

## SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

The English Department is pleased to present its summer reading program for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Each Middle School student (6-8) **must read ONE mandatory summer reading book and one selected summer reading book** before the school year begins.

Each Upper School student (9-12) **must read ONE mandatory summer reading book and one selected summer reading book** before the school year begins.

Students should annotate their selected books as they read. Students should be prepared to write about their selections once they return in the fall; they will also be asked to discuss these books in class.

So that students might have a clearer sense of each choice, teachers have included short descriptions of the books for their respective classes.

We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

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ENGLISH 11<sup>th</sup> grade

Mandatory: **The Great Gatsby**, F. Scott Fitzgerald

**Bread Givers**, Anzia Yeziarska

Choose one from the following:

**How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents**, Julia Alvarez

The novel centers on four sisters: Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, and Sofia, who immigrate to NYC (in 1960) from the Dominican Republic. Although they try to become Americanized, they are caught between the old and the new, belonging eventually to two distinct cultures. In addition to being a story of immigrant struggle and American culture, it is also a coming of age story, in which each girl works to become a fully realized individual.

**Nickel and Dimed**, Barbara Ehrenreich

Motivated by welfare reform in the late 1990s, journalist Barbara Ehrenreich embarks on an undercover assignment to investigate the realities for low wage workers in America. Living in trailer parks and motels and working in a variety of minimum wage jobs like waitressing, she travels around the States to examine America's promise of the better life from the bottom.

**The Crucible**, Arthur Miller

The play is set during the Salem Witchcraft Trials and examines the hypocrisy and injustice of the early Puritan community, which brought about mass hysteria and

murder. It is also about one man's courage (John Proctor's) to admit his own wrongs in order to protect the innocent and take a stand against false accusations. On yet another level, the play is a political pamphlet against Senator McCarthy and the Red Scare, which launched its own witch hunt against alleged communists in the 1950s.

**The Things They Carried**, Tim O'Brien

The novel is set during the Vietnam War and tells the story of several American soldiers who must face the burdens of war: the fear, the shame, the guilt, the brutality, the futility. It brings into question not only the nature of the Vietnam War but the nature of all wars and the individual responses of those involved.

**The Jungle**, Upton Sinclair

**The novel is about Jurgis Rudkis**, a young Lithuanian immigrant who arrives in America filled with dreams of freedom, opportunity, and wealth. The reality, however, is life in Packingtown, the Chicago stockyards where he and his family struggle to make a living, maintain their dignity and even their very lives. It focuses on the injustices of slave wages, back-breaking labor, and urban chaos.

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