



The mission of Branford High School is to prepare students to be independent and collaborative learners who are responsible, informed, and contributing members of society. In partnership with the community, we strive to provide a learning environment that supports all student in embracing diversity, acting with integrity, and achieving their personal and academic potential.

Branford High School Summer Reading Grade 12 (World Literature)

The following books have been chosen to complement the novels and themes that you may cover in *World Literature*. The following questions will be discussed throughout the year. Consider them as you read this summer.

- *How do our views of the world connect with those of writers from other cultures?*
- *How does a writer's culture impact the way he or she views the world?*
- *Through written expression and literature, how do we share experiences with humanity throughout the ages?*
- *How do we perceive truths and insights into human nature through literature?*

NOTE TO PARENTS: Before selecting a book, please review it with your child to determine if it is appropriate. Several websites, including commonsensemedia.org and Amazon.com, offer reviews of literature to help parents and students make the right selection for them.

Unaccustomed Earth by Jhumpa Lahiri

These eight stories take us from Cambridge and Seattle to India and Thailand, as they explore the secrets at the heart of family life. Here they enter the worlds of sisters and brothers, fathers and mothers, daughters and sons, friends and lovers. Rich with the signature gifts that have established Jhumpa Lahiri as one of our most essential writers, *Unaccustomed Earth* exquisitely renders the most intricate workings of the heart and mind. Fiction.

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Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad

Dark allegory describes the narrator's journey up the Congo River and his meeting with, and fascination by, Mr. Kurtz, a mysterious personage who dominates the unruly inhabitants of the region. Masterly blend of adventure, character development, psychological penetration. Fiction.

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The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the road to 9/11 by Lawrence Wright

This Pulitzer Prize-winning book, is a historical look at the way in which Al-Qaeda came into being, the background for various terrorist attacks and how they were investigated, and the events that led to the September 11 attacks. Non fiction.

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Breath, Eyes Memory by Edwidge Danticat

At age twelve, Sophie Caco is sent from her impoverished Haitian village to New York, to be reunited with a mother she barely remembers. There she discovers secrets that no child should ever know, and a legacy of shame that can be healed only when she returns to Haiti. What ensues is a passionate journey through a landscape charged with the supernatural and scarred by political violence, in a novel that bears witness to the traditions, suffering, and wisdom of an entire people. Fiction.

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Please Look After Mom by Kyung-Sook Shin

The story of a family's search for their mother, who goes missing one afternoon amid the crowds of the Seoul Station subway. As her children argue over how to find her and her husband returns to their countryside home to wait for her, they each recall their lives with her, their memories often more surprising than comforting. Fiction.

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And the Mountains Echoed by Khaled Hosseini

A man sets out from his small Afghani village with his young daughter in tow, headed for the big city of Kabul. Though he's tried to leave his son, Abdullah, behind, Abdullah's obstinance has surprised him, and so the three make their way to the city. This seemingly small journey will change their lives forever and impact hundreds of others over the course of the next sixty years. Fiction.

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Mountains beyond Mountains by Tracy Kidder

This is the true story of Dr. Paul Farmer, a gifted man who loves the world and has set out to do all he can to cure it. Kidder's account takes us from Harvard to Haiti, Peru, Cuba, and Russia as Farmer changes minds and practices through his dedication to the philosophy that "the only real nation is humanity." Non fiction.

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A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

One of the most chilling novels about the oppression of totalitarian regimes and the first to open Western eyes to the terrors of Stalin's prison camps; if Solzhenitsyn later became Russia's conscience in exile, this is the book with which he first challenged the brutal might of the Soviet Union. Fiction.

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Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer

A first-hand account of a catastrophic expedition up Mount Everest in March 1996. Despite the expertise of trek leaders and others, by the end of summit day eight people were dead. Krakauer's book is at once the story of the ill-fated adventure and an analysis of the factors leading up to its tragic end. Non fiction.

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Letters to a Young Scientist by EO Wilson

The eminent entomologist, naturalist and sociobiologist draws on the experiences of a long career to offer encouraging advice to those considering a life in science. Pulitzer Prize winner Wilson, whose book's title is reminiscent of Rilke's Letters to a Young Poet, is not, however, writing to one young man but to a generation of potential scientists. Non fiction.

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Kitchen Confidential by Anthony Bourdain

When the rest of the world is leaving the day's work behind, a restaurant staff's workday is just moving into high gear. Chef Bourdain writes intensely and personally about his career in New York's restaurants, leaving little to the imagination. Non fiction.

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A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson

From primordial nothingness to this very moment, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* reports what happened and how humans figured it out. To accomplish this daunting literary task, Bill Bryson uses hundreds of sources, from popular science books to interviews with luminaries in various fields. His aim is to help people like him, who rejected stale school textbooks and dry explanations, to appreciate how we have used science to understand the smallest particles and the unimaginably vast expanses of space. Non-fiction.

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The Secrets of Picking a College (and Getting In!) by Jeffrey Durso-Finley, Jeremy S. Hyman, Johan T. Hyman, and Lynn F. Jacobs.

Two award-winning professors, a former admissions officer at a major university (now a counselor at a prestigious high school), and a gifted high school senior (now in the throes of the college admissions process himself) team up to offer you over 600 tips, techniques, and strategies to help you get in to the college of your choice. Non-fiction.

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http://bhsenglish.wikispaces.com/summer_reading