

Professional Performing Arts School
Ninth Grade Humanities Summer Reading 2022

Welcome to 9th grade and PPAS! We can't wait to learn, think, and grow with you.

Our ninth grade Humanities course takes us on a journey to learn about the history, art, literature, and cultures of our global community. This summer reading assignment takes you on a journey across continents and cultures, and gives you a chance to tell us about yourself through the story you choose to read!

For the Summer Reading Assignment, you will read a book, write a letter, and create art!

Did you know that we can learn a lot about ourselves from the stories we love? Read this excerpt from an essay by Indian-born British-American writer Salman Rushdie. Think about it as you choose a novel to read for us this summer!

["Ask Yourself Which Books You Truly Love"](#)

By Salman Rushdie, published in *The New York Times*, May 24, 2021

Before there were books, there were stories. At first the stories weren't written down. Sometimes they were even sung. Children were born, and before they could speak, their parents sang them songs, a song about an egg that fell off a wall, perhaps, or about a boy and a girl who went up a hill and fell down it. As the children grew older, they asked for stories almost as often as they asked for food.

The children fell in love with these stories and wanted to hear them over and over again. Then they grew older and found those stories in books. And other stories that they had never heard before, about a girl who fell down a rabbit hole, or a silly old bear and an easily scared piglet and a gloomy donkey, or a phantom tollbooth, or a place where wild things were. The act of falling in love with stories awakened something in the children that would nourish them all their lives: their imagination.

The children made up play stories every day, they stormed castles and conquered nations and sailed the oceans blue, and at night their dreams were full of dragons. But they went on growing up and slowly the stories fell away from them, the stories were packed away in boxes in the attic, and it became harder for the former children to tell and receive stories, harder for them, sadly, to fall in love.

I believe that the books and stories we fall in love with make us who we are, or, not to claim too much, the beloved tale becomes a part of the way in which we understand things and make judgments and choices in our daily lives. A book may cease to speak to us as we grow older, and our feeling for it will fade. Or we may suddenly, as our lives shape and hopefully increase our understanding, be able to appreciate a book we dismissed earlier; we may suddenly be able to hear its music, to be enraptured by its song.

When, as a college student, I first read Günter Grass's great novel "The Tin Drum," I was unable to finish it. It languished on a shelf for fully 10 years before I gave it a second chance, whereupon it became one of my favorite novels of all time: one of the books I would say that I love. It is an interesting question to ask oneself:

Which are the books that you truly love? Try it. The answer will tell you a lot about who you presently are.

THE TASKS

- **Read 1 Young Adult book by an author from anywhere in the world BUT THE UNITED STATES. (No American or African-American or ANYONE-AMERICAN authors.)** (See the links below for suggestions)
- **After reading, write a 500-word letter to your future Humanities teacher** (See below for detailed instructions)
- **Create one original work of art**
- **Due Date: Thursday, September 8** (On the first day of school, your teacher will give you instructions for submitting the letter and an image of your artwork via Google Classroom.)

In the letter, be sure to include:

1. An Introduction with:

- The title, author, and genre of the book you chose.
- The author's native country
- The setting of the story (Which country?)
- Why did you choose this book? What interested you about it? What does this book choice tell us about you, your interests, and your mindset this summer?

2. One body paragraph telling us about yourself through your discussion of the international book you read and reading in general:

- What was your experience reading this book? What did you like and dislike about the story? Give us details from the book that stood out to you, characters you related to, characters you liked and disliked...and why.
- Which quote, scene, setting, symbol, or character will your artwork depict? Provide for us a page number if it's a specific quote or scene.

3. One body paragraph telling us more about yourself:

- What is your performing arts major and prior experience?
- How do you feel about coming back to school full time?
- What has life been like for you and your family during the pandemic?
- How did you learn and perform during remote and blended learning? What worked? What didn't? Do not be shy! Let us get to know you!

4. A conclusion paragraph telling us what you are looking forward to in your ninth grade year.

- What are your academic, social, and performing arts goals?
- What kind of support do you need from us?

Formatting the Document:

- Type it in a Google Doc
- Use *Arial* 12-point font
- Be sure to double-space it!
- If you do not have access to a computer, you can write it by hand and use a school computer the first week of school.

Questions? E-mail
MSale@ppasshare.org.

Be patient! It's summer and it takes longer to respond to e-mails.

Create one work of original art:

- **Choose** a quote, a scene, a setting, a symbol, or a character from the book you read for the Summer Reading Assignment.
- **Be inspired!** Create a painting, drawing, sculpture, or any other work of art that's inspired by the book you read.
- **Be sure to:**
 - put your name on the back of the work of art
 - tell us in your 500 word written letter about the quote, scene, setting, symbol, or character that inspired your artwork

- **DO NOT** roll or fold your artwork. Bring it to school in good condition to be displayed! If you cannot bring the work in, take some good photos of it and be ready to submit to the Google Classroom!

Here are some tips to find International Young Adult Book Lists:

- You can find your own lists by doing a Google search: "International YA books"
- *Amazon.com* and *Barnes & Noble.com* also have good search engines for books!
- You could also search for a book from an author of a particular country, for example:
 - "Mexico young adult book"
 - "Japan teen fiction"
- Try these lists:
 - [International YA Books](#)
 - ["Go Global with these YA Books Set Around the World"](#)

Be sure that the book you choose is written by an author who is from a country *other than* the United States. *Avoid* a book that is written by someone *not* from the culture or country in which the book is set. For example, a British author who writes a book about teens in Syria, should be avoided, *unless* that author is of Syrian heritage.