

Putnam Valley High School
9th Grade Summer 2010 Reading

Summaries listed below are from Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble

All students entering 9th grade English are to read any two of the following (Honors students must read three):

Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt

Young Jethro Creighton grows from a boy to a man when he is left to take care of the family farm in Illinois during the difficult years of the Civil War.

Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix

Government regulations limit families to two children each, so Luke, an illegal third-born, must live his life in secret, hidden in his family's farmhouse.

Annie John by Jamaica Kincaid

Annie John and her passage into young adulthood – the tumultuous love of her mother and their gradual separation is a story that will speak to listeners of all ages.

Blood Secret by Kathryn Lasky

Fourteen-year-old Jerry Luna, mute since her mother's disappearance, is sent to her great-great Aunt Constanza's house, where she discovers a trunk that draws her into the world of her ancestors during the Spanish Inquisition.

Bone From a Dry Sea by Peter Dickinson

In two parallel stories, a young female member of a prehistoric tribe becomes instrumental in advancing her people, and a present day girl visits her paleontologist father on a dig in Africa where they discover important fossil remains.

Butterfly Revolution by William Butler

Welcome to High Pines Summer Camp for Boys. There is hiking, swimming, canoeing-- and a revolution led by General Frank. He promises change for the better, but little by little, he begins to change, and the revolution turns into a nightmare....

Curse of the Blue Tattoo by Louis A. Meyer

In 1803, after being exposed as a girl and forced to leave her ship, Jacky Faber finds herself attending school in Boston, where, instead of learning to be a lady, she battles her snobbish classmates, roams the city in search of adventure, and learns to ride a horse.

Eragon (Inheritance Trilogy #1) by Christopher Paolini

In Aagaesia, a fifteen-year-old boy of unknown lineage called Eragon finds a mysterious stone that weaves his life into an intricate tapestry of destiny, magic, and power, peopled with dragons, elves, and monsters.

Flipped by Wendelin VanDraanen

In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.

Geeks: How Two Boys Rode the Internet Out of Idaho by John Katz

Armed with nothing more than big brains and a bit of luck, two misfit teens flee their stifling Idaho hometown for Chicago in this nonfiction work. An oddly touching page-turner about social outcasts using technology to wriggle free of dead-end lives.

Girl with the Pearl Earring, A by Tracey Chevalier

The life of 16-year-old Griet is transformed forever when she goes to work as a maid in the home of Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer, and catches the eye of the famous artist.

Hobbit, The. by JRR Tolkien

Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit, lives comfortably in his hobbit-hole until the day the wandering wizard Gandalf chooses him to take part in an adventure from which he may never return.

How Reading Changed My Life by Anna Quindlen

American author Anna Quindlen discusses how her love of reading has impacted her life from childhood through adulthood.

How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents by Julia Alvarez

A collection of short stories that vividly chronicles a Dominican family's new life in the Bronx. The book focuses on the four Garcia daughters' rebellions against their immigrant elders.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

A young governess finds romance, mystery, and heartbreak when she accepts a position in the home of the brooding and arrogant Mr. Rochester.

Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury

Chronicles the early attempts by humans to colonize an inhabited Mars by transforming the Red planet into a mirror image of the world they left behind.

Member of the Wedding, The by Carson McCullers

Frankie Addams, a motherless twelve-year-old raised by her father and the family's African-American cook, struggles with conflicting feelings about her brother's upcoming wedding.

Radioactive Boy Scout, The by Ken Silverstein

The radioactive boy scout : the frightening true story of a whiz kid and his homemade nuclear reactor.

Snow in August by Pete Hamill

Set in a working-class Brooklyn neighborhood in 1947, this poignant tale revolves around an eleven-year-old Irish Catholic boy named Michael Devlin and Rabbi Judah Hirsch, a refugee from Prague. From their initial chance encounter one Saturday morning to the awe they share at first setting eyes on the grounds of Ebbets Field, Hamill brings to life the richness and complexity of this most remarkable friendship.

Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes by Chris Crutcher

Overweight high school student Eric Calhoun tries to answer his friend Sarah Byrne's dramatic cry for help.

Tree Grows in Brooklyn, A by Betty Smith

It is a novel about a young girl, her family and friends, and their life in the slum section of Brooklyn in the early years of the twentieth century.

