9th Grade Summer Reading

Choose one work of fiction and one work of non-fiction from the lists below and complete the assignment below. The reading journal will be handed in during the first week of classes and will count as a quiz grade.

Assignment - Reading Journal
Directions:
   a) On looseleaf, keep track of your reading and your responses to each book read.
   b) Date each entry, keep track of how many pages you have read and record your responses.
      • Journal can be typed or hand-written.
      • 25-word minimum per entry
      • A minimum of one entry per chapter. There is no limit on how much you can write.
   The following sentence openers will help you choose a focus for your entries.
      • I can't really understand…
      • I was surprised…
      • I wonder why…
      • I'm confused by…
      • I began to think of…
      • I understand the feeling…
      • I can't believe…
      • I love the way the author…
      • I noticed…
      • I'm not certain, but maybe…
      • I was motivated to read these pages because…
      • I found it difficult to focus on the reading because…
      • I figured out that…
      • Now I understand why…
      • _____ is a character who…
      • I hope…
      • I'm frustrated by the way…
      • This reminds me of another work of literature, ________…
      • I think I'm going to have to remember…

Fiction - Choose one work from this list.

Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry
Annemarie Johansen, the ten-year-old central character, lived in Copenhagen, Denmark, and was caught up in the events surrounding the rescue of the Danish Jews. She and her family risked their lives to help Annemarie's best friend, by pretending she was her sister who died earlier in the war.
**Interpreter of Maladies**, by Jhumpa Lahiri
This collection of stories revolves around the lives of Indians and Indian Americans who are caught between the culture of their heritage and the “New World” of America.

**When I Was Puerto Rican**, by Esmeralda Santiago
In the first of her three memoirs chronicling her childhood in Puerto Rico to her eventual residence in the United States, Esmeralda Santiago’s *When I Was Puerto Rican* recounts her early years. This coming-of-age tale recounts Santiago’s journey from rural Puerto Rico to bustling New York City.

**The Secret Life of Bees**, by Sue Monk Kidd
*The Secret Life of Bees* tells the story of a fourteen-year-old white girl, Lily Owens, in South Carolina in 1964. When after a run-in with three racists in town, Lily’s fierce-hearted “stand-in mother,” Rosaleen escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother’s past. Lily finds refuge in their enchanting world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna after being taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters.

**Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close**, by Jonathan Safran Foer
The book’s narrator is an eight-year-old boy named Oskar Schell. Two years before the story begins, Oskar loses his father on 9/11. In the story, Oskar discovers a key in a vase that belonged to his father. Oskar embarks on a healing journey that takes him through the five boroughs after he finds a mysterious key belonging to his late father. With humor, tenderness, and awe, this journey of healing attempts to confront the trauma left behind after that fateful day.

**Stargirl**, by Jerry Spinelli
Capturing Leo Borlock’s heart with just one smile, a new girl and non-conformist, Stargirl turns her school upside down from day one. While the students are initially enchanted by her free spirit, they quickly turn on her. Panicked and desperate, Leo urges her to become the one thing that can destroy her: common.

**Nothing But the Truth**, by Avi
This novel of historical fiction tells the story of a boy in a fictional New Hampshire town that is suspended for humming the United States National Anthem. The story gains national publicity as what happened in the classroom changes everyone involved in ways that no one could have predicted.

**Finding Nouf**, by Zoe Ferraris
Palestinian-born desert guide Nayir is an outsider among the well-to-do families of Jeddah. However, when the 16-year-old daughter of a wealthy Saudi, Nouf ash-Shrawi, disappears just before her arranged marriage, Nayir is the one trusted to bring her home. This captivating, often suspenseful murder mystery is set against the clash of generational differences in modern Saudi Arabian society.

**Mudbound**, by Hillary Jordan
Laura McAllen finds herself in a place both foreign and frightening when her husband Henry moves his city-bred wife to a cotton farm in the Mississippi Delta in 1946. Laura struggles to adjust to rural life and raise their two young children in an isolated shotgun shack with no indoor plumbing or electricity, under the eye of her hateful, racist father-in-law in the Jim Crow South.

**Catherine, Called Birdy**, by Karen Cushman
The 13-year-old daughter of a medieval English country knight keeps a journal in which she records the events of her life, and her attempts to avoid being married off by her father. The inventive and humorous Birdy does her best to get rid of any male suitor her father has in mind for her.
**Chinese Cinderella**, by Adeline Yen
This memoir offers a bittersweet look into the pain of childhood and an intriguing glimpse at a tumultuous time in 1940s China. Life is difficult after Adeline’s father remarries. She and her siblings are subjected to the abuse of her stepmother, while her stepsiblings are spoiled with gifts and attention. Adeline accolades at school are not enough to compensate for what she really needs -- the love and understanding of her family. This powerful “Cinderella story” is a moving story of resilience and hope.

