

2021 Suggested Summer Reading Honors 11

In the 2021-2022 school year, students in Honors 11 will begin utilizing McGraw-Hill's StudySync curriculum incorporating excerpts and full texts while exploring a variety of themes.

(Special Note: AP Language and Composition will continue to use the College Board-approved curriculum, not StudySync.)

During the summer months, all Honors students are encouraged to select a book from the attached list in preparation for English class. Please note that summer reading is NOT required; however, reading one of these texts and examining the author's style, use of language, and purpose for writing will give you invaluable practice at text analysis.

***The Crucible* by Arthur Miller**

"I believe that the reader will discover here the essential nature of one of the strangest and most awful chapters in human history," Arthur Miller wrote of his classic play about the witch-hunts and trials in seventeenth-century Salem, Massachusetts. Based on historical people and real events, Miller's drama is a searing portrait of a community engulfed by hysteria. In the rigid theocracy of Salem, rumors that women are practicing witchcraft galvanize the town's most basic fears and suspicions; and when a young girl accuses Elizabeth Proctor of being a witch, self-righteous church leaders and townspeople insist that Elizabeth be brought to trial. The ruthlessness of the prosecutors and the eagerness of neighbor to testify against neighbor brilliantly illuminates the destructive power of socially sanctioned violence." (Goodreads.com)

***The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri**

"*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.com)

***Walden* by Henry David Thoreau**

Originally published in 1854, *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, is a vivid account of the time that Henry D. Thoreau lived alone in a secluded cabin at Walden Pond. It is one of the most influential and compelling books in American literature. Much of Walden's material is derived from Thoreau's journals and contains such engaging pieces as "Reading" and "The Pond in the Winter." Other famous sections involve Thoreau's visits with a Canadian woodcutter and with an Irish family, a trip to Concord, and a description of his bean field. For the student and for the general reader, this is the ideal presentation of Thoreau's great document of social criticism and dissent." (Goodreads.com)

***Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer**

"In April, 1992, a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, a party of moose hunters found his decomposed body. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*. Immediately after graduating from college in 1991, McCandless had roamed through the West and Southwest on a vision quest like those made by his heroes Jack London and John Muir. In the Mojave Desert he abandoned his car, stripped it of its license plates, and burned all of his cash. He would give himself a new name, Alexander Supertramp, and, unencumbered by money and belongings, he would be free to wallow in the raw, unfiltered experiences that nature presented.

Craving a blank spot on the map, McCandless simply threw away the maps. Leaving behind his desperate parents and sister, he vanished into the wild." (Goodreads.com)

***Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

"Fair and long-legged, independent and articulate, Janie Crawford sets out to be her own person -- no mean feat for a black woman in the '30s. Janie's quest for identity takes her through three marriages and into a journey back to her roots." (Goodreads.com)

"A classic of the Harlem Renaissance, this beautiful, haunting story follows a woman's search for love, independence and, ultimately, self-discovery. A lyrical novel that has become a Southern masterpiece, this is a story that deserves to be read, re-read and savored.

One of the most important and enduring books of the twentieth century, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* brings to life a Southern love story with the wit and pathos found only in the writing of Zora Neale Hurston. Out of print for almost thirty years—due largely to initial audiences' rejection of its strong black female protagonist—Hurston's classic has since its 1978 reissue become perhaps the most widely read and highly acclaimed novel in the canon of African-American literature." (barnesandnoble.com)

***As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner**

"*As I Lay Dying* is Faulkner's harrowing account of the Bundren family's odyssey across the Mississippi countryside to bury Addie, their wife and mother. Narrated in turn by each of the family members -- including Addie herself -- as well as others; the novel ranges in mood, from dark comedy to the deepest pathos. Considered one of the most influential novels in American fiction in structure, style, and drama, *As I Lay Dying* is a true 20th-century classic. (Goodreads.com)