Turtle Moon by Alice Hoffman

Verity, home to more divorced women from New York than any other town in Florida, is where Lucy moves with her son Keith to get away from her ex-husband. But when Keith runs off with a baby, after the child's mother is murdered, the stage is set for mayhem, thrills, and unexpected romance.

Twisted by Laurie Halse Anderson

After finally getting noticed by someone other than school bullies and his ever-angry father, seventeen-year-old Tyler enjoys his tough new reputation and the attentions of a popular girl, but when life starts to go bad again, he must choose between transforming himself or giving in to his destructive thoughts.

PUTNAM VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
10th Grade Summer 2010 Reading List

Students who are entering 10th grade English need to read any two books from the list below:

FICTION

Bean Trees, The by Barbara Kingsolver

Taylor, a poor Kentuckian, makes her way west with an abandoned baby girl and stops in Tucson. There she finds friends and discovers resources in apparently empty places.

Briar Rose by Jane Yolen

Haunted by tales of the Holocaust, a young American woman begins a search for her grandmother's World War II past.

Call of the Wild, The by Jack London

Jack London's classic tale tracing Buck's entry into the wild and survival among the wolves.

Death of Bernadette Lefthand, The by Ron Querry

This novel focuses on the murder of a beautiful young Apache woman and offers a profound view of the complexity and the bleakness of contemporary life on the reservation.

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

This is the story of Pip, an orphan in Victorian England who is informed one day that he has "great expectations" and is to be educated and reared as a gentleman.

My Antonia by Willa Cather

A successful lawyer remembers his boyhood in Nebraska and his friendship with an immigrant Bohemian girl named Antonia.

Namesake, The by Jhumpa Lahiri

This novel, which is set in Boston and New York, begins with a young Indian man doing research at MIT, and his wife, who becomes pregnant with a son. As years go by, their son, unlike his parents, becomes thoroughly westernized and even rebellious.

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

In nineteenth-century England, a young orphan boy lives in the squalid surroundings of a workhouse until he becomes involved with a gang of thieves.

Once and Future King, The by T.H. White

Tells the story of the youth and reign of King Arthur, the establishment of the Round Table, and the search for the Holy Grail.

Ordinary People by Judith Guest

After spending eight months in a mental institution following a suicide attempt, seventeen-year-old Conrad returns home and finds that he must rebuild his life.

Perfect Storm, The by Sebastian Junger

October 1991- It was the “perfect storm”—a tempest that may only happen once in a century—a nor’easter created by so rare a combination of factors that it could not possibly have been worse. Creating waves ten stories high and winds of 120 miles an hour, the storm whipped the sea to inconceivable levels few people on Earth have ever witnessed. Few, except the six-man crew of the Andrea Gail, a commercial fishing boat tragically headed toward its hellish center.

Poisonwood Bible, The by Barbara Kingsolver

Nathan Price and his family move to the Belgian Congo in 1959, and the experiences they have while living in Africa affect each member of the family in a different way.

Prince and the Pauper, The by Mark Twain

When young Edward VI of England and a poor boy of similar appearance exchange places, each learns something about the other’s very different station in life.

Suzanne Diary for Nicholas by James Patterson

Katie Wilkinson has found her perfect man at last. He’s everything she imagined she wanted in a partner. But one day, without explanation, he disappears from her life, leaving behind only a diary for her to read. This diary is a love letter written by a new mother named Suzanne for her baby son, Nicholas. As Katie reads this touching document, it becomes clear that the lover who has just left her is the husband and father in this young family. She reads on, filled with terror and hope, as she struggles to understand what has happened—and whether her new love has a prayer of surviving.

Time to Kill, A by John Grisham

A Southern lawyer takes the controversial case of a black man accused of killing a white man in rural Mississippi.

Uglies by Scott Westerfeld

This novel is about a world in which everyone has an operation when they turn sixteen, making people supermodel beautiful: big eyes, full lips, no one fat or skinny. This seems like a good thing, but it’s not. Especially if you’re one of the “uglies,” a bunch of radical teens who have decided they want to keep their own faces.

!Yo! by Julia Alvarez

Yolanda or Yo, is one of four sisters in a Dominican-American family. She has grown up to be a writer. In her first novel, she made characters out of her family members and friends, and now her relatives decide to seek revenge.

NON-FICTION/POETRY/DRAMA

My House: Poems by Nikki Giovanni

This is a collection of poems of mothers and their children, of childhood memories, and of Africa.

