

Summer Reading Assignment for Incoming 10th Graders, Fall 2021

Your Summer Reading Assignment is due on Friday, 27 August 2021.

Welcome to World Literature! This summer assignment is meant to keep your reading and writing skills fresh. You should choose *carefully*—select books that will be interesting and enjoyable for you.

Any assignments that do not follow directions exactly will not be accepted. **This assignment is due the first day of academic classes (Friday, 27 August) to your World Literature Teacher. This will count as your first formative grade.** Directions: For your summer assignment, please choose **ONE** of the following books to read.. If there's a book that you'd really like to read that is not on this list, please reach out to chris.brudzynski@scienceandtech.org for approval!

Fiction Choices

The Odyssey by Homer (Ancient Greece) - THE quintessential hero's journey; it chronicles Odysseus's adventure home after the battle of Troy.

Mythology ed. Edith Hamilton (Ancient Greece) – A revered collection of Ancient Greek mythology. Highly recommended if you're interested in mythology and/or want to have a stronger understanding of Western literature's earliest stories.

Don Quixote by Cervantes (Medieval Spain) – Feeling up to the challenge of an old medieval classic, that's timelessly hilarious and is the quintessential hero's journey? Look no further. There are movies, comical spoofs, and references galore in film and literature about the fantastic Don Quixote, and for good reason.

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (England) – The quintessential British Romantic novel (and not just "romantic" in terms of love – curious? Ask Ms. Hickey). The dialogue is witty, the portrayal of women is progressive (for a novel from 1795) and there's the wonderful love story of the dashing Mr. Darcy. Elizabeth is a witty and engaging narrator, critiquing her own society and turning down marriage proposals left and right until she decides Darcy's

Nonfiction Choices

A Grief Observed by C.S. Lewis – Lewis's emotional journey following the death of his wife Helen. He explores difficult topics including thoughts on religion and God and chronicles the process of grief. (Good pre-reading for *Gilgamesh* next year)

Reading Lolita in Tehran by Azar Nafisi (Iran) – Every Thursday morning for two years in Iran, Nafisi gathered seven of her most committed students in secret to read forbidden Western classics. This story gives a glimpse at women's lives in revolutionary Iran through the exploration of great literature.

A History of the World in 6 Glasses by Tom Standage – tells the story of humanity from the Stone Age to the 21st Century through the lens of what humans drink, from coffee and tea, to beer, wine, and soda.

Coach Wooden and Me: Our 50 Year Relationship on and off the Court by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar – NBA legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar reveals his inspirational story of 3 NCAA championships and his bond with coach John Wooden.

You Don't Have to Say You Love Me: A Memoir by Sherman Alexie – prompted by the death of his mother, Native-American author

a'ight.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (England) – Either you love Austen or you love Bronte. If you prefer a British love story that's brooding, darker, and more drama-filled, with a woman locked in an attic, a house that catches fire and some blindness, this one's for you.

The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas (France) – Another World Lit classic, considered "the greatest 'cloak and sword' story ever written. If you like sword fights, and brotherhood, adventure, romance, and drama, this one is for you.

Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy (Russia) – Russian classic of classics. It's long though, be forewarned. If you enjoy deep explorations of society, from multiple perspectives, loaded with detail (one chapter focuses just on food) where you deeply know many characters' lives, and some dark, at times sad, love stories, this is for you.

Sherman Alexie (*Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*) writes 78 poems, 78 essays, and photographs to share his raw, angry, funny, profane, and tender memories of his childhood on the Rez.

World Without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech by Franklin Foer – Looks at the threat posed by big tech in today's world and gives us a toolkit to fight the pervasive influence. Considers rapid changes happening with Amazon, Facebook, Apple, and Google, as well as our growing reliance on their services.

The Future is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia by Masha Gessen – Interested in current events? Curious to know more about modern Russian history? Wonder why and how Putin has so much power? Look no further. This book explains it all and gives context.

