

**Summer Reading List - Grade 11
2010**

As a candidate for 11th Grade English, you are required to read two books from this list during the summer. During the second week of school, you will be asked to write an in-class essay to demonstrate your knowledge of the books and provide your new English teacher with a sample of your writing. Candidates for Honors are required to read *Grendel* and **two** other books designated 3 or 4.

The following list contains a brief description of each book and a numbered rating system to indicate to you the degree of difficulty of each book. The numbers mean:

1. a book slightly easier than 11th grade level
2. a book typical of the reading ability of an 11th grader
3. a book geared to slightly older students
4. a difficult read -- you should be a good reader with the persistence to finish a lengthy book.

1. ***To Sir, With Love*** – E.R. Braithwaite (1)
A true story of a black teacher who comes to an inner city school in London’s East End.
2. ***Regeneration*** – Pat Barker (1)
During the First World War an English army psychiatrist treats a group of shell-shocked young men. They explore vivid flashbacks of the war, their feelings about pacifism and masculinity, and conflicts around social class.
3. ***Born on a Blue Day*** – Daniel Tammet (1)
An autobiography of an autistic savant who explores what it’s like to be different from early childhood until adulthood, when he finally realizes his true self.
4. ***Brave New World*** - Aldous Huxley (2)
A look into the future makes this fascinating story of a utopian society a classic of science fiction.
5. ***Cry, The Beloved Country*** – Alan Paton (2)
This novel exposes the racial inequality and injustices in historic South Africa.
6. ***Dracula*** – Bram Stoker (2)
Evil comes to England from Transylvania. The classic vampire story that started it all, this novel has served as a basis for over thirty films and a Broadway play.
7. ***The Inheritance of Loss*** – Kiran Desai (3)
In the Himalayan foothills a young woman arrives at her grandfather’s remote home, soon to be invaded by insurgents. Simultaneously, a young Indian man makes his way as a new immigrant in New York City. This book explores issues of identity, social class, and ethnic conflict.
8. ***Wuthering Heights*** – Emily Bronte (3)

The passionate love story of Heathcliff and Catherine explores the degree to which death and time have power over passion and revenge.

9. ***Howard's End*** - E.M. Forster (3)

Set in Edwardian England, this novel concerns the relationships that develop among the members of the imaginative, life-loving Schlegel family.

10. ***Grendel*** – John Gardner (3)*

A man-eating monster struggles with mortality and his place in the world in Anglo-Saxon Denmark. In *Grendel*, American writer John Gardner rewrites the primary English epic, *Beowulf*, from the perspective of its surprisingly articulate and conflicted villain.

11. ***Jane Eyre*** – Charlotte Bronte (4)

The inspiring story of a young orphan who is alienated from her snobbish foster family but grows to become sure of herself despite a society that is extremely class-conscious.

12. ***Gulliver's Travels*** – Jonathan Swift (4)

Lemuel Gulliver takes four fantastic voyages to different lands, each of which would delight any child. Though this novel is playful, Jonathan Swift uses it to make pointed criticisms about all sorts of social ills that plague England at the time of its writing, though it still has relevance today due to its astute observations of human flaws.

13. ***Tess of the D'Urbervilles*** – Thomas Hardy (4)

Thomas Hardy's moving novel of a girl in Victorian England who must cope with being a victim of rape and therefore an outcast. This novel speaks not only to feminist concerns, but to questions of guilt, compassion, and self-image as well.

14. ***The French Lieutenant's Woman*** – John Fowles (4)

An inventive novel about Victorian England (written in the 1970's) in which a wealthy young man falls in love with an ostracized woman who had an illicit relationship with a French soldier.

* In addition to reading **two** books from the list rated either 3 or 4, honors candidates must read *Grendel*.

Since credit for having read the books will be given to you as part of your grade for the first quarter of your new English class, we suggest that you take some notes on the important features of the book if there is to be a long period between the time you read the book and the time you write the essay.