

North Attleboro High School English Department Required Summer Reading Lists 2010

The North Attleboro High School English Department has a required summer reading program for students entering grades 9 and 10 in the fall. The goal of the program is to promote reading for pleasure and encourage students to talk about the books they've read.

Students will be required to read two books, one assigned to the entire class and one of their choice from a list of four other books. When students return to school in the fall, they will participate in book discussions.

The following summaries are adapted from Amazon.com, 26 May 2009 and 11 June 2010.

Grade 9 List

Required for all: *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom (Nonfiction)

"This true story about the love between a spiritual mentor and his pupil...reminds us of the affection and gratitude that many of us still feel for the significant mentors of our past. It also plays out a fantasy many of us have entertained: what would it be like to look those people up again, tell them how much they meant to us, maybe even resume the mentorship? Plus, we meet Morrie Schwartz--a one of a kind professor, whom the author describes as looking like a cross between a biblical prophet and Christmas elf. And finally we are privy to intimate moments of Morrie's final days as he lies dying from a terminal illness. Even on his deathbed, this twinkling-eyed mensch manages to teach us all about living robustly and fully" (Amazon.com).

Choose one from the following list:

Tangerine by Edward Bloor (Fiction)

"So what if he's legally blind? Even with his bottle-thick, bug-eyed glasses, Paul Fisher can see better than most people. He can see the lies his parents and brother live out, day after day. No one ever listens to Paul, though--until the family moves to Tangerine. In Tangerine, even a blind, geeky, alien freak can become cool. Who knows? Paul might even become a hero!" (Amazon.com).

The Woods by Harlan Coben (Fiction)

"In this stand-alone legal thriller, Harlan Coben presents a riveting courtroom drama, creates riveting players, and delves into family secrets, love, loss, mistakes, and betrayal" (Amazon.com).

Never Give Up: My Stroke, My Recovery, and My Return to the NFL by Tedy Bruschi and Michael Holley (Nonfiction)

"Ten days after helping the New England Patriots win the 2005 Super Bowl, 31-year-old middle linebacker Bruschi suffered a debilitating stroke that left his future uncertain. Initially he planned to retire, but as he began to recover, a process that included surgery to repair the hole in his heart that precipitated the stroke, the lure of football beckoned. Bruschi learned much about stroke from doctors who treated him and cleared him to play again...His story is a compelling and convincing one that will appeal to both football fans and those affected by strokes" (Amazon.com).

Just Listen by Sarah Dessen (fiction)

Annabel Greene seemingly had everything: cool friends, close family, good grades, and a part-time modeling career in town. But it all came crashing down, and Annabel has spent the summer in shaky, self-imposed exile. She finds herself dreading the new school term and facing, well, everyone again...This is young adult fiction at its best, delving into the minds of complex, believable teens, bringing them to life, and making readers want to know more about them with each turn of the page" (Amazon.com).

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Grade 10 List

Required for all: *This I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women* by Jay Allison and Dan Gediman (editors) (Nonfiction)

“National Public Radio listeners have been moved to tears by the personal essays that constitute the series *This I Believe*. Created in 1951 with Edward Murrow as host, the sometimes funny, often profound, and always compelling series has been revived, according to host Jay Allison, because, once again, ‘matters of belief divide our country and the world’” (Amazon.com).

Choose one from the following list:

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult (Fiction)

“On Peter Houghton's first day of kindergarten, he watched helplessly as an older boy ripped his lunch box out of his hands and threw it out the window. From that day on, his life was a series of humiliations, from having his pants pulled down in the cafeteria, to being called a freak at every turn. But can endless bullying justify murder? As Picoult attempts to answer this question, she shows us all sides of the equation, from the ruthless jock who loses his ability to speak after being shot in the head, to the mother who both blames and pities herself for producing what most would call a monster” (Amazon.com).

The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow (Nonfiction)

“One of the staples of ‘the college experience’ at many schools is the ‘last lecture’ --- a beloved professor sums up a lifetime of scholarship and teaching as if he/she were heading out the door for the last time...But a ‘last lecture’ by Randy Pausch was different in every possible way. The professor of Computer Science, Human Computer Interaction, and Design at Carnegie Mellon University was just 46, and this really was his last lecture --- he was dying... And dying fast. On September 18, 2007... Randy Pausch gave his last lecture... Pausch's philosophy, in brief: ‘We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand’” (Amazon.com).

Playing for Pizza by John Grisham (Fiction)

“Third-string Cleveland Browns quarterback Rick Dockery becomes the greatest goat ever by throwing three interceptions in the closing minutes of the AFC championship game. Fleeing vengeful fans, he finds refuge in the grungiest corner of professional football, the Italian National Football League, as quarterback of the inept but full-of-heart Parma Panthers. What ensues is a winsome football fable, replete with team bonding and character-building as the underdog Panthers challenge the powerhouse Bergamo Lions for a shot at the Italian Superbowl” (Amazon.com).

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

“Death himself narrates the World War II-era story of Liesel Meminger from the time she is taken, at age nine, to live in Molching, Germany, with a foster family in a working-class neighborhood of tough kids, acid-tongued mothers, and loving fathers who earn their living by the work of their hands. The child arrives having just stolen her first book—although she has not yet learned how to read—and her foster father uses it, *The Gravediggers Handbook*, to lull her to sleep when she's roused by regular nightmares about her younger brother's death... Death is not a sentimental storyteller, but he does attend to an array of satisfying details, giving Liesel's story all the nuances of chance, folly, and fulfilled expectation that it deserves” (Amazon.com).