

May 18, 2018

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

We hope that the Methuen High School Summer Reading Program provides students with a meaningful and pleasurable literary experience. In preparation for a Socratic seminar held in English class at the beginning of the school year, students are expected to **select and read one book** from the attached grade level list. In addition to reading the goodreads summaries provided, students are encouraged to consult with their parents and teachers when selecting a text. You will notice that, by design, the summer reading titles for each grade align thematically for the sake of the Socratic seminar. However, most offerings differ in complexity, genre, and content. Please take the time to consider which book suits you best.

To inform you of the premise and purpose of a Socratic seminar, a [Student Socratic Seminar Guide](#) developed by Lipscomb University is attached. This resource also includes tips on how to best prepare for participation. English teachers will offer further guidance at the start of the school year. Student participation in the Summer Reading Socratic seminar will account for five percent of the first term grade.

Students enrolled in either AP English Language and Composition or AP English Literature and Composition for the 18-19 school year **do not** need to select a book from these lists, but are instead required to complete the AP summer work for their respective course(s).

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

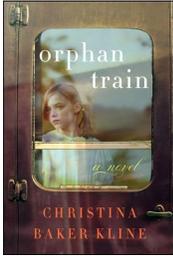
Enjoy your summer,

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GRADE 9

***Orphan Train*, by Christina Baker Kline**

Lexile: 890



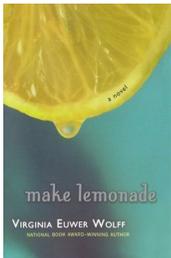
Nearly eighteen, Molly Ayer knows she has one last chance. Just months from "aging out" of the child welfare system, and close to being kicked out of her foster home, a community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping her out of juvie and worse.

Vivian Daly has lived a quiet life on the coast of Maine. But in her attic, hidden in trunks, are vestiges of a turbulent past. As she helps Vivian sort through her possessions and memories, Molly discovers that she and Vivian aren't as different as they seem to be. A young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City, Vivian was put on a train to the Midwest with hundreds of other children whose destinies would be determined by luck and chance...

Rich in detail and epic in scope, *Orphan Train* is a powerful novel of upheaval and resilience, of second chances, of unexpected friendship, and of the secrets we carry that keep us from finding out who we are. (goodreads)

***Make Lemonade*, by Virginia Euwer Wolff**

Lexile: 890



An award-winning novel about growing up and making choices.

Virginia Euwer Wolff's groundbreaking novel, written in free verse, tells the story of fourteen-year-old LaVaughn, who is determined to go to college--she just needs the money to get there.

When she answers a babysitting ad, LaVaughn meets Jolly, a seventeen-year-old single mother with two kids by different fathers. As she helps Jolly make lemonade out of the lemons her life has given her, LaVaughn learns some lessons outside the classroom. (goodreads)

***Eleanor & Park*, by Rainbow Rowell**

Lexile: HL580



Two misfits.

One extraordinary love.

Eleanor... Red hair, wrong clothes. Standing behind him until he turns his head. Lying beside him until he wakes up. Making everyone else seem drabber and flatter and never good enough...Eleanor.

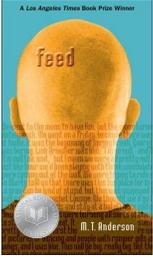
Park... He knows she'll love a song before he plays it for her. He laughs at her jokes before she ever gets to the punch line. There's a place on his chest, just below his throat, that makes her want to keep promises...Park.

Set over the course of one school year, this is the story of two star-crossed sixteen-year-olds—smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. (goodreads)

GRADE 10

***Feed*, by Matthew Tobin Anderson**

Lexile: 770

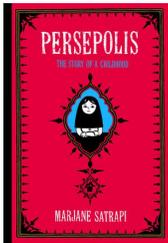


Identity crises, consumerism, and star-crossed teenage love in a futuristic society where people connect to the Internet via feeds implanted in their brains.

For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon - a chance to party during spring break and play with some stupid low-grav at the Ricochet Lounge. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its omnipresent ability to categorize human thoughts and desires. Following in the footsteps of George Orwell, Anthony Burgess, and Kurt Vonnegut Jr., M. T. Anderson has created a not-so-brave new world — and a smart, savage satire that has captivated readers with its view of an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now. (goodreads)

***Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi -graphic autobiography-**

Lexile: GN380L



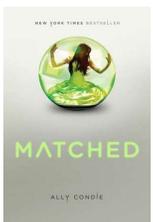
Here, in one volume: Marjane Satrapi's best-selling, internationally acclaimed graphic memoir.

Persepolis is the story of Satrapi's unforgettable childhood and coming of age within a large and loving family in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution; of the contradictions between private life and public life in a country plagued by political upheaval; of her high school years in Vienna facing the trials of adolescence far from her family; of her homecoming--both sweet and terrible; and, finally, of her self-imposed exile from her beloved homeland. It is the chronicle of a girlhood and adolescence at once outrageous and familiar, a young life entwined with the history of her country yet filled with the universal trials and joys of growing up.

