

Penncrest High School

Required Summer Reading Program

2006

The goal of the Penncrest Summer Reading Program is to expose students to quality literature that will inspire them to expand and explore connections to the classroom, to the community, and to the world.

Students entering Penncrest High School's grades 9 through 12 must select two books to read during the summer. One selection is a mandatory core reading, and the other may be self-selected. Your English teacher will assess your reading in September. Please bring your optional reading records and completed parent interview responses with you on the first day of class.

I. Mandatory Core Reading: Choose one (1) book in your incoming grade level category.

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Gentlehands</i> (M.E. Kerr) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistlestop Cafe</i> (Fannie Flagg) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Mole People: Life in the Tunnels Beneath New York City</i> (Jennifer Toth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i> (Ken Kesey)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ender's Game</i> (Orson Scott Card) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Hot Zone</i> (Richard Preston) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln</i> (Doris Kearns Goodwin) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to his White Mother</i> (James McBride)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life</i> (Lance Armstrong and Sally Jenkins) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Speak</i> (Laurie Halse Anderson) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ethan Frome</i> (Edith Wharton) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>the curious incident of the dog in the night-time</i> (Mark Haddon)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency</i> (Alexander McCall Smith) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Pudd'nhead Wilson</i> (Mark Twain) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>After the First Death</i> (Robert Cormier) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Kite Runner</i> (Khaled Hosseini)

II. Self-Selected Reading: Choose and read a second book.

You may choose any book that you would like to read. See the back of this sheet for more ideas about how to choose a book and where to go for ideas.

The Rose Tree Media School District and the English Department value the role that community and family play in a child's literacy education. If you have any questions about the Summer Reading Program, please contact your child's English teacher or the Office of Teaching and Learning.

Ideas for Self-Selected Reading

Perhaps you would like to challenge yourself this summer. The English Department suggests these traditional and contemporary Classics...

Grade 9

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (Twain)
The Call of the Wild (London)
Jane Eyre (C. Brontë)
Robinson Crusoe (Defoe)
War of the Worlds (Wells)
Twelfth Night (Shakespeare)
Anne of a Thousand Days (Anderson)
Pygmalion (Shaw)
You Can't Take it With You (Kaufman & Hart)

Grade 10

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (Twain)
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Carroll)
Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant (Tyler)
Go Tell It on the Mountain (Baldwin)
How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents (Alvarez)
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (Spark)
The Prince and the Pauper (Twain)
Antony and Cleopatra (Shakespeare)
Blithe Spirit (Coward)
The Importance of

Being Ernest (Wilde)

Grade 11

A Farewell to Arms (Hemingway)
Dracula (Stoker)
The Grapes of Wrath (Steinbeck)
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (Angelou)
The Jungle (Sinclair)
Lost Horizon (Hilton)
My Ántonia (Cather)
On the Road (Kerouac)
The Red Badge of Courage (Crane)
Uncle Tom's Cabin (Stowe)
The Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare)
A Doll's House (Ibsen)
A Streetcar Named Desire (Williams)

Grade 12

Emma (Austen)
Lord Jim (Conrad)
Mrs. Dalloway (Woolf)
Native Son (Wright)
Silent Spring (Carson)
Song of Solomon (Morrison)
The Age of Innocence (Wharton)
The Odyssey (Homer)
White Noise (Delillo)
King Lear (Shakespeare)
Cyrano de Bergerac (Rostand)
The Rivals (Sheridan)

...or books recommended by Penncrest students:

The Secret Life of Bees (Sue Monk Kidd)
Plain Truth (Jodi Picoult)
Tuesdays with Morrie (Mitch Albom)
Angels & Demons (Dan Brown)
Our Man in Havana (Graham Greene)
The Lovely Bones (Alice Sebold)

...or titles recommended by Penncrest faculty:

Bringing Down the House (Ben Mezrich)
The Perfect Storm (Sebastian Junger)
Funny in Farsi (Firoozeh Dumas)
'A' is for Alibi (Sue Grafton)
The Horse Whisperer (Nicholas Evans)
A Lesson Before Dying (Ernest J. Gaines)

For more ideas, visit these websites:

www.rtmsd.org

The English Department website will post recommendations from students, parents, and faculty beginning July 1.

<http://www.ala.org>

The American Library Association offers a Summer Reading page with a variety of book lists as well as tips for parents.

www.reading.org

The International Reading Association offers a 'Choices Booklists' page with student and teacher recommendations.

<http://libwww.library.phila.gov/onebook/>

This site includes information about the "One Book, One Philadelphia" program that centers this year on a celebration of Benjamin Franklin.

www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/one-book

The Library of Congress *Center for the Book* lists every city in America participating in "One City, One Book" programs.

Mandatory Core Reading: Grade 9

- ***Ender's Game*** by Orson Scott Card

When the Earth is threatened with an attack by malevolent aliens, the human race turns to an unusual group to defend it—brilliant children. Ender Wiggins is one such extraordinary child, and his training takes a very familiar form—video game simulations of an alien attack. The question is: where does the training leave off and reality begin?

- ***Gentlehands*** by M.E. Kerr

A young man's summer begins with his dream girl agreeing to go out with him. It slowly becomes more involved, however, when he becomes reacquainted with the grandfather he never knew and when someone begins searching his small town for the presence of an infamous and unpunished Nazi officer.

- ***It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life*** by Lance Armstrong

Lance Armstrong, world-champion cyclist, tells the story of his battle to overcome cancer. His story of courage and survival speaks to the winner inside each of us.

