**Summer Reading: BHS English Department**



1st Annual Read-Across Barrington High School!

This summer, the teachers of the Barrington High School English Department want to encourage you to read for the fun of it. We’ve selected three books we think you’ll enjoy and all you have to do is read one of them over the summer. When you return to school in August, you’ll have the opportunity to discuss the book with both students in your grade as well as those in other grades and to write about what you have read. You can complete the attached graphic organizer if you think it will help you remember what you have read when it comes time to talk/write about it, but you don’t have to.

Here’s how it works:

1. Choose one of the books below. They are listed in order from the most accessible to the most complex with respect to their length and complexity:

***We Were Liars*** (2014)

E. Lockhart’s novel follows Cadence Sinclair Easton who comes from an old-money family, headed by a patriarch who owns a private island off of Cape Cod. Each summer, the extended family gathers at the various houses on the island, and Cadence, her cousins Johnny and Mirren, and friend Gat (the four "Liars"), have been inseparable since age eight. During their fifteenth summer however, Cadence suffers a mysterious accident. She spends the next two years—and the course of the book—in a haze of amnesia, debilitating migraines, and painkillers, trying to piece together just what happened. Lockhart writes in a somewhat sparse style filled with metaphor and jumps from past to present and back again—rather fitting for a main character struggling with a sudden and unexplainable life change. The story, while lightly touching on issues of class and race, more fully focuses on dysfunctional family drama, a heart-wrenching romance between Cadence and Gat, and, ultimately, the suspense of what happened during that fateful summer. The ending is a stunner that will haunt readers for a long time to come.(School Library Journal*). 242 pages*

***Norwegian By Night*** (2013)

Derek Miller’s novel—selected as this year’s Read Across Rhode Island selection by the Rhode Island Center for the Book—follows Sheldon Horowitz who has outlived everyone he’s known, except his granddaughter, Rhea, who fears he suffers from dementia and convinces him to move from Manhattan to Oslo, where she lives with her Norwegian husband. So the 82-year-old finds himself in a strange land, bemused by placid, orderly Norwegians. When a young woman is murdered in his apartment building, Sheldon shelters her young son and sets out to find a refuge for him. But the killer is a brutal Kosovar war criminal, and Sheldon must rely on his Korean War scout-sniper training to evade the killer. No brief plot outline can do justice to a book that deserves to find a place on a few best-of-the-year lists. Sheldon is a brilliantly imagined character, a true mensch, made of Greatest Generation stuff. His wife and Rhea believed he was a mere file clerk, not a wounded combat hero. Only his son, who died in Vietnam following Sheldon’s example, knew the real story, and Sheldon dreams nightly of being on patrol in Vietnam with him. Miller keeps the reader guessing about Sheldon’s dementia. Might he simply be an old man appropriately focused on past and present rather than the future? (Booklist). *306 pages*

***All The Light We Cannot See*** (2014)

Anthony Doerr’s Pulitzer Prize winning novel is set during the occupation of France during WWII, but brief chapters told in alternating voices give the overall narrative a swift movement through time and events. We have two main characters, each one on opposite sides in the conflagration that is destroying Europe. Marie-Louise is a sightless girl who lived with her father in Paris before the occupation; he was a master locksmith for the Museum of Natural History. When German forces necessitate abandonment of the city, Marie-Louise’s father, taking with him the museum’s greatest treasure, removes himself and his daughter and eventually arrives at his uncle’s house in the coastal city of Saint-Malo. Young German soldier Werner is sent to Saint-Malo to track Resistance activity there, and eventually, and inevitably, Marie-Louise’s and Werner’s paths cross. It is through their individual and intertwined tales that Doerr masterfully and knowledgeably re-creates the deprived civilian conditions of war-torn France and the strictly controlled lives of the military occupiers. A novel to live in, learn from, and feel bereft over when the last page is turned (Booklist). *545 pages*

1. Read the book and complete the graphic organizer if you think it will help you better remember what you’ve read. *NOTE: All of the books are available as audiobooks; so, if you’d rather listen to a good book, you have that option.*
2. Come back to school prepared to talk about the book with your classmates and other students in grades 9-12 who read the same text. You’ll also be asked to write about what you have read to give your English teacher a sense of where you stand as a reader and a writer at the beginning of the school year.

*IMPORTANT: If you choose NOT to read one of the books, you’ll still be asked to read a piece of fiction, answer some questions about it, and write about it in order to give your English teacher a “snapshot” of your reading and writing skills.*

**Barrington High School English Summer Reading: 2015**

*1st Annual Read Across BHS!*



Read **ONE** of the following texts this summer. You may complete the graphic organizer if you think it will help you talk and write about the book you choose when you return to school in August:

* *We Were Liars* (2014) by E. Lockhart
* *Norwegian By Night* (2013) by Derek Miller
* *All The Light We Cannot See* (2014) by Anthony Doerr

Guidelines for completing the attached graphic organizer (optional):

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| **Notes** | *As you read*, use this space to write anything you feel is important to remember from each chapter/section. Include character/important figure names, settings, conflicts, events, themes, tone, or any other elements that catch your attention as a reader. These notes should help you recall your experience of the text as a whole. |
| **Summarize** | *After you read*, retell, in your own words, the action and important details of the text. |
| **Vocabulary** | *As you read*, keep track of unfamiliar words, terms, phrases, culture references, and scientific terminology. |
| **Question** | *As you read*, write down questions you have about the text, and any questions about the reading that you do not understand and/or would like your teacher or another reader to help clarify—i.e., What about the text confused you? Also, consider what questions you would ask other readers to extend or challenge your understanding of the text; these would be great questions for further analysis, application, and evaluation of the text. |
| **Connect** | *After you read*, write down anything that you find familiar: either a situation you have experienced, a character/historical figure that reminds you of someone, or an event from the text that is similar to something you have already read or studied. Try to relate your understanding of the text to some aspect of your own life, your other reading and viewing, your study or the world around you. |
| **Reflect** | *As you read*, write down any quotations, passages, or moments from the text that affected you in some meaningful way as a reader. If you choose a particular quotation or passage, be sure to include *reasons* why you chose it and note the page number for possible future reference.  *After you read*, reflect on your experience of the text as a whole. Consider the following questions, but do not limit yourself to them: Did you enjoy this text, why/why not? What do you think the author’s purpose was for writing this text? Are there any themes or main ideas you recognize? |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_

Title of Book: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Notes** |  |
| **Summarize** |  |
| **Vocabulary** |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Question** |  |
| **Connect** |  |
| **Reflect** |  |