Rising 12th grade (class of 2027):

Students are to read both works. One is a novel and the other is a short story. There will be a written response test on Friday, August 21st. The test will evaluate basic comprehension to some degree, but it is more important that students have engaged with the writing and are able to respond flexibly to open-ended thematic questions.

Klara and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro (2021)

A luminous new novel from the Nobel Prize-winning author of *Never Let Me Go* and *The Remains of the Day*, *Klara and the Sun* explores the uncharted implications of AI to human relationships and the abiding question of what it means to love. The novel tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, watches carefully the behavior of those who come in to browse, and of those outside. She remains hopeful a customer will soon choose her, but when the possibility emerges that her circumstances may change for ever, Klara is warned not to invest too much in the promises of humans.

"A masterpiece of great beauty, meticulous control and, as ever, clear, simple prose." - *Sunday Times*

"Another masterwork, a work that makes us feel afresh the beauty and fragility of our humanity" - *Observer*

"Intelligent, beautiful, mesmeric and a breeze to read - what more could you want?" - *Metro*

"A delicate, haunting story, steeped in sorrow and hope." - *The Washington Post*

ISBNs: 978-0593311295 (paperback), 978-0593318171 (hardcover)

"Interpreter of Maladies" by Jhumpa Lahiri (1999)

PLEASE NOTE: The required work is the SHORT STORY titled "Interpreter of Maladies". This story is contained in a story collection also titled *Interpreter of Maladies.* Students are welcome to purchase the whole collection, but they are only required to read the short story, which can be found here: Interpreter of Maladies - Jhumpa Lahiri.pdf or here: https://iblit2013.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/lahiri-interpreter-of-maladies-full-text.pdf. If you have any difficulties accessing this story, please contact Mrs. Shirley at kate.shirley@charlestoncatholic-crw.org.

Students MUST have a physical copy of the story for the first two weeks of school. So, they can either purchase the book and use the story within it OR print their own copy of the document above. Annotations are encouraged!

"Interpreter of Maladies" is the title story of Jhumpa Lahiri's debut short story collection, which won a Pulitzer Prize when published in 1999. Since then, Lahiri has garnered praise for her stories and novels, most of which chronicle the immigrant experience between India and the United States. According to Lahiri, she has always "felt intense pressure to be two things: loyal to the old world and fluent in the new."

The story explores the complexities of identity and communication through the lens of an Indian American family vacationing in India. The narrative follows Mr. and Mrs. Das, along with their three children, as they tour various sites with their Indian guide, Mr. Kapasi. Despite their Indian heritage, the Das family's behavior and interactions reflect their American upbringing, creating a cultural dissonance. As the story unfolds, Lahiri sensitively navigates the intersections of culture, familial relationships, and the search for connection amid personal and cultural dislocation. - Chris Benson, EBSCO

Rising 11th grade (class of 2028):

Students are to read both books and should prepare for a test within the first few days of school.

Into the Wild **by John Krakauer**

"In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given $25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*."

ISBN-10: 0385486804
ISBN-13: 978-0385486804

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption **by Bryan Stevenson**

"Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever."

"*Just Mercy* is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice."

ISBN-10: 9780812984965
ISBN-13: 978-0812984965

Rising 10th grade (class of 2029)

Upcoming sophomores will read two very different murder mysteries! Students are to read both books and should prepare for a test within the first few days of school.

And Then There Were None **by Agatha Christie**

1939. Europe teeters on the brink of war. Ten strangers are invited to Soldier Island, an isolated rock near the Devon coast. Cut off from the mainland, with their generous hosts Mr. and Mrs. U.N. Owen mysteriously absent, they are each accused of a terrible crime. When one of the party dies suddenly they realize they may be harboring a murderer among their number. The tension escalates as the survivors realise the killer is not only among them but is preparing to strike again... and again...

This is the story that made Agatha Christie the best-selling novelist of all time and is read the world over in more than 50 languages.

ISBN-10: 0062073478
ISBN-13: 978-0062073471

Ordinary Grace **by William Kent Krueger**

New Bremen, Minnesota, 1961. The Twins were playing their debut season, ice-cold root beers were selling out at the soda counter of Halderson's Drugstore, and Hot Stuff comic books were a mainstay on every barbershop magazine rack. It was a time of innocence and hope for a country with a new, young president. But for thirteen-year-old Frank Drum it was a grim summer in which death visited frequently and assumed many forms.

Frank begins the season preoccupied with the concerns of any teenage boy, but when tragedy unexpectedly strikes his family—which includes his Methodist minister father; his passionate, artistic mother; Juilliard-bound older sister; and wise-beyond-his-years kid brother—he finds himself thrust into an adult world full of secrets, suddenly called upon to demonstrate a maturity and gumption beyond his years.

Told from Frank's perspective forty years after that fateful summer, *Ordinary Grace* is a brilliantly moving account of a boy standing at the door of his young manhood, trying to understand a world that seems to be falling apart around him. It is an unforgettable novel about discovering the terrible price of wisdom and the enduring grace of God.

