

**Brentwood High School
English Department
2022 Summer Reading**

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Overview of BHS Summer Reading – ALL SHOULD READ!:

Students,

We hope you have a relaxing summer, whether out fishing or splashing it up at the pool, keeping cool in the movie theater or taking in a baseball game. It's the season of detoxing from the rigors of academics and enjoying all that life has to offer - family, friends, and fun!

By the same token, though, we recognize the value of staying active of mind. In this spirit, we in the BHS English Department are determined to make summer reading opportunities purposeful and intentional.

Please review the document's contents below for your grade-specific requirements regarding summer reading for the upcoming 2022 fall semester. **A summer reading selection is mandatory, and teachers will conduct an opening assessment two weeks after the start of the 2022-2023 school year:**

Some grade levels provide a great deal of flexibility, so find something to suit your interests! With any option, please review and confirm choices with parents/guardians.

All the best,

Matt Grimes & Dr. Erica Powell
English Department Chairs, 2021-2022

English I

Welcome to Brentwood High! We highly recommend that you choose a book that you have always wanted to read. Your selection must meet the following requirements:

1. The work you choose should be a narrative of some variety - fiction is preferred, but nonfiction narratives or memoirs, etc., would work. Do *not* choose poetry or plays. Avoid non-fiction reads that do not tell a story (such as self-help books or compilations of essays and speeches).
2. As we want to maintain a certain expectation of grade-level challenge, your book should be a minimum of 150 pages.

3. Additionally, your book should have a lexile level of 800 or more (or as close to that number as possible). You can use this website to see if your book has an appropriate lexile level: [Lexile Find a Book site](#)

Ask a parent, grandparent, teacher, or friend what their favorite books are to get some ideas. We want you to be inspired as well as to read something that will be meaningful and relevant to you.

Still looking for ideas on what to read? Here are a few suggestions from our freshman teachers:

- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott (1300 L)
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (1050-1190 L)
- *Friday Night Lights* by H.G. Bissinger (1220 L)
- *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens (1090-1150 L)
- *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (various - choose an appropriate edition)
- *The Princess Bride* by William Golding (860 L)
- *Paper Towns* by John Greene (850 L)

Please DO NOT READ from the following works/WCS protected titles that likely will be covered in class:

- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
- *The Odyssey* by Homer
- *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles
- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang

Good luck with your search, and have fun reading!

Thanks,
BHS Freshman English Teachers – the best group in town!

English II

Congrats! You made it through your freshman year! You're well on your way through your high school career, and we want to make sure you don't "turn off" completely during the summer. For this reason, we are requiring students to read one novel that fulfills the following requirements:

- The book should be approximately on the 850 lexile level or higher. You can use the following site to guide your selection - [Lexile Find a Book site](#)
- The book should be a minimum of 200 pages.
- The book should be narrative in nature. That means it is *not* a collection of short stories or a self-help book or anything of that sort. Pay attention to your selection!

In an effort to make summer reading more accessible to a broad range of readers, we've selected a number of books that we feel will engage you both academically and personally. Though you may choose your own novel, here are some suggestions from the Sophomore English teachers:

- *In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez (910 L)
- *A Long Way Gone: Memoir of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah (920 L)
- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte (960 L)
- *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho (910 L)
- *Dune* by Frank Herbert (800 L)
- *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier (880 L)
- *Blindness* by Jose Saramago (NP)
- *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson (1130 L)
- *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan (930 L)
- *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien (1000 L)
- *The Invisible Man* by H.G. Wells (980 L)

The following are novels and plays you are likely read next year at BHS - these are books you should **not** read this summer:

- *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr
- *1984* by George Orwell
- *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose
- Any text by William Shakespeare
- *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

As you move toward adulthood and college, we on the sophomore team wanted to invigorate the chore of summer reading with a wide array of experiences and ideas. We recognize, though, that not all books "work" for all students; some content or themes may reach beyond an individual's or a family's comfort zone. Again, as long as your book meets the criteria outlined, you are good to go!