- ***No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency*** by A. M. Smith

Meet Precious Ramotswe: a delightfully cunning female detective in Botswana. Her keen knowledge of the human mind and heart and her sense of right and wrong help her to solve the humorous and dangerous mysteries in her town.

Mandatory Core Reading: Grade 10

- ***The Hot Zone*** by Richard Preston

This book proves that truth is more frightening than fiction. The appearance of a strain of the deadly Ebola virus is discovered in a laboratory in Reston, Virginia. This book details the search for the origin of the disease, the decision-making and in-fighting between the Army and the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, and the peril faced by everyone due to the potential for a plague being unleashed in the United States.

- ***Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe*** by Fannie Flag

This novel follows Idgie Threadgoode and her longtime friend and companion, Ruth Bennett, through some of their adventures in Depression-era Whistle Stop, Alabama. The reader follows the dreams and struggles of Idgie and Ruth as they operate the Whistle Stop Café, try to raise Ruth's son, "Stump," and attempt to rid themselves of Ruth's violent ex-husband, Frank. The narrator is elderly Mrs. Cleo Threadgoode, who relates the tale in flashback from the lounge of the Rose Terrace Nursing Home in 1985.

- ***Speak*** by Laurie Halse Anderson

A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school. Her pain and her guilt isolate her from her peers and her family. Her sarcastic wit, honesty, and courage make her a memorable character whose ultimate triumph will empower readers.

- ***Pudd'nhead Wilson*** by Mark Twain

Hoping to ensure a better life for her child, a slave woman exchanges her light-skinned baby for her master's. What ensues is clever social commentary in typical Twain style.

Mandatory Core Reading: Grade 11

The Mole People: Life in the Tunnels Beneath New York City by Jennifer Toth

This is the true story of Jennifer Toth's journey into the subway tunnels of New York City. With both compassion and a scientific eye, she immerses herself in the culture of the homeless and explores what has driven them underground.

Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin

Team of Rivals is a reaffirmation of why President Lincoln is so revered and treasured to this day. Written in elegant, inspirational prose, Goodwin's story unravels the workings of the federal government, particularly the Cabinet. Goodwin presents history in a compassionate, dramatic, engrossing way.

Ethan Frome by Edith Wharton

In the cold, bleak winter farmlands of Massachusetts, Ethan Frome finds himself in a desperate situation. He struggles to farm, to care for his ungrateful and demanding wife, and to resist his wife's lively cousin, Mattie. Tragic consequences result from this struggle between his moral duty and the desires of his heart.

After the First Death by Robert Cormier

This is a psychological thriller about three teenagers brought together in a terrorist takeover of a school bus. The realistic and suspenseful plot is guaranteed to keep you turning pages. It will leave you asking questions about your own concepts of bravery, heroism, and sacrifice.

Mandatory Core Reading: Grade 12

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey

This now-classic novel concerns events in a mental institution and centers on a struggle for power between the head nurse and a particularly troublesome male patient. This struggle leads to an astonishing climax of hatred, violence, death, freedom, and some say, redemption.

The Color of Water by James McBride

Subtitled A Black Man's Tribute to his White Mother, this memoir recounts the story of the author's mother, who was raised an Orthodox Jew in the South. She moves to Harlem, marries a black man, and manages to send all twelve of her mixed-race children to college. This is a story of survival, a tale that clearly illustrates how a person can use difficult times to strengthen herself and her children.

the curious incident of the dog in the night-time by Mark Haddon

Christopher John Francis Boone is mathematically gifted and socially hopeless. For a school project, he investigates the mysterious murder of a neighborhood dog and discovers family secrets along the way.

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

Moving back and forth between Afghanistan and California and spanning almost forty years, this novel tells the story of Amir and his best friend, Hassan, the son of one of his father's servants. It is a tale of loyalty, redemption, and the rich traditions of Afghanistan. This selection contains strong plot situations.

Suggestions for Keeping Track of Reading

The activities listed below will help you to read closely and to keep track of your summer reading. Try using one of these ideas this summer or develop one of your own.

Keep notes.

If you have purchased your own novel, use the book's margins for notes and highlight significant lines. This will be good practice for college reading. Be careful not to over-highlight!

OR

Buy the smallest size post-it pads and use them for comments and observations you make as you go through the novel. Position them so that an edge is extending beyond the page. This will make it easy to locate important comments you made during the reading.

Keep a journal.

Buy a notebook for your summer reading. Take some time between reading sessions to record your impressions of characters and your thoughts about the plot. What do you know about characters? What do you think might become of them? What has happened in the story so far? What do you think might happen next? When you finish reading, look back at your entries and consider how you might respond to those predictions and questions now that you know the novel's outcome.

OR

You might consider making a double-entry journal. Record quotes and/or events on the left-hand side of the page; on the right-hand side, explain why your choices are important to your understanding of the novel.

Make a character map.

Once you've established who the main character of the novel is, keep a chart or record of the important events that happen to him, his reactions to those events, and what those reactions reveal about his personality. Use the chart to track the character's growth from the beginning of the novel to the end.

Tape responses.

Tape your ideas, questions, and favorite passages at the end of every chapter. You could also summarize the key events of each chapter to help you in the fall when you must use your memory to talk about the book. This tape could then be shared with other readers.

Read with a parent.

You and a parent can read the same book and arrange to talk about what you've read. Consider completing the interview on the back of this sheet.

Form a reading group.

You and a group of friends could read the same book. Set specific deadlines for finishing sections of the book; then, when each deadline arrives, arrange a meeting to discuss that section with the group. Set specific goals for each meeting. For instance, have every group member bring questions to one meeting, a favorite passage or two to another, and a journal reaction to another. Keep a record of when your group meets and a summary of your discussions.

