



Upper School English Summer Reading Guide 2025

Dear Students,

Welcome to the Upper School Summer Reading Guide for 2025. Here, you will find a list of the **required and choice books for all English courses**, plus links so you can find out more about each title, read reviews, make informed choices based on your interests, and, if you would like, order your summer texts right away. You will also find the code to each course's Google Classroom so you can access instructions and expectations for the assignments that are due by **Monday, August 18th at 10:00PM**.

As a student in the Upper School, please acquire texts on your own (new or used, borrowed from a friend or your local library) and in whatever medium you prefer (print, ebook, or audiobook). Unless a particular edition or translation is indicated, any will suffice. The links to Boswell Books are for your reference. **Read the instructions carefully to understand what is required and what is optional.**

Enroll in the appropriate Google Classroom ASAP. Once enrolled, carefully read the summer assignment.

Initiated by the English Department in 1975, required summer reading has long been a tradition at The Prairie School. The Department believes that reading and learning should end neither in June nor with the curriculum. We expect students to take advantage of the summer to read books of their choosing — *above and beyond what is required for school*. No matter a student's grade level, required and independent reading help students practice and improve their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.

Please make sure you have submitted all summer work to Google Classroom by August 18th, 10PM. Submissions after that time will be considered late.

Have a wonderful summer of reading!

Sincerely,

Mr. Bayer
Ms. Davis
Mr. Peterson
Dr. Sattler
Dr. Wheeler

2025 SRC Summer Reading Resources

Need to find summer reading books?

SRC Website

<https://sites.google.com/prairieschool.com/src/upper>

*Use this link to access the library catalog and Sora ebooks.

Destiny Discover Library Catalog (print)



**You must be logged in to request holds on books and view your account information.

For Grades 6-12

Username: school email address

Password: 1234

Example

flast01@prairieschool.com

1234

* Passwords can be changed and reset by the librarian. Please email src@prairieschool.com to make any password changes.

*Parents/Guardians are welcome to have their own SRC accounts. Please email the librarian at src@prairieschool.com to request an account.

WI Schools Digital Library Catalog (WSDLC) + Sora app (ebooks and digital audiobooks)

*Use your school Google account as login on a phone, iPad, or Chromebook.

You can also link your digital public library catalog with your public library card number and pin to your Sora app.



Please see local public libraries and Boswell Book Company for additional copies.

English 9

"Sometimes the only reason for us to be somewhere else is to see things from a different perspective."

- Leila Summers

Google Classroom code: 7yak7bqu. Please join to access the full assignment instructions.

The blessing and bane of being a reader is that there are always more amazing texts to read than hours in a day—or days in a school year, for that matter. Therefore, our summer reading is a curated list of well-known, well-read, and well-loved 9th-grade classics that perfectly complement our in-class work.

Each of these works explores a journey: toward adulthood, toward the unknown, toward destiny. Therefore, as you prepare for your journey into Upper School, reading two (2) of these important works will be time well spent. While you are required to read *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, you may choose the second text from the list of options below. Please read the synopses from Boswell Books and follow the links for more information:

■ **OUR REQUIRED TEXT**

- [*The Alchemist*](#) by **Paulo Coelho**: Combining magic, mysticism, wisdom, and wonder into an inspiring tale of self-discovery, Coelho's masterpiece tells the mystical story of Santiago, a shepherd boy who yearns to travel in search of a worldly treasure. His quest will lead him to riches far different—and far more satisfying—than he ever imagined. Santiago's journey teaches us about the essential wisdom of listening to our hearts, of recognizing opportunity and learning to read the omens strewn along life's path, and, most importantly, to follow our dreams.

■ **YOUR CHOICE (CHOOSE ONE)**

- [*Big Fish: A Novel of Mythic Proportions*](#) by **Daniel Wallace**: In his prime, Edward Bloom was an extraordinary man. He could outrun anybody, never missed a day of school, and saved lives and tamed giants. Animals loved him, people loved him, women loved him. At least that's what he told his son, William. But now Edward Bloom is dying, and William wants to know the truth about his elusive father—this indefatigable teller of tall tales—before it's too late. So, using the few facts he knows, William re-creates Edward's life in a series of legends and myths, through which he begins to understand his father's great feats—and failings.
- [*Fahrenheit 451*](#) by **Ray Bradbury**: Guy Montag is a fireman. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life and wife, Mildred, who spends all day with her television "family." But when he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known.
- [*Spinning Silver*](#) by **Naomi Novik**: Miryem is the daughter and granddaughter of moneylenders, but her father's inability to collect his debts has left his family on the edge of poverty—until Miryem takes matters into her own hands. Hardening her heart, the young woman sets out to claim what is owed and soon gains a reputation for being able to turn silver into gold. When an ill-advised boast draws the attention of the king of the Saryk—grim fey creatures who seem more ice than flesh—Miryem's fate, and that of two kingdoms, will be forever altered. She will face an impossible challenge and, along with two unlikely allies, uncover a secret that threatens to consume the lands of humans and Saryk alike.

Your summer assignment is due on August 18th by 10PM; directions and details can be found on Google Classroom.

English 10

"The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."

— Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Join the summer Google Classroom with the class code **k2cldm6** to see the full instructions for summer reading and the slideshow introducing the required and choice texts.

Please read the following PLAY:

["Master Harold"...and the Boys](#) (Athol Fugard) - **Drama**

In addition, please choose ONE MORE book to read:

- [The Drowned Cities](#) (Paolo Bacigalupi) - **Fiction**
- [Purple Hibiscus: A Novel](#) (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie) - **Fiction**
- [Finding Nouf](#) (Zoe Ferraris) - **Fiction**
- [Babel](#) (R. F. Kuang) - **Fiction**
- [Outcasts United: The Story of A Refugee Soccer Team That Changed A Town](#) (Warren St. John) - **Nonfiction**
- [How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child](#) (Sandra Uwiringiyimana) - **Nonfiction**
- [The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope](#) (William Kamkwamba) - **Nonfiction**
- [Everything Is Tuberculosis: The History and Persistence of Our Deadliest Infection](#) (John Green) - **Nonfiction**
- [Canyon Dreams](#) (Michael Powell) - **Nonfiction**

Your writing assignment about your books is due on August 18th at 10PM and can be found in our Google Classroom.

English 11

"Dreams are the touchstones of our characters."
— Henry David Thoreau

Join the ENG11 summer Google Classroom with the class code **qvq4rcz** for full instructions.

For this summer's reading, we have two required texts – one is a brief history of American ideas and the other is a movie that explores those ideas. Both will enable our class to begin exploring the central themes and topics of American literature and culture.

Our required book:

[The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea That Shaped a Nation](#) by Jim Cullen (2004). This history explores how ideas of "The American Dream" have changed over time and have reflected key eras of American history. **Read the Introduction and Chapters 1-5.** ([Bookfinder](#) is a good source for used texts; Boswell Books is linked above for new books.)

I will be providing regular **reading questions for each chapter**, as well as **extracredit options**. But you must sign up for Google Classroom to find these items.

Our movies (select one and find it online or at your local library):

- **The New World** (Terrence Malick, 2005). A dreamlike vision of the founding of Jamestown and the meeting of Captain John Smith with the young Native American woman we now call Pocahontas.
- **Hamilton** (Lin-Manuel Miranda, 2020). A recording of Miranda's 2015 Broadway smash, a hip-hop reimagining of the life of Alexander Hamilton and the founding of the American nation. (Only available at this time via Disney+.)
- **High Noon** (Fred Zinnemann, 1952). A dark Western, filmed during the Hollywood Red Scare, telling the story of a small-town sheriff who must stand alone against outlaws returning on the noon train, all swearing revenge.
- **Minari** (Lee Isaac Chung, 2020). A touching drama of a Korean-American family that moves to an Arkansas farm in search of their own American Dream.

Your writing assignment is due on August 18th, at 10PM, and can be found in the Google Classroom.

English 12

"The point of essays is the point of writing anything. It's not to tell people what they already think or to give them more of what they already believe; it's to challenge people, and it's to suggest alternate ways of thinking about things."

— Meghan Daum

The Google Classroom code is [5n2cwvm4](#). Please join the Google Classroom to see the full instructions.

Read [Pulphhead: Essays](#) by John Jeremiah Sullivan. See our Google Classroom to know which essays to read and what the follow-up assignments are.

A letter to students about the [college essay component of their summer assignment](#). You will complete the college-essay component after your College Essay Workshop in June *and* after you have read at least some of the essays in *Pulphhead*.

The three components of your summer assignment are due on August 18th at 10PM and can be found in the Google Classroom.

AP English 12

"Reading is the sole means by which we slip, involuntarily, often helplessly, into another's skin, another's voice, another's soul."

— Joyce Carol Oates

All instructions and assignment information can be found in Google Classroom with code: [j5ctmy43](#).

Everyone should read the required book and one choice book:

- [Jasmine](#) (Bharati Mukherjee)
- Choice Book for AP Portfolio

NOTE: These directions can also be found on the US 2025 AP Work document. Ms. Davis will provide you with separate instructions, activities, and due dates via Google Classroom before the end of the school year.

Literary Labyrinths

"We all live in a kind of continuous dream,' I told him. 'When we wake, it is because something, some event, some pinprick even, disturbs the edges of what we've taken as reality.'"

— Jeff Vandermeer

The Google Classroom Code is [fkiyxvs4](#). Please join the Google Classroom to see the full instructions.

Choose ONE of the following books to read and ONE of the listed films to watch.

- [Get in Trouble: Stories](#) (Kelly Link)
- [Lagoon](#) (Nnedi Okorafor)
- [A Tale for The Time Being](#) (Ruth Ozeki)
- [Slade House](#) (David Mitchell)
- [This Is How You Lose the Time War](#) (Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone)
- [The Space Between Worlds](#) (Micaiah Johnson)

Film options:

- [Fight Club](#)
- [Rashomon](#)
- [Twelve Monkeys](#)
- [Shutter Island](#)
- [Inception](#)

Your writing assignment about your book and film is due on Monday, August 18th at 10PM and can be found in our Google Classroom (join with code above).