

NAVIGATING YOUR BRAVE NEW WORLD

Welcome to 10TH Honors English

In the fall, each of you will be arriving from your 9th grade literature world where you were possibly introduced to concepts like star-crossed lovers, the forever hero, and Plato's perspective on knowledge. You also had darker experiences where the notion of BIG BROTHER was first introduced to you and now will never leave you. 10th honors is another journey into darkness and enlightenment—we will investigate our shadowy humanity but celebrate our better selves, too. With that in mind, your 10th honors teachers have gathered a list of recommendations for you that fit with the beginning 10th honors experience of literature.

On the list below, you'll find compelling fiction where writers investigate the consequences of consumerism, technology, freedom, happiness, power, identity, and rebellion. We offer you these as books to read as an opportunity to become informed citizens of this world, students who read critically, write consciously, speak clearly, so you can tell your truth (Clint Smith https://www.ted.com/talks/clint_smith_the_danger_of_silence?language=en).

Suggested Reading (choose one of these or all of them or none of them—up to you)

- **While there will not be an assignment for these books, becoming familiar with dystopian literature will help you in our study of our first unit for the school year.** The books listed in this section are foundational texts in the world of dystopian literature. They develop and incorporate structural and thematic choices that are present across all texts of this genre. If you have not read all of the books in this section, this is the place to start for summer reading:
 - *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley is a dystopian novel in which Huxley investigates and challenges the concept of achieving “happiness” in society. This book is a canon every aspiring college student should read. Huxley's concern with the role technology would play in our lives is both relevant and scary. People constantly reference the book as *the brave new world* we now live in.
 - *1984* by George Orwell is among the seminal texts of the 20th century, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a rare work that grows more haunting as its futuristic purgatory becomes more real. Published in 1949, the book offers political satirist George Orwell's nightmarish vision of a totalitarian, bureaucratic world and one poor stiff's attempt to find individuality. The brilliance of the novel is Orwell's prescience of modern life—the ubiquity of television, the distortion of the language—and his ability to construct such a thorough version of hell.
 - *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury highlights Guy Montag who is a fireman. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life and wife, Mildred, who spends all day with her television “family.” But when he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known.
- **Once you have read those texts, we have created a list of additional summer reads that will help you prepare for the course but also allow for a bit more individualized reading experience**
 - *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood is a dystopian satire which investigates a world in which women are denied their rights to sexual and reproductive freedom. The book was made into the acclaimed Hulu series. It's a

fascinating and relevant read, BUT the content is mature, and we do ask that you get parental permission for reading this book.

- *The Parable of the Sower* navigates climate change and its impact on society. Octavia E. Butler's book is relevant and horrifying, and her main character offers a possible way out of what appears to be an apocalyptic end to humanity.
 - *Station 11* by Emily St. John Mandel uses live theater as its link, this novel weaves back and forth between a period of 20 years. After a famous actor dies while performing on stage, a deadly flu epidemic quickly spreads, changing the world forever. Twenty years later, in what amounts to a really beautiful exploration of the value of art in an unrecognizable world, a young woman in a traveling theater group performs for small communities that have managed to survive the pandemic, but there are new threats on the horizon.
- **Here's another fun non-fiction option if you have time:**
 - *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King is an honest account of the joys and struggles of writing. King blends personal anecdotes with the expected lists of tips and tricks about how to improve your prose. Even though these tips are helpful, the most fulfilling parts of the novel are the sections in which King discusses the obstacles he faced and how he overcame them. These are important reminders that even the most prolific of writers face the dreaded writer's block and have doubts about the quality of their work. And that is where the memoir finds its value: helping the reader develop not only the skills of a successful writer but also the mindset.