

## 9th Honors English Summer Reading

We are pleased you have decided to challenge yourself as you enter your freshman year at Wood River High School. The following is the Summer Reading for the 9th Honors English class at WRHS. These readings will better prepare you not only for your Honors English class, but also, future classes throughout high school.

Homer's epic, *The Odyssey*, is an anchor text for the 9th grade English classes during first semester. In order to fully understand the mythological allusions (references) in the text, we are assigning the following sections from **Edith Hamilton's *Mythology***:

- In Part One: "The Titans and the Twelve Great Olympians" (15 pages)
- In Part Two: "Pyramus and Thisbe" (3 pages)
- In Part Four: "The Heroes of the Trojan War" (35 pages)
  - "The Trojan War" (intro), "The Judgement of Paris," "The Trojan War," and "The Fall of Troy"
- In Part Five: Read the entire section of "The House of Atreus" (27 pages)

These are the required sections, but feel free to read more. The book is filled with commonly alluded to stories, and it can only benefit you in future readings and classes.

**Do not read *The Odyssey* during the summer.**

Additionally, it is required that you read **one book of your choice from the titles on the back of this document/next page if reading online**. Reading should be completed before the first day of class. We will begin the year with a unit related to your summer reading. There will be an assessment and discussions the first week of school.

Books are available at the public libraries and Iconoclast Books in Hailey (the Meriwether Building behind Java) as well as Amazon or other bookstores. WRHS has some of these titles as well, and you are welcome to check them out from the bookroom any day between 3:30-4:00 up until the end of the school year.

It is your responsibility to acquire these texts whether you check them out from a library, WRHS's book room, purchase them, or download them (see below).

If you need any help or have any questions now or over the summer, feel free to email either teacher:

Amy McGraw: [amcgraw@blaineschools.org](mailto:amcgraw@blaineschools.org)

Sarah Allen: [sallen@blaineschools.org](mailto:sallen@blaineschools.org)

An PDF of Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* can be found here: [Edith Hamilton Link](#)

Feel free to take notes or annotate your books (if you've purchased them), but it is not required to do so.

## **Book Options:**

All summaries and reviews come from amazon.com; books with an asterisk (\*) next to the title are available at WRHS for check out prior to June 7 (Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* is also available)

### **\**Bless Me Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya (1999)**

Content Warnings: lots of religious conversation and debate; there are some swear words

Genre: fiction, young adult, coming of age, magical realism. Latino literature

This coming-of-age classic and the bestselling Chicano novel of all time follows a young boy as he questions his faith and beliefs -- now one of PBS's "100 Great American Reads."

Antonio Marez is six years old when Ultima comes to stay with his family in New Mexico. She is a curandera, one who cures with herbs and magic. Under her wise wing, Tony will probe the family ties that bind him, and he will discover himself in the magical secrets of the pagan past--a mythic legacy as palpable as the Catholicism of Latin America. And at each life turn there is Ultima, who delivered Tony into the world...and will nurture the birth of his soul. The winner of the 2015 National Humanities Medal, Rudolfo Anaya is acclaimed as the father of Chicano literature in English and for his rich and compassionate writing about the Mexican-American experience.

### **\**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon (2004)**

Content Warnings: some animal cruelty/death and adult situations

Genre: fiction, young adult, mystery

A bestselling modern classic—both poignant and funny—about a boy with autism who sets out to solve the murder of a neighbor's dog and discovers unexpected truths about himself and the world. Nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read*

This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.

### ***Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford (2009)**

Content Warnings: racism

Genre: fiction, historical, World War II, romance, Asian literature

The book jumps between two time periods, the 1940s and 1980s. It follows the experiences of Henry Lee growing up in Seattle during World War II as a Chinese American where he attends an American school mostly by white students. There he meets Keiko and amid the chaos of blackouts, curfews, and FBI raids, Henry and Keiko forge a bond of friendship—and innocent love—that transcends the long-standing prejudices of their Old World ancestors. Forty years later, the Panama hotel in Seattle, once the gateway to Seattle's Japantown, is opened up after being boarded up for decades and the owner finds belongings of Japanese families, left when they were rounded up and sent to internment camps during World War II. Now a widower, Henry is still trying to find his voice—words that might explain the actions of his nationalistic father; words that might bridge the gap between him and his modern, Chinese American son; words that might help him confront the choices he made many years ago.

### ***How It Went Down* by Kekla Magoon (2014)**

Content Warnings: violence

Genre: fiction, realistic, young adult, African American literature

When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson dies from two gunshot wounds, his community is thrown into an uproar. Tariq was black. The shooter, Jack Franklin, is white. In the aftermath of Tariq's death, everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events line up. Day by day, new twists further obscure the truth.

Tariq's friends, family, and community struggle to make sense of the tragedy, and to cope with the hole left behind when a life is cut short. In their own words, they grapple for a way to say with certainty: This is how it went down.

*How It Went Down* by Kekla Magoon is a timely story by an acclaimed author who won the Coretta Scott King-John Steptoe Award for the Rock and the River, whose book *X :A Novel* (written with Ilyasah Shabazz) was longlisted for the National Book Award.