel that polarizes opinion as much as it excites young people's minds, The Fountainhead is the novel that solidified Rand's career and began nationwide interest in Rand's philosophy "objectivism/rational egoism." This is the story of Howard Roark, an architect who will not compromise: a man who builds for himself – not for economic and social utility. Part social criticism, part philosophy, and part love story, this novel is hard to classify as well as hard to forget.

**In the Time of the Butterflies Julia Alvarez** Four sisters, symbols of hope in a country shadowed by dictatorship and despair, sacrifice their safe and comfortable lives in the name of freedom.

**Invisible Man Ralph Ellison** Acclaimed as a powerful representation of the lives of African Americans during the Depression, this novel describes the experiences of one young black man during that period. After a Harlem race riot, he is aware that he must contend with both whites and blacks and that loss of social identity makes him invisible among his fellow beings.

**Killer Angels Michael Shaara** Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, this compelling story focuses on the four riveting days in June and July, 1863, preceding the Battle of Gettysburg. Told from the perspective of the colonels, generals, and military men who fought and died in this epic struggle, this novel was the basis of the film *Gettysburg*.

**Life of Pi Yann Martel** Yann Martel's imaginative and unforgettable *Life of Pi* concerns sixteen-year-old Pi Patel, the son of a zookeeper, who finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean, trapped on a 26-foot lifeboat with a wounded zebra, a spotted hyena, a seasick orangutan, and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.

**The Kitchen God's Wife Amy Tan** Pressed to tell her American-born daughter the truth about her life in China, Winnie unburdens herself of old angers and fears and recounts her violent, war-wrenched youth and the barbaric tyranny of her arranged marriage.

**The Kite Runner Khaled Hosseini** This epic tale takes the reader from the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy to the atrocities of the Taliban. It tells the story of a father – son relationship, of a friendship between two boys, and of the guilt that takes one of them back to his homeland to make restitution for his sins. In the words of Isabelle Allende: "It is so powerful that for a long time everything I read after seemed bland."

**Mules and Men Zora Neale Hurston** This treasury of American folklore comprises an oral history of the South, particularly the hometown of Eatonville, Florida, where Hurston grew up.

**No Exit Jean-Paul Sartre** Three strangers find themselves in a hotel room decorated with Second Empire furniture. Gradually they learn about one another as they discuss their current situation and their respective pasts. In the final analysis they come to a chilling conclusion: "Hell is – other people." The first play to be performed in Paris after its liberation from Nazi occupation, *No Exit* represents an influential landmark in Existentialist thought and a pioneering example of the dramatic genre known as Theater of the Absurd.

**On the Road Jack Kerouac** This semi-autobiographical novel describes the wanderings across America, casual friendships, labors, and affairs of Sal Paradise, a young writer, and his friend and hero, Dean Moriarty.

**One Hundred Years of Solitude Gabriel Garcia Marquez** An epic narrative, this book follows the development of an imaginary South American town, Macondo, and seven generations of the Buendia family. In writing this novel, published in 1970, Marquez created a world representative of life in post-colonial South America and established himself as a master in the literary genre of Magical Realism. In 1982, Marquez was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature largely due to this vividly imaginative work of fiction.

**Passage to India E.M. Forster** Politics and mysticism are potent forces in India just after World War I. The trial that results from an attack by a young Moslem doctor divides the groups in the city so acutely that a reconciliation appears impossible.

**Slaughterhouse-Five Kurt Vonnegut** Arguably Vonnegut's most celebrated and controversial novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five* follows a "pilgrim" of sorts (aptly named Billy Pilgrim) through WWII and the bombing of Dresden to a world that exists outside time and space. Through time and space and love and hate Pilgrim searches for meaning and finds meaninglessness. Vonnegut's lacerating irony and stylistic originality make this novel one of the most discussed and pondered postmodern novels ever written.

**Song of Solomon Toni Morrison** This novel tells the story of a young man from the wealthiest black family in a Midwestern town. He travels south looking for information on his heritage and in the process learns about himself.

**A Thousand Splendid Suns Khaled Hosseini** The best-selling novel that chronicles the remarkable and unlikely friendship of two women brought together under one roof in Kabul, Afghanistan, and how their courageous actions bring about change not only in their lives but in the next generation.

**Vanity Fair William Makepeace Thackeray** Salacious heroine Becky Sharp manipulates her way up the social ladder in this scathing, witty tale of the English upper class in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Through the devious machinations of Becky and the other characters, Thackeray cleverly indicts an entire society full of human vanity and weakness.