Affluence Without Abundance: The Disappearing World of the Bushmen by James Suzman – Vibrant life of bushmen in South Africa. Is the success of civilization measured by its ability to adapt

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Remarque (Germany) – World War I, from the German perspective. Young Paul Baumer enlists with his classmates in the German army. Despite their enthusiasm, they fall to pieces during their first bombardment in the trenches. The novel shows the vow all young men in the trenches, on either side, took to fight "principles of hate", despite being very much the same.

The Stranger by Albert Camus (Algeria) – an ordinary man who is unwittingly drawn into a senseless murder on an Algerian beach. Camus explores what he called "the nakedness of a man faced with the absurd."

Cry the Beloved Country by Alan Paton (South Africa) – South African Zulu pastor Stephen Kumalo and his son, Absalom, set against the background of a land and a people riven by racial injustice. It is a "classic work of love and hope, courage and endurance, born of the dignity of man." (Amazon)

Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Nigeria) – This story illuminates Biafra's independent struggle to establish an independent republic in southeastern Nigeria during the late 1960s. Follows the lives of five unforgettable characters. **Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress** by Sijie Dai (China) – This story captures the magic of reading and the wonder of discovery. It follows two "hapless city boys" exiled to a remote mountain village for re-education during China's Cultural Revolution. They meet a

local tailor's daughter and discover a hidden stash of Western classics in Chinese translation

Sputnik Sweetheart by Haruki Murakami (Japan) – College student falls in love with his classmate, Sumire, but his unkempt writer's lifestyle gets in the way of any relationship. Sumire falls for a much older man and disappears off the coast of Greece. The young college student joins the search party and finds himself drawn back into Sumire's world. Love story and detective story. **Life of Pi** by Yann Martel (Spain) – Young man survives harrowing shipwreck and months on a lifeboat with large Bengal tiger. **The Alchemist** by Paulo Coelho (Brazil) – Man meets an Englishman who wants to learn the secret of alchemy (turning metal into gold) from famous alchemist who lives at an oasis on the way to the Pyramids. Grapples with meaning of life and "truth" along the way. **The House of Spirits** by Isabel Allende – Family saga of 4 generations, focuses on lives of 2 women. Non chronological and magical realism. Constructs a spirit-ridden world full of all-too-human inhabitants to illustrate the turbulent world of Latin America.

Oryx and Crake by Margaret Atwood (Canada) – "speculative fiction"; "adventure romance" – a story that goes beyond realism and focuses on a post-apocalyptic character by the name of Snowman who lives near a group of primitive human-like creatures **All the Light We Cannot See** (USA / World War II – Europe) – Blind French boy and German girl whose paths collide in occupied France

as they both try to survive World War II.

Exit West by Mohsin Hamid. When Nadia and Saeed fall in love in a distant unnamed city, they are just like any other young couple. But soon bullets begin to fly, fighter jets streak the sky, and curfews fall. As the spell of violence spreads, they flee their country, leaving behind their loved ones.

and change, or its endurance over time to remain intact? Discusses the collision between the modern global economy and the oldest hunting and gathering society on earth.

Ali: A Life by Jonathan Eig – Biography of American icon,

Muhammad Ali. A story about America, about race, about a brutal sport, and a courageous man who shook the world. **On Tyranny:**

Twenty Lessons From the Twentieth Century by Timothy Snyder – Explores tyrannical regimes of the 20th-century and discusses the need to protect Democracy in the 21st century. **The Dictator's**

Handbook by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita - Mesquita starts with a single assertion: Leaders do whatever keeps them in power. They don't care about the "national interest" or even their subjects, unless they have to. Accessibly examines the difference between tyrants, democrats, and different forms of government. **The Poetry**

of Pop by Adam Bradley - From Tin Pan Alley to the Beatles to Beyonce, "Mr. Bradley skillfully breaks down a century of standards and pop songs into their elements to reveal the interaction of craft and art in composition and performance." **The Sixth Extinction** by Elizabeth Kolbert. *Over the last half-billion years, there have been five mass extinctions, when the diversity of life on earth suddenly and dramatically contracted. Scientists are currently monitoring the sixth extinction, predicted to be the most devastating extinction event since the asteroid impact that wiped out the dinosaurs. This time around, the cataclysm is us.* **Homo Deus: A Brief History of**

Tomorrow by Yuval Noah Harari - Focuses on humanity's future, and our quest to upgrade humans into gods. Over the past century humankind has managed to do the impossible to rein in famine, plague, and war. What is next? **Sapiens: A brief History of**

Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari - Human history has been shaped by three major revolutions: the Cognitive Revolution (70,000 years ago), the Agricultural Revolution (10,000 years ago) and the Scientific Revolution (500 years ago). These revolutions empowered humans to do what no other life forms have done: to create and connect ideas that do not physically exist (religion, capitalism, politics etc.).

