Summer Vacation Reading List 
for Students Entering Grade 12

Prior to commencing your English studies in Grade 12, you are required to read TWO books from the following list over the summer period. We have provided choices that allow you to explore different styles of literature—fiction, graphic, non-fiction. We hope that these choices will inspire you to continue reading throughout the year! Most of the listed titles are available in the St. George’s Learning Commons. All of the titles are available in the St. George’s Learning Commons. Most are also available in ebook and audiobook formats. Other options for acquiring these books would include: public library, Kidsbooks, Chapters, and Amazon. Please read through the book titles and their plot summaries below to assist you in making your choices.

In Grade 12, we will be exploring the motif of personal growth. Each of the books on the list will help you to familiarize yourself with the motif before beginning our exploration of it in class. All students are required to finish reading their two choices prior to the first day of class. Upon your return to school, your teacher will give you criteria for an oral assessment and a written assessment. Enjoy your reading exploration this summer!

Beartown by Fredrik Backman

FICTION

People say Beartown is finished. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. Their junior ice hockey team is about to compete in the national semi-finals, and they actually have a shot at winning. All the hopes and dreams of this place now rest on the shoulders of a handful of teenage boys.

Being responsible for the hopes of an entire town is a heavy burden, and the semi-final match is the catalyst for a violent act that will leave a young girl traumatized and a town in turmoil. Accusations are made and, like ripples on a pond, they travel through all of Beartown, leaving no resident unaffected.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

FICTION

Paulo Coelho's enchanting novel has inspired a devoted following around the world. This story, dazzling in its powerful simplicity and inspiring wisdom, is about an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of a treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles along the way. But what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasure found within. Lush, evocative, and deeply humane, the story of Santiago is an eternal testament to the transforming power of our dreams and the importance of listening to our hearts.

Watchmen by Alan Moore

GRAPHIC NOVEL

It all begins with the paranoid delusions of a half-insane hero called Rorschach. But is Rorschach really insane or has he in fact uncovered a plot to murder super-heroes and, even worse, millions of innocent civilians? On the run from the law, Rorschach reunites with his former teammates in a desperate attempt to save the world and their lives, but what they uncover will shock them to their very core and change the face of the planet! Following two generations of masked superheroes from the close of World War II to the icy shadow of the Cold War comes this ground-breaking comic story -- the story of Watchmen.

Plot summaries retrieved from Good Reads and Barnes & Noble
The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown

The sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the American rowing team defeated elite rivals first from eastern and British universities and finally the German crew rowing for Adolf Hitler in the Olympic games in Berlin, 1936. The emotional heart of the story lies with one rower, Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, who rows not for glory, but to regain his shattered self-regard and to find a place he can call home. The crew is assembled by an enigmatic coach and mentored by a visionary, eccentric British boat builder, but it is their trust in each other that makes them a victorious team. They remind the country of what can be done when everyone quite literally pulls together—a perfect melding of commitment, determination, and optimism.