ISBN-10: 1451645856
ISBN-13: 978-1451645859

"A superb literary novel." — New York Journal of Books

"A novel that transforms narrator and reader alike." — Kirkus Reviews (starred)

Rising 9th grade (class of 2030):

Students are to read both books and should prepare for a test within the first few days of school.

The Odyssey **by Homer (Gareth Hinds edition - graphic novel!)**

ISBN-10: 0763642681
ISBN-13: 978-0763642686

During freshman year, students will read portions of Homer's *Odyssey* in class, but over the summer, students can enjoy this highly accessible graphic novel version to ensure basic comprehension and allow deeper analysis during the year. The poem tells the story of Odysseus, king of Ithaca, who wanders for 10 years trying to get home after the Trojan War. With Christopher Nolan's epic film adaptation coming to theaters this July, this classic has never felt more alive.

"The mythic trials have seldom felt more grueling or genuine... a grand example of Hinds' ability to combine historical adventure with human understanding." – Booklist starred review

"Hinds adds another magnificent adaptation to his oeuvre... readers are transported into a world that easily combines the realistic and the fantastic." – Kirkus starred review

"A timeless long-ago past comes alive in these images of gods and heroes, monsters and enchantresses" – Horn Book starred review

"The depth of the dialog, the outstanding individuation of the characters, and the patient and lovingly developed flow between frames... make the work accessible." – BCCB starred review

"My students LOVED reading the Odyssey and did SO much better with their unit test (which I did not change at all from the one I use with the regular text). This book is a delight!" – Teacher reviewer on BarnesandNoble.com

The Hunger Games (*Book 1)* **by Suzanne Collins**

ISBN-10: 9780439023528
ISBN-13: 978-0439023528

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games," a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed.

Rising 8th grade (class of 2031):

Students are to read both books and should prepare for a test within the first few days of school.

***The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**

Penguin Classics:
ISBN-10: 01403786X
ISBN-13: 978-0140437867

This mystery novel featuring detective Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson follows the investigation of the mysterious death of Sir Charles Baskerville, whose family is said to be cursed by a terrifying supernatural hound. When Sir Henry Baskerville arrives to inherit the family estate, Baskerville Hall, Holmes, and Watson work to find out whether the danger is truly supernatural, or the result of a human plot.

***Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by J.K. Rowling**

Standard Scholastic:
ISBN-13: 9781338878943

In Harry's third year at Hogwarts, he learns that Sirius Black, a dangerous prisoner, has escaped from Azkaban and may be coming after him. As strange events unfold at school, Harry discovers surprising truths about his parents' past and their old friendships, and also faces betrayal.

Rising 7th grade (class of 2032):

Students are to read both books and should prepare for a test within the first few days of school.

Treasure Island **by Robert Louis Stevenson**

Penguin Classics:
ISBN-10: 9780140437683
ISBN-13: 978-014043768

This adventure novel follows a young boy named Jim Hawkins, who discovers a treasure map that once belonged to a pirate captain. Jim joins a voyage to find the hidden treasure, but the journey becomes dangerous when he learns that some of the crew, including the clever and deceptive Long John Silver, are actually pirates planning a mutiny. Throughout the book Jim must help outsmart the pirates and uncover the treasure.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone **by J.K. Rowling**

Standard Scholastic:
ISBN-13: 9781338878929

In this fantasy novel about Harry Potter, an orphan who has lived an unhappy life with his aunt, uncle, and cousin, he learns on his eleventh birthday that he is a wizard. He begins attending Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where he makes close friends, learns magic, and begins to discover the truth about his past. When he uncovers a plot involving a powerful magical object, Harry must show courage to help protect it.

Rising 6th grade (class of 2033):

Students are to read both books and should prepare for a test within the first few days of school.

A Series of Unfortunate Events, Book 1: The Bad Beginning **by Lemony Snicket**

In the tradition of great storytellers, from Dickens to Dahl, comes an exquisitely dark comedy that is both literary and irreverent, hilarious and deftly crafted. Never before has a tale of three likeable and unfortunate children been quite so enchanting, or quite so uproariously unhappy.

ISBN-10: 9780064407663
ISBN-13:978-0064407663

“Those who enjoy a little poison in their porridge will find it wicked good fun.” - Kirkus Reviews

“Irrepressible, brave and charming.” - New York Times Book Review

“With a cast of unforgettable characters, a distinctly literary air, and plenty of laugh-out-loud moments, this is a great match for dark comedy fans.” - Brightly

Holes **by Louis Sachar**

Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnatses. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys’ detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the boys build character by spending all day, every day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes.

It doesn’t take long for Stanley to realize there’s more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something. But what could be buried under a dried-up lake? Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment —and redemption.

ISBN-10: 0440414806
ISBN-13: 978-0440414803

Winner of the Newbery Medal and the National Book Award
#1 New York Times Bestseller
A New York Public Library’s 100 Great Children’s Books 100 Years Selection

“A dazzling blend of social commentary, tall tale and magic realism.” —Publishers Weekly, Starred Review

“[A] rugged, engrossing adventure.“ —Kirkus Reviews

“This delightfully clever story is well-crafted and thought-provoking.” —VOYA

“[Sachar] comes fully, brilliantly into his own voice. This is a can’t-put-it-down read.“ —The Bulletin