Edgy, searingly observant, and candid, often heartbreaking but threaded throughout with raw humor and hard-earned wisdom--*Persepolis* is a stunning work from one of the most highly regarded, singularly talented graphic artists at work today. (goodreads)

***Matched*, Ally Condie**

Lexile: HL680

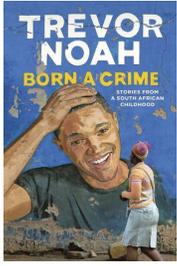


In the Society, officials decide. Who you love. Where you work. When you die.

Cassia has always trusted their choices. It's hardly any price to pay for a long life, the perfect job, the ideal mate. So when her best friend appears on the Matching screen, Cassia knows with complete certainty that he is the one...until she sees another face flash for an instant before the screen fades to black. Now Cassia is faced with impossible choices: between Xander and Ky, between the only life she's known and a path no one else has ever dared follow—between perfection and passion.

Matched is a story for right now and storytelling with the resonance of a classic. (goodreads)

GRADE 11



Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood, by Trevor Noah Lexile: HL770

Trevor Noah's unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of The Daily Show began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. Living proof of his parents' indiscretion, Trevor was kept mostly indoors for the earliest years of his life, bound by the extreme and often absurd measures his mother took to hide him from a government that could, at any moment, steal him away. Finally liberated by the end of South Africa's tyrannical white rule, Trevor and his mother set forth on a grand adventure, living openly and freely and embracing the opportunities won by a centuries-long struggle...

It is also the story of that young man's relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother—his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life. (goodreads)



Small Great Things, by Jodi Picoult

HL:800L

Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse at a Connecticut hospital with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene?

Ruth hesitates before performing CPR and, as a result, is charged with a serious crime. Kennedy McQuarrie, a white public defender, takes her case but gives unexpected advice: Kennedy insists that mentioning race in the courtroom is not a winning strategy. Conflicted by Kennedy's counsel, Ruth tries to keep life as normal as possible for her family—especially her teenage son—as the case becomes a media sensation. As the trial moves forward, Ruth and Kennedy must gain each other's trust, and come to see that what they've been taught their whole lives about others—and themselves—might be wrong.

With incredible empathy, intelligence, and candor, Jodi Picoult tackles race, privilege, prejudice, justice, and compassion—and doesn't offer easy answers. *Small Great Things* is a remarkable achievement from a writer at the top of her game. (goodreads)

The Hate U Give, by Angie Thomas

Lexile: HL590



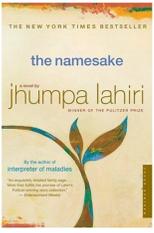
Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed.

Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does or does not say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life. (goodreads)

GRADE 12

***The Namesake*, by Jhumpa Lahiri**

Lexile: 1140

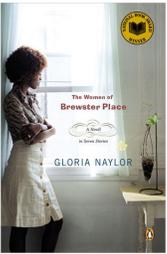


Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies* established this young writer as one of the most brilliant of her generation. Her stories are one of the very few debut works -- and only a handful of collections -- to have won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Among the many other awards and honors it received were the New Yorker Debut of the Year award, the PEN/Hemingway Award, and the highest critical praise for its grace, acuity, and compassion in detailing lives transported from India to America...

The Namesake takes the Ganguli family from their tradition-bound life in Calcutta through their fraught transformation into Americans. On the heels of their arranged wedding, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli settle together in Cambridge, Massachusetts. An engineer by training, Ashoke adapts far less warily than his wife, who resists all things American and pines for her family. When their son is born, the task of naming him betrays the vexed results of bringing old ways to the new world. Named for a Russian writer by his Indian parents in memory of a catastrophe years before, Gogol Ganguli knows only that he suffers the burden of his heritage as well as his odd, antic name.

Lahiri brings great empathy to Gogol as he stumbles along the first-generation path, strewn with conflicting loyalties, comic detours, and wrenching love affairs. With penetrating insight, she reveals not only the defining power of the names and expectations bestowed upon us by our parents, but also the means by which we slowly, sometimes painfully, come to define ourselves. (goodreads)

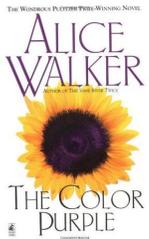
***The Women of Brewster Place* - Gloria Naylor**



Gloria Naylor weaves together the stories of seven women living in Brewster Place, a bleak inner-city sanctuary, creating a powerful, moving portrait of the strengths, struggles, and hopes of black women in America. Vulnerable and resilient, openhanded and open-hearted, these women forge their lives in a place that in turn threatens and protects—a common prison and a shared home. Naylor renders both loving and painful human experiences with simple eloquence and uncommon intuition. Her remarkable sense of community and history makes *The Women of Brewster Place* a contemporary classic—and a touching and unforgettable read. (goodreads)

***The Color Purple* - Alice Walker**

Lexile: HL 670



The Color Purple is a classic. With over a million copies sold in the UK alone, it is hailed as one of the all-time 'greats' of literature, inspiring generations of readers.

Set in the deep American South between the wars, it is the tale of Celie, a young black girl born into poverty and segregation. Raped repeatedly by the man she calls 'father', she has two children taken away from her, is separated from her beloved sister Nettie and is trapped into an ugly marriage. But then she meets the glamorous Shug Avery, singer and magic-maker - a woman who has taken charge of her own destiny. Gradually, Celie discovers the power and joy of her own spirit, freeing her from her past and reuniting her with those she loves. (goodreads)