

Northside High School Summer Reading 2021

Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors

Open Letter

Congratulations on completing the 2020 - 2021 school year. No doubt it has been challenging, exhausting, and demanding. The experience of an unprecedented pandemic has impacted students, parents, and educators, and we want to thank you for your dedication and hard work over the past year.

As grateful as we are to our students and parents, we, the Northside English Department, must acknowledge the difficulties of this past school year, and we must confront a very real fact—many of our students have experienced some degree of learning loss due to our circumstances. If left unaddressed, this learning loss could be harmful to the educational future of our students. We firmly believe that combating this loss requires us, our students, and our community to recommit ourselves to continued education throughout the year, both in and out of the classroom.

In light of this, we are reintroducing summer reading, a longtime Northside High School requirement. This is a direct effort to meet the needs of our students by providing them an opportunity to strengthen their literacy skills during the summer, a time the reading muscles of our students atrophy due to lack of use. We believe this is a vital part of our department's strategy to move forward and strengthen our student's abilities in the fundamental areas of reading and comprehension.

Summer Reading Assignment

Simply put, we are asking our students to choose a book from the list below, read it, and annotate it. In the fall, each class will offer activities based on these books as well as a written assessment.

When looking over the list below, please choose a book from the correct list, based on the classes a student will be taking during the 2021-22 academic school year. **Incoming freshmen are not required to complete summer reading. If you are taking an AP English course next year, your assignments are located on a different document, which you can get from the Northside [Website](#).**

10th Grade Literature and Composition (Pick one)

- Room* - Emma Donoghue
- And Then There Were None* - Agatha Christie

10th Grade Honors and 11th Grade American Literature (Pick one)

- Born a Crime* - Trevor Noah
- Into Thin Air* - John Krakauer

12th Grade Multicultural Literature (Pick one)

- Purple Hibiscus* - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Homegoing* - Yaa Gyasi

Dramatic Writing (Choose **one** of the **pairs** of texts.)

- A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen **and** *A Doll's House, Part 2* by Lucas Hnath
- A Raisin in The Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry **and** *Clybourne Park* by Bruce Norri

Controversial Issues / Materials

Keep in mind that some books on this list address potentially controversial issues. If you or your parents have any questions or concerns about the books, please visit commonsensemedia.org before you make your book selection to get a better understanding of any sensitive topics or issues contained within the texts.

Tips for Parents

Here are some quick tips for how you can help your student complete this work during the summer.

Let your student choose something they want to read.

If your student shows interest in a title from the list, particularly if it deals with an area they find important, entertaining, or meaningful, encourage them to follow that interest. It's always more enjoyable to read something we find engaging and interesting.

Read and discuss the book with your student.

Summer reading can feel like a chore, but reading with your student is a great way to spark discussion and discover a shared interest. It also makes reading an act of engagement and community both of which we sorely need in light of our recent circumstances. Ask your student questions about the reading and share your opinions about the subject, topic, etc.

Purchase the audiobook or borrow it from the library.

This can be an especially good tip for readers who lack motivation or who find reading challenging. Ask your student to follow along with a physical copy as they listen, and (pro-tip) check their comprehension periodically. If they're doing this independently, then ask them to answer a few quick questions about their reading—What happened in the story today? Which part was your favorite? What do you think is going to happen?