**The Martian Chronicles**, by Ray Bradbury
*The Martian Chronicles* is a science fiction consisting of several related short stories. It chronicles the exploration and colonization of Mars, by Americans leaving an Earth that was devastated by nuclear war.

**She’s Come Undone**, by Wally Lamb
This coming-of-age novel brings readers on a wild ride on a journey of love, pain, and renewal. Dolores Price, a heartbreakingly comical heroine, is determined to rise to the occasion and give herself one more chance before she really goes under when she realizes that her life is getting away from her.

**Esperanza Rising**, by Pam Munoz Ryan
In this historical novel, Esperanza thought she’d always live with her affluent family on their ranch in Mexico. However, the murder of her father forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California during the Great Depression and to settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers. Esperanza must find a way to rise above these new difficult circumstances including hard labor and financial hardship. The lives of her and her mother depend on it.

**Peak** by Roland Smith.
After Peak Marcello is arrested for scaling a New York City skyscraper, he's left with two choices: wither away in juvenile detention or go live with his long-lost father, who runs an overseas climbing company. But Peak quickly learns that his father's renewed interest in him has strings attached. Big strings. As the owner of Peak Expeditions, he wants his son to be the youngest person to reach the Everest summit—and his motives are selfish at best. Even so, for a climbing addict like Peak, tackling Everest is the challenge of a lifetime. It's also one that could cost him his life.

**The Plague**, by Albert Camus
Set in a town consumed by a deadly virus, *The Plague* is Albert Camus's world-renowned fable of fear and courage. The townspeople of Oran are in the grip of a deadly plague, which condemns its victims to a swift and horrifying death. Fear, isolation, and claustrophobia follow as they are forced into quarantine. Each person responds in their own way to the lethal disease: some resign themselves to fate, some seek blame, and a few, like Dr. Rieux, resist the terror. An immediate triumph when it was published in 1947, The Plague is in part an allegory of France’s suffering under the Nazi occupation and a story of bravery and determination against the precariousness of human existence.

**Non-Fiction** - Choose one work from this list.

**Into The Wild**, by John 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. He had given $25,000 in savings to a charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a life for himself. Jon Krakauer brings Chris McCandless's uncompromising pilgrimage out of the shadows and illuminates it with meaning in this mesmerizing and heartbreaking tour de force.
Go Ask Alice, by an anonymous author
A book, presented in diary form, about a teenage girl who develops a drug addiction at age 15 and runs away from home on a journey of self-destructive escapism.

Zlata’s Diary, by Zlata Filipovic
Zlata begins writing in her diary when she had just started fifth grade. Her diary chronicles her daily life from 1991 to 1993 during the Bosnian War and the war’s increasing impact on her hometown of Sarajevo. Zlata Filipovic becomes a witness to food shortages and the deaths of friends and learns to wait out bombardments in a neighbor’s cellar. She remains courageous and observant. The result is a book that has the power to move and instruct readers a world away.

A Place to Stand, by Jimmy Santiago Baca
Baca’s memoir tells of his life before, during, and after incarceration in a maximum security prison, delving into concepts of parental abandonment and an unjust legal system. It is a triumph of overcoming adversity and finding one’s voice.

Fast Food Nation, by Eric Schlosser
Journalist Eric Schlosser discusses facts about food production and preparation, the ingredients and taste-enhancers in the food, the chains’ efforts to reel in young, susceptible consumers, and other unsettling facts. He reasons that the fast food industry has led to the growth of malls throughout America, widened the economic gap, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and propelled American cultural imperialism across the globe.

Isaac’s Storm, by Erick Larson
Blending science and history, Isaac’s Storm is the story of Galveston, Texas, its people, and the hurricane that devastated them. Relying on hundreds of personal reflections on the storm, Larson follows individuals through the pivotal day and the days that follow. Larson describes its nuances in immense detail, with the storm itself as the book’s true protagonist.

Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee, by Charles Shields
With over 40 million copies sold, To Kill a Mockingbird is perhaps the twentieth century’s most widely read American novel. Despite its popularity, its author continues to be a somewhat mystifying figure. Shields brings to life the warmhearted, high-spirited, and occasionally hardheaded woman who gave us two of American literature’s most unforgettable characters—Atticus Finch and his daughter, Scout—and who contributed to the success of her lifelong friend Truman Capote’s masterpiece, In Cold Blood.