



ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
Summer Reading List
For Students Entering Grade 10

Essential Questions:

1. What can a book teach about the many dimensions of global culture (family, food, religions, gender, education, art, entertainment, etc.) at a particular place and time?
2. How do important historical or political shifts affect the lives of the people in a culture or society?
3. What character traits are considered noble, heroic, or admirable in a particular culture or society?
4. How does *fitting in with* or *clashing with* the cultural values of a society affect the individual?
5. What does reading about the culture and society of a different global area teach you about your own culture and society?

Selections:			
Author	Title	Synopsis	Global Area
Adichie	<i>Purple Hibiscus</i>	Adichie's novel tells the compelling story of a joyless family. Fifteen-year-old Kambili is the dutiful daughter of a rich man, a religious fanatic and domestic tyrant whose public image is of a politically courageous newspaper publisher and philanthropist. When a widowed aunt takes an interest in Kambili, her family begins to unravel and re-form itself in unpredictable ways. Amazon.com Review	Africa
Bronte	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	As an orphan, Jane's childhood is not an easy one, but her independence and strength of character sustain her through the miseries inflicted by cruel relatives and a brutal education system. Taking a job as a governess in a house containing dangerous secrets and a passionate man she finds increasingly attractive, Jane is ultimately forced to call on all her resources in order to hold fast to her beliefs. Amazon.com (product description)	Europe
Brooks	<i>Nine Parts of Desire</i>	Having spent six years covering the Middle East for the Wall Street Journal, Brooks presents an exploration of the daily life of Muslim women and the often contradictory forces that shape their lives. From Publishers Weekly	Middle East
Dostoyevski	<i>Notes from the Underground</i>	In <i>Notes from Underground</i> the unnamed narrator is a former official who has defiantly withdrawn into an underground existence. In full retreat from society, he scrawls a passionate, obsessive, self-contradictory narrative that serves as a devastating attack on social utopianism and an assertion of man's essentially irrational nature. Amazon.com (product description)	Russia
Dumas	<i>The Three Musketeers</i>	The Three Musketeers tells the story of D'Artagnan and his three friends from the regiment of the King's Musketeers - Athos, Porthos and Aramis. Under the watchful eye of their patron, the four defend the honour of the regiment and the queen as the power struggles of seventeenth century France are played out in the background. Amazon.com (product description)	Europe

Eire	<i>Waiting for Snow in Havana: Confessions of a Cuban Boy</i>	In the early nineteen-sixties, an operation called Pedro Pan deposited more than fourteen thousand Cuban children, without their parents, in Miami. Eire, now a professor at Yale, was one of them. In his deeply moving memoir Eire delivers unsparing indictments of practically everyone concerned, including himself. From <i>The New Yorker</i>	Caribbean
Jin	<i>In the Pond</i>	<i>In the Pond</i> tackles some very big issues: power, vanity, art, injustice, and politics. Set in modern Communist China, the book's hero, Shao Bin, is an employee at a fertilizer plant and a self-taught artist. When Bin publishes a satirical cartoon protesting official corruption, the consequences of this simple act snowball, and in self-defense, Bin finds himself aiming his attacks ever higher up the bureaucratic ladder. Amazon.com Review	China
Kincaid	<i>My Brother</i>	In <i>My Brother</i> , Jamaica Kincaid's searing account of her younger brother Devon's 1996 death from AIDS, the author is ruthlessly honest about her ambivalence toward the impoverished Caribbean nation from which she fled, her restrictive family, and the culture that imprisoned Devon. Amazon.com Review	Caribbean
Martel	<i>Life of Pi</i>	The son of a zookeeper, 16-year-old Pi Patel is raised in Pondicherry, India. Planning a move to Canada, his father packs up the family and their menagerie and they hitch a ride on an enormous freighter. After a harrowing shipwreck, Pi ultimately finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean, trapped on a 26-foot lifeboat with a 450-pound Bengal tiger, drifting for 227 days through shark-infested waters while fighting hunger, the elements, and an overactive imagination. Amazon.com Review	India
See	<i>Snow Flower and the Secret Fan</i>	Set in remote 19th-century China, this novel details the story of lifelong friends Lily and Snow Flower. See's in-depth research into women's ceremonies and duties brings fascinating revelations about arranged marriages, women's inferior status in both their natal and married homes, and the Confucian proverbs and myriad superstitions that informed daily life in China's rural interior. From Publishers Weekly	China
Rachlin	<i>Persian Girls: A Memoir</i>	This memoir tells the story of an Iranian girl growing up in a culture where, despite the Westernizing reforms of the Shah, women had little power or autonomy. As an infant in 1946, Rachlin was given to her mother's childless and widowed sister. But at the age of nine, Rachlin is returned to her birth family. Eventually Nahid manages to escape the typical female fate, convincing her father to send her to college in the U.S. From Publishers Weekly	Middle East
Sidhwa	<i>Water</i>	Set in 1938, against the backdrop of Gandhi's rise to power, <i>Water</i> follows the life of eight-year-old Chuyia, abandoned at a widow's ashram after the death of her elderly husband. There, she must live in penitence until her death. This riveting look at the lives of widows in colonial India is ultimately a haunting and lyrical story of love, faith, and redemption. Amazon.com (product description)	India