Effects of Gamma Rays on Man in the Moon Marigolds by Paul Zindel

A two-act play depicting an embittered mother who vents her frustrations upon her two daughters.

Story of My Life, The by Helen Keller

An autobiography of Helen Keller, written while she was a young woman, in which she tells of her early life, her relationship with her teacher Ann Sullivan, and her struggles to triumph over blindness and deafness.

Putnam Valley High School
11th Grade English Summer 2010 Reading List

Students entering English 11 must read any two of the following books:

FICTION

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett

Somewhere in South America, at the home of the country's vice president, a lavish birthday party is being held in honor of the powerful businessman Mr. Hosokawa. Roxanne Cross, opera's most revered soprano, has mesmerized the international guests with her singing. It is a perfect evening-until a band of gun wielding terrorists take the entire party hostage. But what begins as a panicked, life-threatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different, a moment of great beauty, as terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds and people from different continents become compatriots, friends and lovers.

Bell Jar, The by Sylvia Plath

The autobiographical novel describes an ambitious and brilliant young woman's search for values and her eventual breakdown.

Bridges of Madison County, The by Robert James Waller

Photographer Robert Kincaid meets Iowa farm wife Francesca Johnson while looking for the famous bridges. Her family is away, and the two discover an uncommon passion between them---one that cannot be denied or completely fulfilled.

Color of Water, The by James McBride

This is a young black man's search to uncover his white mother's past and his own identity. McBride examines his life, his own childhood in Brooklyn's Red Hook housing projects, and the love that guided his family's life.

DaVinci Code, The by Dan Brown

Robert Langdon is a Harvard professor of symbology who can't stay out of trouble. This mild-mannered academic finds himself entangled in a deadly conspiracy that stretches back centuries. Visiting Paris on business, he is awakened at 2:00 a.m. by a call from the police: an elderly curator has been murdered inside the Louvre, and a baffling cipher has been found near the body. Aided by the victim's cryptologist granddaughter, Langdon begins a danger-filled quest for the culprit, but the deeper he searches, the more he becomes convinced that long-festering conspiracies hold the answer to the art lover's death.

Farewell To Arms, A by Ernest Hemingway

This novel is about a love story based largely on the author's experiences as a young soldier in Italy when Hemingway, working as an ambulance driver in the war, fell in love with an English nurse.

Glass Castle: A Memoir, The by Jeannette Wall

This memoir revolves around the author's parents, who give the concept of bad parenting a whole new meaning. The irresponsible romantic of a father was an inventor of outlandishly useless devices, and her mother, an artist, was his abettor. As the two of them dragged the family around the country on the run from creditors and from one bad idea to another, they virtually ignored their four hapless children, except when they were giving them shoplifting lessons or stealing money for booze.

Grapes of Wrath, The by John Steinbeck

This is the saga of a family in 1939 that struggles through the Great Depression by laboring as Dust Bowl migrants. This novel focuses on the travels of bankrupt farmers as they struggle to deal with the problems of poverty plaguing their family as they head to the promise land of California.

Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, The (a novel) by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows

Juliet Ashton writes to her publisher expressing her desire to stop covering the aftermath of WWII. At the same time, a Guernsey farmer (Guernsey was a British island once occupied by the Nazis), Dawsey Adams, invites neighbors to write to Juliet with their stories. This puts her off at first but eventually helps her find inspiration for her next book, and her life.

History of Love, The by Nicole Krauss

It has been decades since Leo Gursky first surrendered his heart, then wrote a book about it, at the tender age of ten, and he's been in love with the same person ever since. Leo believes his book is lost to time, but what he doesn't know is, not only has it survived sixty years without him, but it has also been an inspiration to others. Fourteen-year-old Alma was even named for a character from the book. When she realizes how deeply the story touched her lonely mother, she embarks on a search for answers.

House of Sand and Fog by Andre Dubus

Colonel Behrani, an Iranian immigrant, has spent most of his savings trying to enhance his daughter's chances of a good marriage. Once she is married, he spends the remaining funds on a house at an auction, unwittingly putting himself and his family in the middle of a legal tussle with the house's former owner, Kathy Nicolo. What begins as a legal struggle turns into a personal confrontation, with tragic results.

Interview With The Vampire by Anne Rice

In a darkened room a young man sits telling the macabre and eerie story of his life—the story of a vampire, gifted with eternal life, cursed with exquisite cravings for human blood. Vampire Louie tells his epic story of love, betrayal, loneliness and hunger.

