

(Incoming) Sophomore English Summer Reading List 2021

Step 1: Choose and obtain one (1) book from the list below to read over the summer before your sophomore year.

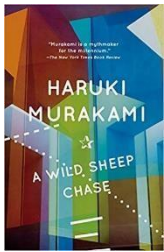
Step 2: Read your chosen book and write a response essay to the book of at least 2-3 pages (anything less than 2 FULL pages will lose points). Your response should discuss your thoughts, responses, and reactions to your chosen book in regards to its themes, characters, plot elements, etc. The point here is to document YOUR responses to a given piece of literature. What makes you like or dislike a book? What grabs your attention?

The response essay should follow MLA guidelines for formatting (double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, with proper heading information and page numbers with last name in top right). Improperly formatted papers will also lose points.

Response essays are due the first day of classes.

Step 3: During the first week of classes you will create and deliver a presentation that will educate and interest the rest of the class in the book's content, literary merits, and author. You will work together with others who read the same book in order to keep presentation overlap to a minimum.

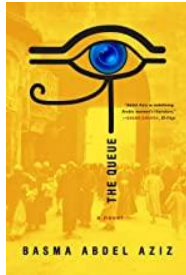
***A Wild Sheep Chase* by Haruki Murakami**



Quirky and utterly captivating, *A Wild Sheep Chase* is Murakami at his astounding best.

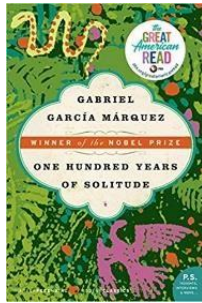
An advertising executive receives a postcard from a friend and casually appropriates the image for an advertisement. What he doesn't realize is that included in the scene is a mutant sheep with a star on its back, and in using this photo he has unwittingly captured the attention of a man who offers a menacing ultimatum: find the sheep or face dire consequences. Thus begins a surreal and elaborate quest that takes readers from Tokyo to the remote mountains of northern Japan, where the unnamed protagonist has a surprising confrontation with his demons.

The Queue by Basma Abdel Aziz



"*The Queue* ... has drawn comparisons to Western classics like George Orwell's *1984* and *The Trial* by Franz Kafka. It represents a new wave of dystopian and surrealist fiction from Middle Eastern writers who are grappling with the chaotic aftermath and stinging disappointments of the Arab Spring." -- *The New York Times*

Written with dark, subtle humor, *The Queue* describes the sinister nature of authoritarianism, and illuminates the way that absolute authority manipulates information, mobilizes others in service to it, and fails to uphold the rights of even those faithful to it.



One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

One Hundred Years of Solitude tells the story of the rise and fall, birth and death of the mythical town of Macondo through the history of the Buendia family. Inventive, amusing, magnetic, sad, and alive with unforgettable men and women -- brimming with truth, compassion, and a lyrical magic that strikes the soul -- this novel is a masterpiece in the art of fiction.

Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi

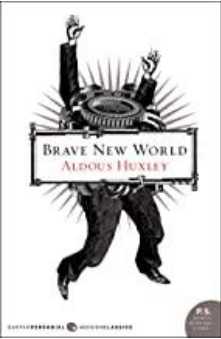


Here, in one volume: Marjane Satrapi's best-selling, internationally acclaimed graphic memoir.

Persepolis is the story of Satrapi's unforgettable childhood and coming of age within a large and loving family in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution; of the contradictions between private life and public life in a country plagued by political upheaval; of her high school years in Vienna facing the trials of adolescence far from her family; of her homecoming--both sweet and terrible; and, finally, of her self-imposed exile from her beloved homeland. It is the chronicle of a girlhood and adolescence at once outrageous and familiar, a young life entwined with the history of her country yet filled with the universal trials and joys of growing up.

Edgy, searingly observant, and candid, often heartbreaking but threaded throughout with raw humor and hard-earned wisdom--*Persepolis* is a stunning work from one of the most highly regarded, singularly talented graphic artists at work today.

***Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley**



Aldous Huxley's profoundly important classic of world literature, *Brave New World* is a searching vision of an unequal, technologically-advanced future where humans are genetically bred, socially indoctrinated, and pharmaceutically anesthetized to passively uphold an authoritarian ruling order—all at the cost of our freedom, full humanity, and perhaps also our souls. “A genius [who] who spent his life decrying the onward march of the Machine” (*The New Yorker*), Huxley was a man of incomparable talents: equally an artist, a spiritual seeker, and one of history’s keenest observers of human nature and civilization.

Brave New World, his masterpiece, has enthralled and terrified millions of readers, and retains its urgent relevance to this day as both a warning to be heeded as we head into tomorrow and as thought-provoking, satisfying work of literature. Written in the shadow of the rise of fascism during the 1930s, *Brave New World* likewise speaks to a 21st-century world dominated by mass-entertainment, technology, medicine and pharmaceuticals, the arts of persuasion, and the hidden influence of elites.

***Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio* by Amara Lakhous**



A small culturally mixed community living in an apartment building in the center of Rome is thrown into dissaray when one of the tenants is murdered. As each of the victim's neighbors is questioned by the police, readers are offered an all-access pass into the most colorful neighborhood in contemporary Rome. Each character takes his or her turn "giving evidence," recounting his or her story—the drama of racial identity, the anxieties and daily humiliations born of a life spent on society's margins, but also the hilarious imbroglios that are inevitable in this melting pot of cultures. What emerges is a moving story that

is common to us all.

With language that is as colorful as the neighborhood it describes, *Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio* is characterized by a seemingly effortless prose that borrows from the cinematic tradition of the *Commedia all'Italiana*, as exemplified by directors such as Federico Fellini.

At the heart of this bittersweet comedy, winner of Italy's prestigious Flaiano Prize for Fiction, is a social reality we often tend to ignore and an anthropological analysis, refreshing in its generosity that cannot fail to fascinate.

