

## (Incoming) Senior English Summer Reading 2021

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

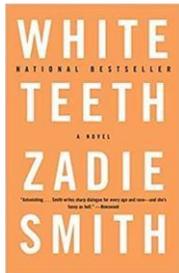
**Step 2:** Read your chosen book and write a response essay to the book of at least 2-3 pages (anything less than 2 FULL pages will lose points). Your response should discuss your thoughts, responses, and reactions to your chosen book in regards to its themes, characters, plot elements, etc. The point 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 an attempt to minimize presentation overlap.

### ***White Teeth* by Zadie Smith**



Zadie Smith's dazzling debut caught critics grasping for comparisons and deciding on everyone from Charles Dickens to Salman Rushdie to John Irving and Martin Amis. But the truth is that Zadie Smith's voice is remarkably, fluently, and altogether wonderfully her own.

At the center of this invigorating novel are two unlikely friends, Archie Jones and Samad Iqbal. Hapless veterans of World War II, Archie and Samad and their families become agents of England's irrevocable transformation. A second marriage to Clara Bowden, a beautiful, albeit tooth-challenged, Jamaican half his age, quite literally gives Archie a second lease on life, and produces Irie, a knowing child whose personality doesn't quite match her name (Jamaican for "no problem"). Samad's late-in-life arranged marriage (he had to wait for his bride to be born), produces twin sons whose separate paths confound Iqbal's every effort to direct them, and a renewed, if selective, submission to his Islamic faith. Set against London's racial and cultural tapestry, venturing across the former empire and into the past as it barrels toward the future, *White Teeth* revels in the ecstatic hodgepodge of modern life, flirting with disaster, confounding expectations, and embracing the comedy of daily existence.

### ***Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison**



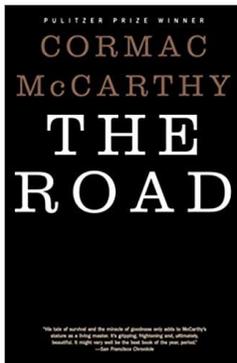
**Both a deeply compelling bestselling novel and an epic milestone of American literature.**

Originally published in 1952 as the first novel by a then unknown author, it remained on the bestseller list for sixteen weeks, won the National Book Award for fiction, and established Ralph Ellison as one of the key writers of the century.

The book's nameless narrator describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", before retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be.

The book is a passionate and witty tour de force of style, strongly influenced by T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, James Joyce, and Dostoevsky.

### ***The Road* by Cormac McCarthy**



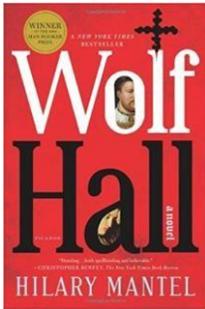
**WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE**

**The searing, post-apocalyptic novel about a father and son's fight to survive.**

A father and his son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. It is cold enough to crack stones, and when the snow falls it is gray. The sky is dark. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing; just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food—and each other.

*The Road* is the profoundly moving story of a journey. It boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which the father and his son, "each the other's world entire," are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of: ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation.

## ***Wolf Hall* by Hilary Mantel**



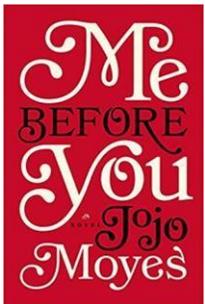
In the ruthless arena of King Henry VIII's court, only one man dares to gamble his life to win the king's favor and ascend to the heights of political power.

England in the 1520s is a heartbeat from disaster. If the king dies without a male heir, the country could be destroyed by civil war. Henry VIII wants to annul his marriage of twenty years, and marry Anne Boleyn. The pope and most of Europe opposes him. The quest for the king's freedom destroys his adviser, the brilliant Cardinal Wolsey, and leaves a power vacuum.

Into this impasse steps Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell is a wholly original man, a charmer and a bully, both idealist and opportunist, astute in reading people and a demon of energy: he is also a consummate politician, hardened by his personal losses, implacable in his ambition. But Henry is volatile: one day tender, one day murderous. Cromwell helps him break the opposition, but what will be the price of his triumph?

In inimitable style, Hilary Mantel presents a picture of a half-made society on the cusp of change, where individuals fight or embrace their fate with passion and courage. With a vast array of characters, overflowing with incident, the novel re-creates an era when the personal and political are separated by a hairbreadth, where success brings unlimited power but a single failure means death.

## ***Me Before You* by JoJo Moyes**



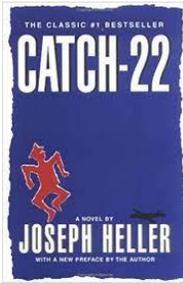
They had nothing in common until love gave them everything to lose . . .

Louisa Clark is an ordinary girl living an exceedingly ordinary life—steady boyfriend, close family—who has never been farther afield than their tiny village. She takes a badly needed job working for ex-Master of the Universe Will Traynor, who is wheelchair bound after an accident. Will has always lived a huge life—big deals, extreme sports, worldwide travel—and now he's pretty sure he cannot live the way he is.

Will is acerbic, moody, bossy—but Lou refuses to treat him with kid gloves, and soon his happiness means more to her than she expected. When she learns that Will has shocking plans of his own, she sets out to show him that life is still worth living.

A Love Story for this generation, *Me Before You* brings to life two people who couldn't have less in common—a heartbreakingly romantic novel that asks, *What do you do when making the person you love happy also means breaking your own heart?*

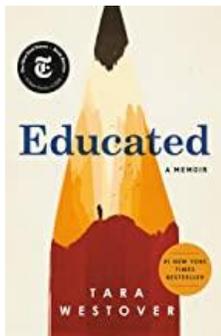
## *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller



Fifty years after its original publication, *Catch-22* remains a cornerstone of American literature and one of the funniest—and most celebrated—books of all time. In recent years it has been named to “best novels” lists by Time, Newsweek, the Modern Library, and the London Observer.

Set in Italy during World War II, this is the story of the incomparable, malingering bombardier, Yossarian, a hero who is furious because thousands of people he has never met are trying to kill him. But his real problem is not the enemy—it is his own army, which keeps increasing the number of missions the men must fly to complete their service. Yet if Yossarian makes any attempt to excuse himself from the perilous missions he’s assigned, he’ll be in violation of *Catch-22*, a hilariously sinister bureaucratic rule: a man is considered insane if he willingly continues to fly dangerous combat missions, but if he makes a formal request to be removed from duty, he is proven sane and therefore ineligible to be relieved.

## *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover



**#1 NEW YORK TIMES, WALL STREET JOURNAL, AND BOSTON GLOBE BESTSELLER • One of the most acclaimed books of our time: an unforgettable memoir about a young woman who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a PhD from Cambridge University**

**• FINALIST: National Book Critics Circle’s Award In Autobiography and John Leonard Prize For Best First Book • PEN/Jean Stein Book Award • Los Angeles Times Book Prize**

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara’s older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she’d traveled too far, if there was still a way home.