

English Department

All students are to read over the summer in preparation for the start of the new school year. Teachers selected these books to interest students and to enrich their literary background. The Belmont Public Library will receive copies of this list. If at all possible, students should purchase copies of their summer reading books so that they can mark them up and use them at the start of school.

Entering Freshmen

Entering freshmen taking honors English (9H) should read *Kindred* by Octavia Butler and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding.

Entering freshmen taking college preparatory English (9CP) should choose one book to read from a choice of three novels, listed below with publisher's summaries.

***Pop*, by Gordon Korman**

New to town, Marcus spends the summer before his junior year practicing football alone at a local park hoping to meet someone from the high school team. Instead, he meets an eccentric middle-aged man named Charlie who teaches Marcus more about football, tackling, and the art of the "pop" than he could have imagined, and the two strike up an unusual friendship. Marcus tries out and makes the team, but learns that they are not a welcoming group, fearful that the newcomer will upset their perfect record. To make matters worse, the star quarterback, Troy, is Charlie's son, and his ex-girlfriend, Alyssa, has the hots for Marcus. Gradually, Marcus figures out that Charlie is an ex-NFL star hiding a secret. Despite the obstacles, he is determined to help his friend.

This might be the book for you if you like football, characters who are great athletes, and themes of persistence, overcoming obstacles, and friendship.

***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, by Sherman Alexie**

Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he thought he was destined to live.

This might be the book for you if you like drawing, basketball, reading; characters who struggle to find an identity between two very different worlds; and books that are funny, sad, and smart.

***Speak*, by Laurie Halse Anderson**

Divided into the four marking periods of an academic year, the novel, narrated by Melinda Sordino, begins on her first day as a high school freshman. No one will sit with Melinda on the bus. At school, students call her names and harass her; her best friends from junior high scatter to different cliques and abandon her. Yet Anderson infuses the narrative with a wit that sustains the heroine through her pain and holds readers' empathy. A girl at a school pep rally offers an explanation of the heroine's pariah status when she confronts Melinda about calling the police at a summer party, resulting in several arrests. But readers do not learn why Melinda made the call until much later... Only through her work in art class, and with the support of a compassionate teacher there, does she begin to reach out to others and eventually find her voice.

This might be the book for you if you like art, characters who face real-life teenage issues like bullying, and themes of fear, courage, identity, friendship, and trust.

Entering Sophomores

Entering sophomores taking English 10CP should read *Early Autumn*, a novel by Robert Parker.

Students taking English 10H should read **one novel from the list of global authors** below.

Khaled Hosseini: *Kite Runner* or *And the Mountains Echoed*

Amy Tan: *Joy Luck Club* or *Kitchen God's Wife*

Jhumpa Lahiri: *Interpreter of Maladies* or *Unaccustomed Earth*

Julia Alvarez: *In the Time of the Butterflies* or *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accent*

Chimamanda Adichie: *Americanah* or *The Purple Hibiscus*

Isabel Allende: *House of the Spirits* or *Daughter of Fortune*

Marjane Satrapi: *Persepolis*

Entering Juniors

All entering juniors should read **at least one book about the American Dream and/or American identities from the American Literature Summer Reading list** (distributed in class and posted on Edline and the high school website). **Students entering 11H must read one contemporary AND one classic work from the list.**

Entering Seniors

As part of an activity in junior English classes, all students entering 12 CP selected at least one book, and all students entering 12H or 12AP selected at least two books, to read over the summer as preparation for the senior English thesis. Each senior also identified a back-up book to read if the first book proves uninteresting. A record of these titles is on file with the English Department. Entering seniors should read and annotate (in the margins or on sticky notes) at least those selected books for their senior thesis by the start of school in the fall; many graduates have suggested that entering seniors read as many thesis books as possible over the summer before the start of senior year. **Annotations are required for CP English students; they are recommended for AP/H English students to support additional essays they will have to write during the year. In addition to selected thesis books, all entering seniors should read the *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien.** Please see additional information on annotation requirements for CP English posted on our summer reading website.

All summer reading information is also available at <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bhs/summer/>