

REQUIRED NOTRE DAME HS SUMMER 2010 READING LIST

This summer's expected reading assignment contains English, Social Studies and Theology Department offerings. These selections have been chosen by the faculty to offer a diversity of literature and situations. **All students should come to school having completed their respective grade level assignment.** Assessments will be administered in each academic area in the fall. **Reading continues to be the key to preparation and improvement on the SAT verbal section.**

FRESHMEN (CLASS OF 2014)

† **Freak the Mighty** by Rodman Philbrick [Theology] - A wonderful story of triumph over imperfection, shame and loss.

***The House on Mango Street** by Sandra Cisneros [English 9]
Esperanza Cordero, a girl coming of age in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago, uses poems and stories to express thoughts and emotions about her oppressive environment. - From Amazon.com

+**A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier** by Ishmael Beah. [Global Studies 9]
Publisher: Sarah Crichton books, Farrar, Straus and Giroux. New York, New York.
Children have become the soldiers of choice; over 300,000 in the more than 50 violent conflicts worldwide. Ishmael Beah used to be one of them.

SOPHOMORES (CLASS OF 2013)

+&**Stargirl** by Jerry Spinelli [Theology 10]

Jerry Spinelli, author of Newbery Medalist [*Maniac Magee*](#), Newbery Honor Book [*Wringer*](#), and many other excellent books for teens, elegantly and accurately captures the collective, not-always-pretty emotions of a high school microcosm in which individuality is pitted against conformity. Spinelli's Stargirl is a supernatural teen character--absolutely egoless, altruistic, in touch with life's primitive rhythms, meditative, untouched by popular culture, and supremely self-confident. It is the sensitive Leo whom readers will relate to as he grapples with who she is, who he is, who they are together as Stargirl and Starboy, and indeed, what it means to be a human being on a planet that is rich with wonders. Review by *Karin Snelson* for *Amazon.com*

***Into the Wild** by Jon Krakauer [English 10]

"God, he was a smart kid..." So why did Christopher McCandless trade a bright future--a college education, material comfort, uncommon ability and charm--for death in an abandoned bus in the woods of Alaska? This is the question that Jon Krakauer's book

tries to answer. While it doesn't—cannot—answer the question with certainty, *Into the Wild* does shed considerable light along the way. Not only about McCandless's "Alaskan odyssey," but also the forces that drive people to drop out of society and test themselves in other ways. By book's end, McCandless isn't merely a newspaper clipping, but a sympathetic, oddly magnetic personality. Whether he was "a courageous idealist, or a reckless idiot," you won't soon forget Christopher McCandless.

Review From Amazon.com

† #**All Quiet on the Western Front**, Erich Maria Remarque A. W. When (Translator)
(Global Studies 10)

Incinerated by the Nazis in 1933, this famous war novel depicts the horror of the front with deliberately brutal realism.

JUNIORS (CLASS OF 2012)

***The Things They Carried** by Tim O'Brien. [English 11]

O'Brien again shows his literary stuff with this brilliant collection of short stories, many of which have won literary recognition (several appeared in O. Henry Awards' collections and Best American Short Stories). Each of the 22 connected tales relates the exploits and personalities of a fictional platoon of American soldiers in Vietnam.

Review from Amazon.com

+**Tuesdays with Morrie**, Mitch Albom (Theology)

Inspirational beyond words, author Mitch Albom chronicles the life affirming wisdom of former Brandeis University Professor Morrie Schwartz as he battles the fatal illness amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) more commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

AP Literature and Composition [AP English]

+***How To Read Literature Like A College Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines** by Thomas C. Foster

Foster tackles literature from a symbolic metaphorical side, delving into myths, symbols, and the connectedness of all literature. In a lively and entertaining manner he shows the reader how to draw parallels between texts and explores poetic metaphors effectively.

AP Literature and Composition [AP English]

***#Jane Eyre** by Charlotte Bronte

On the surface a fairly conventional Gothic romance (poor orphan governess is hired by rich, brooding hero-type), but the story is very much about the nature of human freedom and equality, and if Jane was seen as something of a renegade in nineteenth-century England, it is because her story is that of a woman who struggles for self-definition and determination in a society that too often denies her that right. Rochester, that thorny man whom Jane eventually falls for, is a man who sets his own laws and manipulates the lives of those around him; before he can enter into a marriage of equals with Jane he must undergo a spiritual transformation. Should the lesson sound dry, it's not. **Jane Eyre** is full of drama: fires, storms, attempted murder, and a mad wife conveniently stashed away in the attic.[Review From Amazon.com]

Jane Eyre is one of the most frequently appearing novels on the AP Literature Exam!

Jane Eyre will be the first grades and material covered in the fall!

SENIORS (CLASS OF 2011)

Theology 12

#Have a Little Faith by Mitch Albom

Best-selling author Mitch Albom tells another true story about faith, hope, and love at work in the lives of two quite different people. In telling the story, Albom invites readers to reflect on the same virtues in their own lives.

English 12 and ENG101/105 [Genesee Community College course]

***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie

Exploring Indian identity, both self and tribal, Alexie's first young adult novel is a semiautobiographical chronicle of Arnold Spirit, aka Junior, a Spokane Indian from Wellpinit, WA. The bright 14-year-old was born with water on the brain, is regularly the target of bullies, and loves to draw. He says, "I think the world is a series of broken dams and floods, and my cartoons are tiny little lifeboats." He expects disaster when he transfers from the reservation school to the rich, white school in Reardan, but soon finds himself making friends with both geeky and popular students and starting on the basketball team. Meeting his old classmates on the court, Junior grapples with questions about what constitutes one's community, identity, and tribe. The daily struggles of reservation life and the tragic deaths of the protagonist's grandmother, dog, and older sister would be all but unbearable without the humor and resilience of spirit with which Junior faces the world. The many characters, on and off the rez, with whom he has

dealings are portrayed with compassion and verve, particularly the adults in his extended family. Forney's simple pencil cartoons fit perfectly within the story and reflect the burgeoning artist within Junior. . . The teen's determination to both improve himself and overcome poverty, despite the handicaps of birth, circumstances, and race, delivers a positive message in a low-key manner. - *Chris Shoemaker, New York Public Library* [book review from Amazon.com]

AP Language and Composition [AP English]

+# **Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave** written by Himself

Written more than a century ago by Frederick Douglass, a former slave who went on to become a famous orator, U.S. minister, and a leader of his people, this masterpiece is one of the most eloquent indictments of slavery ever recorded (Google Books).

+# **Angela's Ashes** by Frank McCourt – Frank McCourt tells his story of growing up as an Irish Catholic in Limerick in this humorous yet emotional memoir.

* These works will be the first unit studied in class, so it is very important that the reading is complete at the start of the school year.

These novels are widely available – Best bets would be Borders, Barnes & Noble, any college bookstore or ordering online at Amazon.com. Looking to keep your business local? Try Present Tense Books [101 Washington Ave., Batavia] also as a source for summer reading. Books are also available through any public library, such as the Richmond Memorial Library in Batavia.

† This reading was assigned at the same grade level during the recently concluded 2009-2010 school year. Students who read this work during the past year may, therefore, also be a source of this book.

&Students also had the opportunity to sign this selection out at the end of the 2009-2010 year from Mrs. Korzelius

@Check with Present Tense Books [101 Washington Ave., Batavia]