Your assignment upon returning to school will bridge from last year's freshman task - a one-pager digest of information - while building on rigor and challenge with a writing component that asks you to synthesize ideas and opinions of your own.

Though it is not a requirement, it is highly recommended that you take notes or annotations in your novel prior to the school's start date. This will help you to get back into the swing of things and to refine skills that may have gone dormant over the summer.

See you in the fall!

BHS Sophomore English Team

English III

Welcome to English III! While we hope your summer is productive recreationally, we also want to get ready for 2022-2023. We plan to build from the skills gained during freshman and

sophomore years to prepare you for a variety of writing possibilities, including the college essay at the end of the school year.

For your summer reading, you must **read one book** by Friday, August 19th, that meets the following criteria:

1. The book should be narrative literature in nature - no books of poetry, nonfiction, or plays.
2. The book must be written by an American author - do your homework!
3. The book should have an approximate lexile level of 900 L. The [Lexile Find a Book site](#) can help you out.
4. The book cannot be one read from a previous year of school. Branch out and try something new that interests you.

If your novel fits the bill, congrats! Should you have any questions, please visit the faculty page on the BHS website and email any of us. We'll be glad to help you out. Below is a list to get started if you're having trouble finding a suitable selection:

- *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan (1010 L)
- *Absalom, Absalom!* by William Faulkner (1070 L)
- *This Side of Paradise* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1070 L)
- *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Other Stories* by Washington Irving (1380 L)
- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey (1050 L)
- *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville (1150 L)
- *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair (1170 L)
- *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1050 L)
- *Black Boy* by Richard Wright (950 L)

We hope you choose something that works for you. See you in August!

BHS Junior English Teachers

English IV Standard and Honors:

Welcome to English IV! The following task applies to both standard and honors sections, so if that's you, you're in the right spot!

We love reading; we *want* you to read. However, we recognize that your plans post-BHS may be of higher priority. For this reason, **we ask you to read this PDF of college essays** (<https://www.oceanedco.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/essays-that-worked.pdf>) as planning for the first weeks of school. Our aim is to compile what is most helpful and most beneficial for the majority of our students moving forward, and this seems like a good starting point.

Our goal is to have students produce a rough draft college essay by **Monday, August 29th**. If you are not seeking to pursue entry at a college or university, we will craft an individual product that works for your purposes when you arrive to school in August.

We've included Common Application essay prompts for the 2022-2023 school year below. These might be useful for those wanting to get an early jump on writing!

Looking forward to seeing you for the final countdown to graduation!

All the best,
BHS Senior English Teachers

Common App Topics and Prompts, 2022-2023

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

AP Language – 11th grade

Overview: In AP Language, the primary focus is nonfiction essay writing—both personal and formal types and in a variety of genres (political, biographical, autobiographical, philosophical, ethical, etc.). Your test in May will challenge you in both analyzing the content of and the rhetorical strategies used within a variety of formal and informal nonfiction essays. The test will also ask you to compose three one-draft essays: one prompt will require you to synthesize several sources into an argument-persuasion formal essay addressing a current issue; a second prompt will ask you to analyze the argument and rhetorical strategies used within a specified text; a third prompt will give you an opportunity to write a personal essay, reacting to an abstract idea, in which you provide the specific and appropriate evidence in defense of your argument.

However, since this class is taken during your third year of high school, the course takes the place of English III, which traditionally uses a survey of American literature as the foundation for literary studies. Knowing that you will return to literature as the foundation for discussion during your senior year (usually AP Literature and Composition), we will include within our AP Language curriculum highlights of the American literary canon that are typically included within the AP Literature and Composition exam.

Summer reading selection reflects this two-tier focus of AP Language and Composition.

