

Putnam Valley High School
12th Grade Summer 2011 Reading List

Please read one of the following texts in preparation for your year in 12th grade English.
Summaries listed below are from Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble

Namesake, The by Jhumpa Lahiri

This novel, which is set in Boston and New York, begins with a young Indian man doing research at MIT, and his wife, who becomes pregnant with a son. As years go by, their son, unlike his parents, becomes thoroughly westernized and even rebellious.

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro

All children should believe they are special. But the students of Hailsham, an elite school in the English countryside, are so special that visitors shun them, and only by rumor and the occasional fleeting remark by a teacher do they discover their unconventional origins and strange destiny. Like the students of Hailsham, readers are "told but not told" what is going on and are allowed to discover the secrets of Hailsham and the truth about these children on their own.

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

In a remote Hertfordshire village in England, a country squire of no great means must marry off his five vivacious daughters. At the heart of this all-consuming enterprise are his headstrong second daughter Elizabeth Bennet and her aristocratic suitor Fitzwilliam Darcy—two lovers whose pride must be humbled and prejudice dissolved before the novel can come to its splendid conclusion.

Savage Inequalities by Jonathon Kozol

This non-fiction book studies and exposes some of the horrid conditions of impoverished schools in the United States. Kozol examines some of the causes and results of the situation and discovers that while some wonderful and inspiring stories emerge from these schools, there is more that needs to be done.

Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

This moving story features a girl who struggles with her emotions and identity, in part, because of the death of her mother. Lily, the main character, meets a nurturing, fun, and positive group of women beekeepers. This group of beekeepers enlightens Lily on the strength and power of women.

Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse

In this story, Siddhartha is a young man who leaves his family for a life of thought and contemplation but leaves in pursuit of a life with more immediate gratification. This story traces his journey of self-discovery on which he questions the surrounding world and the purpose of humankind.

Thousand Splendid Suns, A by Khaled Hosseini

Born a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women brought jarringly together by war, by loss and by fate. As they endure the ever escalating dangers around them, they come to form a bond that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other.

Non Fiction

Blind Side, The by Michael Lewis

The real-life fable that is *The Blind Side* tells how a mountainous, destitute black teenager miraculously morphs into an Ole Miss football hero and becomes a member of a wealthy white evangelical family. Its dialogue is sharp and its anecdotes well chosen. Its aim for both the heartstrings and the funny bone is right on the mark.

Last Lecture. The by Randy Rausch

When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at [Carnegie Mellon](#), was asked to give a lecture about what mattered most, he didn't have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. But the lecture he gave—"Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams"—wasn't about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment (because "time is all you have...and you may find one day that you have less than you think"). It was a summation of everything Randy had come to believe. It was about *living*.

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