

## Advanced English 12 summer reading 2020-2021

*“What a miracle it is that out of these small, flat, rigid squares of paper unfold world after world after world, worlds that sing to you, comfort and quiet or excite you. Books help us understand who we are and how we are to behave. They show us what community and friendship mean; they show us how to live and die.”*

— Anne Lamott

### Instructions:

Read two novels from the following list. Choose two that interest you. Just read each book. You will have to write about them when you come to school in the fall, so taking notes and/or annotating for the usual things: ideas, literary elements, plot, and character would be a good idea. Buy, borrow, download, but bring it with you to school the first day. Please don't just pretend to read it.

### CHOICES:

#### ***In the Lake of the Woods by O'Brien***

A thriller with an unsolved mystery at its core, *In the Lake of the Woods* by Tim O'Brien, explores love and the nature of the heart, then carefully explicates the psychological damage of war and the toll it takes on individuals, families, and society as a whole, through the story of one man—John Wade. The plot's central mystery—the disappearance of Kathy Wade—is one of several unveiled in this novel. O'Brien constructs a novel in which the heart of John Wade, and indeed, the heart of every human being, remains an inexplicable enigma. After John is defeated in the United States Senate primary in Minnesota, John and Kathy Wade escape to a yellow cabin on the isolated shores of Lake of the Woods in northernmost Minnesota. There they try to put together the broken pieces of their marriage and their future. Shortly after they arrive at the cabin, Kathy disappears. The third-person narrator reconstructs events from both John and Kathy's perspectives, attempting to solve the mystery of what happened to Kathy. Psychologically damaged during his childhood, John Wade's two tours fighting in Vietnam exacerbated his psychological and emotional problems, resulting in an overpowering need to control events and people in order to gain love and acceptance. His need to create a positive self-image is so great that he generates an alter-ego named Sorcerer to handle the feelings he cannot process, including rage and personal rejection.

#### ***Alias Grace by Atwood***

In *Alias Grace*, bestselling author Margaret Atwood has written her most captivating, disturbing, and ultimately satisfying work since *The Handmaid's Tale*. She takes us back in time and into the life of one of the most enigmatic and notorious women of the nineteenth century.

Grace Marks has been convicted for her involvement in the vicious murders of her employer, Thomas Kinnear, and Nancy Montgomery, his housekeeper and mistress. Some believe Grace is innocent; others think her evil or insane. Now serving a life sentence, Grace claims to have no memory of the murders.

Dr. Simon Jordan, an up-and-coming expert in the burgeoning field of mental illness, is engaged by a group of reformers and spiritualists who seek a pardon for Grace. He listens to her story while bringing her closer and closer to the day she cannot remember. What will he find in attempting to unlock her memories? Is Grace a female fiend? A bloodthirsty femme fatale? Or is she the victim of circumstances?

#### ***All The Light You Cannot See by Doerr***

Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.

#### ***In the Time of the Butterflies by Alvarez***

It is November 25, 1960, and three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Nor does it explain that the sisters were among the leading opponents of Gen. Rafael Leonidas Trujillo's dictatorship. It doesn't have to. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas—"The Butterflies."

In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters—Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé—speak across the decades to tell their own stories, from hair ribbons and secret crushes to gunrunning and prison torture, and to describe the

everyday horrors of life under Trujillo's rule. Through the art and magic of Julia Alvarez's imagination, the martyred Butterflies live again in this novel of courage and love, and the human cost of political oppression.

***The Poisonwood Bible* by Kingsolver**

*The Poisonwood Bible* is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it—from garden seeds to Scripture—is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa.

**Task #3: Make a Personal Connection** Page # \_\_\_\_\_

**Quote:**

**How does this passage connect to your life?**