Assignment: You will read two selections this summer: an archetypal American novel, and one text from what is often called the “other literature,” that is the nonfiction genre. The assigned texts are:

1. *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton
AND
2. *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, a Young man, and Life’s Greatest Lesson* by Mitch Albom

You will need to procure your own copies, for in this class we practice annotating texts—requiring you to write, in blue or black ink, and within the margins, your reactions to the text. Your annotations prove that you have been involved intellectually with the text and the ideas. Do not expect your annotations to be perfect or sophisticated yet; but instead, strive to get involved in the intellectual journey and to record your involvement by your annotations. Your annotating skills will improve as the year progresses. This is just the start of your AP Language journey, for as the father of personal essay writing, Michel de Montaigne, explains: annotations are the record of your understanding at the time of the reading—more valuable than the actual text being annotated. As a reward for making sincere efforts to annotate your reactions, these texts will be submitted for an annotation grade.

So, what do you annotate? Reactions. Your reactions. Your reactions to character comments, use of symbols, settings, conflicts, aphorisms, reflections, possible themes, editorial comments of the narrator. Your annotations should not be summaries, but reflections, references, observations, personal epiphanies. In other words, they are an ink trail of your interaction with and analysis of the texts. Annotating is a key skill for optimal success in this class and in your future collegiate studies.

Be prepared to discuss these texts during the first two weeks of school, to beef up your annotations, and to both answer multiple-choice questions and write a variety of essays (like those described in the above “Overview”) addressing the rhetorical strategies, points of view, and abstract truths of the selected works.

Note Bene: The father of the personal essay, Michel de Montaigne, treasured his annotations more than the text, because his annotations were a record of his perceptions and his sense of truth at the time of the reading. Let your annotations do and be the same for you—a record of your mental journey.

AP Literature – 12th grade

Required Readings and Assignments:

- A. Purchase, read, and annotate *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro**
Beginning Monday, August 22nd, we will begin discussions on *Never Let Me Go*, a 2005 dystopian exploration of morals, ethics, and humanity set at a private

boarding school. To enrich your experience, you are expected to annotate the novel for the following elements:

- Universal themes (or Truth with a capital T, if you'd like) that highlight Ishiguro's exigency in writing *this* novel at *this* juncture in time
- Structural considerations of the novel – organization of chapters, patterns and motifs that recur throughout, etc.
- Characterization and point of view, especially of the three main characters: Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth
- Elements of tragedy and disaster (as one critic in the *London Review of Books* noted, "Ishiguro is fundamentally a tragic novelist; there is always a disaster, remote but urgent, imagined but real, at the heart of his stories.")
- Other items of interest to YOU.

Keep in mind that we do not need you to sacrifice enjoyment of the novel in favor of thousands of annotations. However, this is similar to math – annotations are your efforts to show your work and your thought process. For this reason, make your annotations purposeful; scribbling stock phrases like "Wow!" or "LOL" or "What?" do absolutely NOTHING to grapple with the complexity of the text. Write sentences, struggle with ideas, put down a risky proposal. Avoid platitudes or empty phrases just to fill the pages. Trust us... annotating need not be the bane of your existence. Do it correctly, as a tool for intellectual advancement, and you'll be a-ok.

This copy is the most frequently used: <https://www.amazon.com/Never-Let-Me-Kazuo-Ishiguro/dp/1400078776>

B. Work on/complete a college essay

Do your best to complete a college essay (most choose to complete a Common Application essay, though you may opt to work on a scholarship essay or a school-specific prompt instead). By the end of your attempts, you will have a viable and workable draft that can be proofed and edited in class. Please note that officials at College Board state that you should have one essay completed by the time the fall semester rolls around.

We are assisting you in practical but pertinent time management skills and your pursuit of academic endeavors beyond high school. HOWEVER, we are not in the business of "grading" the college essay – you ultimately must push yourself. We are your support system in this regard; we are willing to help you, but you must first help yourself.

Check out <https://www.commonapp.org/> and get yourself started on the path to success.

See you in the fall!