

## Summer Reading Information for Ninth Graders 2018

The ninth grade English summer reading list includes fiction and non-fiction literature that centers on the themes of *Community, Conflict, and Identity*. Students will read their novels and prepare their reading assignment (*details below*) which they will then use as notes in preparation for class discussion and an in-class essay test in which they will be asked to explore the following focus questions:

- ❑ Based on events and character actions, how is the individual shaped and changed by conflict between personal voice and the voice of his or her community?
- ❑ Based on events and character actions, why is it important to strike a balance between personal beliefs and those of the community?
- ❑ Based on events and character actions, why do some people conform to society's expectations while others choose not to conform and what are the consequences?
- ❑ Based on events and character actions, how should individuals respond when individual choices and desires are in direct conflict with the beliefs of the community?

---

### The Books!

*The Absolutely True Story of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (semi-autobiographical, fiction)

*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (vignettes; semi-autobiographical, fiction)

*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya (semi-autobiographical, historical fiction)

*A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula LeGuin (fantasy)

*Esperanza Rising* Pam Munoz (historical fiction)

*Red Sky at Morning* by Richard Bradford (historical fiction, comedy)

---

**Reading Assignment:** In addition to reading their chosen novel, students will keep a double-entry journal with AT LEAST ten entries (although more are encouraged) in which they record passages from the text that they feel are especially important, respond to the passage, and connect it to other stories, movies/games, personal experiences, or current events. The following page has a sample double-entry format to follow. This can be either typed or handwritten and is meant to help students connect more deeply with their novel.

<p><b>Directions for Left Side:</b>          Copy or summarize part of the text that is important, intriguing, moving, puzzling, or which connects to the essential questions.</p> <p>Be sure to write the page number.</p> <p>Reminder: Any words you copy directly from the text should be written inside quotation marks ("___"). You may use an ellipsis ( ... ) to omit unnecessary parts of a long passage, but be sure to keep all the important parts.</p>	<p><b>Directions for the Right Side:</b>          Write your personal response to the passage you listed on the left side. Your response should do <u>at least two</u> the following things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a connection (to the essential questions, to self, to history, to current events, or to other stories)</li> <li>• Make a prediction</li> <li>• Describe a mental picture</li> <li>• Ask questions</li> <li>• Discuss why this part is important</li> <li>• Reflect on author's choices (writing style, character development, plot development, etc.)</li> </ul>
--	---

**Double Entry Journals**

Excerpt from novel, page number:	Personal Response:
<p>"Richard wrote a mental diary in his head. 'Dear Diary,' he began. 'On Friday I had a job, a fiancé, a home, and a life that made sense. (Well, as much as a life makes sense). Then I found an injured girl bleeding on the pavement and I tried to be Good Samaritan. Now I've got no fiancé, no home, no job, and I'm walking around a couple of hundred feet under the streets of London with the projected life expectancy of a suicidal fruit fly.' "</p> <p>— Neil Gaiman, <i>Neverwhere</i>, pg. 36</p>	<p>The reason I chose this quote here is because it seems like it sums up life pretty well. Most of the people I know have all these big plans and everything is all in order and we're working toward these goals, but a lot of the time, they don't work out if you don't stick exactly to The Plan (the way society wants you to work and behave). My cousin wants to be a writer, but that's not a job anyone respects, so she has to work at a restaurant and put up with annoying people all day because she got a degree in creative writing. She didn't try to get a job with computers or science and so she can't get a good job now, because she did the things she wanted instead of what was expected. Like take Richard, he was working toward what everyone wants, a good career and a hot wife, what society expects of him, but the one time he goes against society to help a homeless looking bag lady bleeding in the street, everyone shuns him. He becomes invisible to our society by doing this one act of kindness. Sometimes we do what WE think is right and society doesn't forgive our choices and like Richard, we fall through the cracks and it is bad for the individual.</p>

Contact Information for Summer Reading, English 9 and 10:  
Tara D. Groneman, English 9 and 10 Instructor  
[tara.groneman@datacharter.org](mailto:tara.groneman@datacharter.org)