

# Summer Reading—English 11

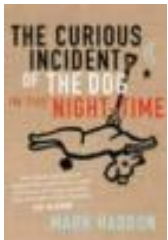


Tired of reruns? Sick of reality shows? Fingers sore from too many video games? Sounds like the perfect time to do your summer reading! Please **read one novel** from the following list, and **complete the attached essay**. This assignment is your opportunity to get off to a great start next school year as the novel will serve as your **introduction to the first unit in English 11**.

Additionally, you will also need to be **prepared for a reading assessment** when you return to school in September. The grade you earn on it will be counted as a test grade in your first quarter grade.

**Books are available at the public library and at local bookstores (most will order if necessary). In addition, you can order new and used books (often at great savings) at [half.com](http://half.com) or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).**

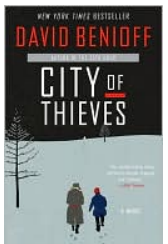
**A note for parents (and students) regarding adult content: Good literature is often provocative in some way, and the selections marked with an asterisk (\*) contain adult material. Therefore, the English 11 teachers invite you to preview any selection that concerns you. If you are uncomfortable with a particular book, please choose one of the others.**



## ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon**

The hero of Haddon's debut novel is 15-year-old Christopher Boone, an autistic math genius who has just discovered the dead body of his neighbor's poodle, Wellington. Wellington was killed with a garden fork, and Christopher decides that, like his idol Sherlock Holmes, he's going to find the killer. Wellington's owner, Mrs. Shears, refuses to speak to Christopher about the matter, and his father tells him to stop investigating. But there is another mystery involving Christopher's mother, who died two years ago. So why does Siobhan, Christopher's social worker, react with surprise when Christopher mentions her death? And why does Christopher's father hate Mrs. Shears' estranged husband?

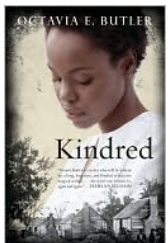
The mystery of Wellington's death begins to unveil the answers to questions in his own life, and Christopher, who is unable to grasp even the most basic emotions, struggles with the reality of a startling deception. Narrated by the unusual and endearing Christopher, who alternates between analyzing mathematical equations and astronomy and contemplating the deaths of Wellington and his mother, the novel is both fresh and inventive. *Kristine Huntley, Copyright © American Library*



## **\**City of Thieves* by David Benioff**

Having elected to stay in Leningrad during the [WWII] siege, 17-year-old Lev Beniov is caught looting a German paratrooper's corpse. The penalty for this infraction (and many others) is execution. But when Colonel Grechko confronts Lev and Kolya, a Russian army deserter also facing execution, he spares them on the condition that they acquire a dozen eggs for the colonel's daughter's wedding cake. Their mission exposes them to the most ghoulish acts of the starved populace and takes them behind enemy lines to the Russian countryside. There, Lev and Kolya take on an even more daring objective: to kill the commander of the local occupying German forces. A wry and sympathetic observer of the devastation around him, Lev is an engaging and self-deprecating narrator who finds

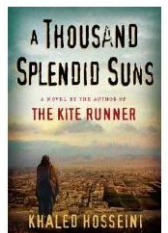
unexpected reserves of courage at the crucial moment and forms an unlikely friendship with Kolya, a flamboyant ladies' man who is coolly reckless in the face of danger. Benioff blends tense adventure, a bittersweet coming-of-age and an oddly touching buddy narrative to craft a smart crowd-pleaser. *Publishers Weekly*