Known World, The by Edward P. Jones

This is a story of Henry Townsend, a black farmer and former slave, who falls under the tutelage of William Robbins, the most powerful man in Manchester County, Virginia. Making certain he never circumvents the law, Townsend runs his affairs with unusual discipline. But death and chaos soon take over.

Memoirs of a Geisha by Arthur Golden

Nitta Sayuri is a young Japanese woman who was taken from her home at the age of nine and sold into slavery as a geisha. She discovers a rare opportunity for freedom when the outbreak of WWII forces an end to the only life she has ever known.

Memory Keeper's Daughter by Jim Edwards

In a small-town, surgeon Dr. David Henry finds himself delivering his own twins. He recognizes the signs of Down's Syndrome in his daughter's face. In a split-second decision he asks the nurse to take his daughter away. As his wife mourns the missing piece in their perfect lives, David struggles with this painful secret that may pull his family apart.

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult

This is a heart-wrenching, controversial story of a family desperately trying to save their eldest daughter who has been dying from APL since she was two years old. This family is torn apart by conflicting needs and a passionate love that triumphs over human weakness. This novel examines what it means to be a good parent, a good sister, and a good person.

Nannie Diaries, The by Emma Mc Laughlin and Nicola Kraus

Written by two former nannies, the alternately comic and poignant satire punctures the glamour of Manhattan's upper class. Nanny takes a position caring for the only son of the wealthy X family. When the marriage begins to disintegrate, Nanny ends up involved way beyond the bounds of human decency or good taste.

Northern Light, A by Jennifer Donnelly

Sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and boyfriend, takes a job at a hotel in 1906 where the death of a guest renews her determination to live her own life.

On The Road by Jack Kerouac

This novel follows the adventures and travels of Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty as they cross North America, usually broke, in search of belief and meaning.

Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut

After surviving the bombing of Dresden in WWII, Billy Pilgrim spends time on the planet Trafalmadon.

Walden by Henry David Thoreau

In this book, Thoreau offers his philosophy on life and his observations of nature gleaned from two years of solitude living in a cabin on Walden Pond in Massachusetts.

Yellow Raft in Blue Water, A by Michael Dorris

This novel is about three generations of Indian women, beset by hardship and torn by angry secrets, yet joined together by bonds of kinship.

NON-FICTION/BIOGRAPHY

Alive: The Story of the Andes Survivors by Piers Paul Read

On October 12, 1972, a plane carrying a team of young rugby players crashed into the remote, snow-peaked Andes. Out of the forty-five original passengers and crew, only sixteen made it off the mountain alive. To survive, they were forced to do what would have been unthinkable...

Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt

This novel is a best seller and the 1997 Pulitzer Prize winning memoir about a young boy growing up with his family in Ireland. Young Frank Mc Court and his family try against all odds to escape the poverty and the hardships of living in the slums of pre-war Limerick.

Autobiography of a Face by Lucy Grealy

Lucy Grealy writes a candid memoir about her struggle with cancer as a child and her attempt to live a normal life as she matured. The story tells of her suffering in school as she contends with taunts and bullying. The book captures the battle between wanting to be an adult and wanting to remain as a child.

Blue Blood by Edward Conlon

As a Harvard graduate and an accomplished writer, Edward Conlon has a different view on things than most other New York City cops. The book is a memoir tracing his life and career from the time he was a rookie cop working tough neighborhoods up to the days he was a narcotics officer on his way to being a detective. The book also offers insight into the role of the family and deals with current issues about brutality and self-defense.

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

The author charges that fast food has hastened the “malling” of the American landscape, widened the chasm between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and propelled the U.S. cultural imperialism abroad.

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

This novel is about the shocking story of the slayings of the Clutter family of Kansas, and the capture, trial, and execution of their murderers.

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer

This is the true story of a young man who hitchhiked into the Alaskan wildlife and walked alone to Mt. McKinley before being found dead. The main character had given \$25,000 in savings to charity and invented a new life for himself before his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. It is a thrilling and haunting story of adventure and mystery.

This Boy's Life by Tobias Wolff

This is Tobias Wolff's memoir and moving tale of the frustrations and cruelties of growing up in a dysfunctional family in the 1950s and 1960s. Teenaged Wolff moves with his divorced mother from Florida to Utah to Washington State to escape her violent boyfriend. When she remarries, Wolff finds himself in a bitter battle of wills with his abusive stepfather.