The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars by Dava Sobel *Harvard College observatory employs women to be "calculators" or "human computers" to track and measure stars. Engrossing story of early American female scientists who shaped our study of astronomy.* **The Vaccine Race: Science, Politics and the Human Costs of Defeating Disease** by Meredith Wadman - The epic and controversial story of a major breakthrough in cell biology that led to the conquest of rubella and other devastating diseases. **The Fear Factor: How One Emotion Connects Altruists, Psychopaths, and Everyone In-Between** by Abigail Marsh - How the brains of psychopaths and heroes show that humans are wired to be good. **The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking** Edward Burger and Michael Starbird presents practical, lively, and inspiring ways for you to become more successful through better thinking. The idea is simple: You can learn how to think far better by adopting specific strategies. Brilliant people aren't a special breed--they just use their minds differently.

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi Ghana, eighteenth century: two half

sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other.

One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the

palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured

in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and

sold into slavery.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini. Mariam is an

illegitimate child, and suffers from both the stigma surrounding her birth along with the abuse she faces throughout her marriage.

What is the What by Dave Eggers. Autobiography of Valentino

Deng who was a member of the Lost Boys in Sudan. This tells the

story of his travels through war-torn Africa and his subsequent

experiences in America.

Educated by Tara Westover. Autobiographical account of growing

up off the grid in rural Idaho, and the process of becoming

"educated" in America.

All of these texts deal with questions of identity and self, exceptional journeys, and/or other archetypal elements of literature (love, humor, and loss to name a few). In each text, be aware of how the protagonist or narrator transforms throughout the text, how the journey impacts that transformation, and consider the power of story-telling, in and of itself.

Assignment Tasks: For your book, you must complete **one** of the following tasks. You can complete one set

of “Two Column notes” (one for each book) OR one evaluation paragraph.

Two Column Notes

As you read the text, please take detailed notes as you read. Then, on a piece of paper, draw a line down the left-hand side of the page. **On the left, write a quote** from the text with the correct page number. **On the right, explain your connections** (please see guidelines on the following page).

- You must take at least **15 detailed notes**.

- **Your explanation** of each quote **must be a minimum of two to three complete sentences**. •

Follow these guidelines for taking notes:

- Explain what’s happening in the book and what your connection is to it (connecting your identity to what is going on in the text – your prior knowledge, facts, experiences, and/or culture). **Suggestions to get you started:**

- You remember something like this happening in your life and you can relate it to the text well. ■

- You remember seeing something from the media (T.V. shows, cartoons, books, magazines, movies etc.) that relates to what is going on in the book.

- You remember learning about something similar happening in today’s world that you can relate it to.

- Note how the book was cited in the examples below, and imitate that in your notes: “Quote” (Author Page #).

Example: *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

Quote	Connection
“In his day he was lazy and improvident and was quite incapable of thinking about tomorrow” (Achebe 4).	This reminds me of times in my life when I’ve felt so scared of growing up that I didn’t embrace the process. Instead of creating a future for myself that I was excited about, I just lived day-to-day.

Evaluation Paragraph

Directions: For each book you read, complete the corresponding paragraph analysis assignment . **Your paragraph must be a minimum of eight to ten complete sentences**. Be sure to indent your paragraph and use information (textual evidence cited correctly) from the text to justify/support your point-of-view.

- What are ways in which you build your own identity as you move through the world? How does this compare or contrast to the main character in the text?

For more questions, please reach out to Chris Brudzynski (chris.brudzynski@scienceandtech.org). Expect a response in 1-3 business days