## **\**Kindred* by Octavia Butler**

*Kindred* utilizes the devices of science fiction in order to answer the question "how could anybody be a slave?" A woman from the twentieth century, Dana is repeatedly brought back in time by her slave-owning ancestor Rufus when his life is endangered. She chooses to save him, knowing that because of her actions a free-born black woman will eventually become his slave and her own grandmother. When forced to live the life of a slave, Dana realizes she is not as strong as her ancestors. Unable to will herself back to her own time and unable to tolerate the institution of slavery, she attempts to run away and is caught within a few hours. Her illiterate ancestor Alice succeeds in eluding capture for four days even though "She knew only the area she'd been born and raised in, and she couldn't read a

map." Alice is captured, beaten, and sold as a slave to Rufus. As Dana is sent back and forth through time, she continues to save Rufus's life, attempting during each visit to care for Alice, even as she is encouraging Alice to allow Rufus to rape her and thus ensure Dana's own birth. As a twentieth-century African-American woman trying to endure the brutalities of nineteenth-century slavery, Dana answers the question, "See how easily slaves are made?" For Dana, to choose to preserve an institution, to save a life, and nurture victimization is to choose to survive. *Donna Nichols-White, Amazon.com*



## **\**A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini**

An in-depth exploration of Afghan society in the three decades of anti-Soviet jihad, civil war and Taliban cruelty. [The author] impels us to empathize with and admire those most victimized by Afghan history and culture—women. Mariam, a 15-year-old bastard whose mother commits suicide, is married off to 40-year-old Rasheed, who abuses her brutally, especially after she has several miscarriages. At 60, Rasheed takes in 14-year-old Laila, whose parents were blown up by stray bombs. He soon turns violent with her. Although Laila is united with her childhood beloved, the potential return of the Taliban always shadows their happiness. *Publishers Weekly*

## English 11 Summer Reading: Written Assignment



After reading your chosen novel, please write an essay answering **ONE** of the following prompts. Essays that do not respond to one of these prompts will not receive credit.

- Oscar Wilde wrote: “There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written or badly written.” Write a well-organized essay in which you argue whether the book you have chosen to read is well or badly written. Make sure you include specific examples from the novel to support your ideas.
- A **dynamic character** is one that does undergo an important change in the course of the story. More specifically, the changes being undergone are not changes in circumstances, but changes in some sense *within* the character in question—changes in insight, understanding (of circumstances, for instance), commitment, or values. Choose a dynamic character in the novel you read and analyze and describe the change that happens. Why is the change significant? Write about these ideas in a well-organized essay.
- Archibald MacLeish wrote: “There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American Dream.” In your essay, argue whether or not the novel you have chosen supports Mr. MacLeish’s idea. Your response must be supported with examples from the novel but you may also use examples from your own experience or that of a friend or relative.

Your essay will be evaluated as follows:

Quality	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Meaning</b>	Provides no evidence of textual understanding; makes no connections between information and ideas in the text and the assigned task	Conveys a vague or inaccurate understanding of the text; makes few or superficial connections between information and ideas in the text and the assigned task	Conveys a basic understanding of the text; states connections between information and ideas in the text and the assigned task	Conveys a complete understanding of the text; clearly states connections between information and ideas in the text and the assigned task	Reveals an in-depth analysis; makes insightful connections between information and ideas in the text and the assigned task
<b>Development</b>	Ideas are largely undeveloped; references to text are sketchy, vague, irrelevant and repetitive.	Develops ideas simply; uses some details from the text.	Develops some ideas; uses details from the text.	Develops ideas clearly and consistently; uses relevant and specific details from the text.	Develops ideas clearly and fully; makes effective use of a wide range of relevant and specific details from the text
<b>Usage &amp; Mechanics</b>	High density and variety of errors in most areas. Errors affect meaning and make writing difficult to understand.	Demonstrates some control in some areas but little on others. Some difficulty in following writer’s ideas.	Demonstrates reasonable control over some but not all areas. Errors do not seriously affect meaning.	Demonstrates control over most areas. Errors do not seriously affect meaning.	Demonstrates awareness and control over all areas of usage and mechanics
	15 - 100%	12 - 88%	9 - 78%	6 - 65%	3 - 50%
	14 - 96%	11 - 84%	8 - 74%	5 - 60%	
	13 - 92%	10 - 80%	7 - 70%	4 - 55%	