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

The author, an alumnus of Brandeis University, tells of his meetings with a former professor suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease and all of the lessons he learned about life and death from his college mentor.

Putnam Valley High School
11th Grade
Advanced Placement Language and Composition
Summer 2010 Reading List

All three books listed below are required reading. In addition, there will be a writing assignment due at the end of September.

Eats Shoots and Leaves by Lynne Truss

Who would have thought a book about punctuation could cause such a sensation? Certainly not its modest if indignant author, who began her surprise hit motivated by "horror" and "despair" at the current state of British usage: ungrammatical signs ("BOB,S PETS"), headlines ("DEAD SONS PHOTOS MAY BE RELEASED") and band names ("Hear'Say") drove journalist and novelist Truss absolutely batty. But this spirited and wittily instructional little volume, which was a U.K. #1 bestseller, is not a grammar book, Truss insists; like a self-help volume, it "gives you permission to love punctuation." Her approach falls between the descriptive and prescriptive schools of grammar study, but is closer, perhaps, to the latter.

On Writing by Stephen King

Short and snappy as it is, Stephen King's ***On Writing*** really contains two books: a fondly sardonic autobiography and a tough-love lesson for aspiring novelists. The memoir is terrific stuff, a vivid description of how a writer grew out of a misbehaving kid. You're right there with the young author as he's tormented by poison ivy, gas-passing babysitters, uptight schoolmarms, and a laundry job nastier than Jack London's. It's a ripping yarn that casts a sharp light on his fiction.

Reading Lolita in Tehran by Reading Lolita in Tehran

From Amazon.com: An inspired blend of memoir and literary criticism, *Reading Lolita in Tehran* is a moving testament to the power of art and its ability to change and improve people's lives. In 1995, after resigning from her job as a professor at a university in Tehran due to repressive policies, Azar Nafisi invited seven of her best female students to attend a weekly study of great Western literature in her home. Since the books they read were officially banned by the government, the women were forced to meet in secret, often sharing photocopied pages of the illegal novels. For two years they met to talk, share, and "shed their mandatory veils and robes and burst into color."

Putnam Valley High School
12th Grade
Summer 2010 Reading List

Please read one of the following texts in preparation for your year in 12th grade English. Each 12th grade course will incorporate these texts into the curriculum.

Savage Inequalities by Jonathon Kozol

This non-fiction book studies and exposes some of the horrid conditions of impoverished schools in the United States. Kozol examines some of the causes and results of the situation and discovers that while some wonderful and inspiring stories emerge from these schools, there is more that needs to be done.

Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

This moving story features a girl who struggles with her emotions and identity, in part, because of the death of her mother. Lily, the main character, meets a nurturing, fun, and positive group of women beekeepers. This group of beekeepers enlightens Lily on the strength and power of women.

Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse

In this story, Siddhartha is a young man who leaves his family for a life of thought and contemplation but leaves in pursuit of a life with more immediate gratification. This story traces his journey of self-discovery on which he questions the surrounding world and the purpose of humankind.

Putnam Valley High School
12th Grade
Advanced Placement Literature and Composition
Summer 2010 Reading

Students entering 12th grade AP English must read the two following texts:

One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel García Márquez

One of the 20th century's enduring works, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is a widely beloved and acclaimed novel known throughout the world, and the ultimate achievement in a Nobel Prize-winning career. The novel tells the story of the rise and fall of the mythical town of Macondo through the history of the Buendía family. It is a rich and brilliant chronicle of life and death, and the tragicomedy of humankind. In the noble, ridiculous, beautiful, and tawdry story of the Buendía family, one sees all of humanity, just as in the history, myths, growth, and decay of Macondo, one sees all of Latin America. Love and lust, war and revolution, riches and poverty, youth and senility -- the variety of life, the endlessness of death, the search for peace and truth -- these universal themes dominate the novel.

Prayer for Owen Meany, A by John Irving

Owen Meany is a dwarfish boy with a strange voice who has an accident with his best friend's mom with a baseball and believes--accurately--that he is an instrument of God, to be redeemed by martyrdom. It is a sometimes funny, sometimes sad journey that searches through many realms of life. While religion is a component, it serves as more of a factor than the purpose of Owen and Johnny's friendship and silly happenings.