

# 2023 Summer Reading

## 12th Grade Reading

All Seniors despite the class should read the following:

*Undecided: Navigating Life and Learning After High School* by Genevieve Morgan

For high school students all over the country, figuring out what to do after graduation is a major question. For many, the logical answer is continuing their education, whether in a training program, a community college, or a four-year university. But no matter what the path, the preparation can be overwhelming, and it's hard to know where to start. That's where *Undecided* comes in! This comprehensive handbook outlines the different options available to teens after high school and provides suggestions on how to follow each path efficiently and successfully.

Be prepared to discuss:

1. What information shared in the book has had an impact on your after high school plans?
2. What is your Plan A? Discuss with your parents.
3. Have any of the alternative paths (other than higher education) appealed to you? Are they financially realistic? How will it be beneficial for future long term plans?

## 11th Grade: American Literature and Composition

*The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative (Indigenous Americas)* by Thomas King

"Stories are wondrous things. And they are dangerous." In *The Truth About Stories*, Native novelist and scholar Thomas King explores how stories shape who we are and how we understand and interact with other people. From creation stories to personal experiences, historical anecdotes to social injustices, racist propaganda to works of contemporary Native literature, King probes Native culture's deep ties to storytelling. With wry humor, King deftly weaves events from his own life as a child in California, an academic in Canada, and a Native North American with a wide-ranging discussion of stories told by and about Indians. So many stories have been told about Indians, King comments, that "there is no reason for the Indian to be real. The Indian simply has to exist in our imaginations." That imaginative Indian that North Americans hold dear has been challenged by Native writers - N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Louis Owens, Robert Alexie, and others - who provide alternative narratives of the Native experience that question, create a present, and imagine a future. King reminds the reader, Native and non-Native, that storytelling carries with it social and moral responsibilities. "Don't say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now."

Be prepared to discuss:

1. Throughout the text, King says that “the truth about [stories](#) is that that’s all we are” (2). What does he mean by this, and why does he repeat that point six separate times in the text?
2. Why do most of the chapters begin with the story of turtles holding up the earth on their backs? What is the significance of the idea that it’s “turtles all the way down” (2)?
3. King mentions that people have an image of an Indian in mind, whether it be one from a team mascot, a film, or history. What do you picture when you think of the term “Indian,” and how has King’s argument changed your conception of an Indian?

### **11th Grade: AP/Acc Comp: The Process of Composition**

*A Room of One’s Own* by Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf, an accomplished novelist and master of the Modernist style, was asked to give a lecture on the subject of women and fiction. What she provided in *A Room of One’s Own* – part fiction, part memoir, part treatise – lives on as a testament to the importance of writing, and writing well.

As you read her lecture, consider the following:

1. Woolf looks to answer why so few women have written. In doing so she addresses issues of economics, history, and tradition. What is her thesis? How does she defend it? Is it persuasive?
2. Consider Woolf’s style. In the lecture she creates imaginary characters, addresses her own life and makes explicit arguments. How do these three genres work together to develop her claims? Also take some time to examine what Woolf is doing with her sentences. How do they work? How do they build momentum?
3. Finally, consider those left out of Woolf’s argument. Who are they? Are they rightly excluded? What does their exclusion suggest about Woolf’s biases?

### **10th Grade: World Literature and Composition (All levels)**

*A Thousand Ships* by Natalie Haynes

Natalie Haynes retells the end of *The Illiad* and most of *The Odyssey* through the eyes of the women. “The devastating consequences of the fall of Troy stretch from Mount Olympus to Mount Ida, from the citadel of Troy to the distant Greek islands, and across oceans and sky in between. These are the stories of the women embroiled in that legendary war and its terrible aftermath, as well as the feud and the fatal decisions that started it all.”

As you read, consider the following:

1. In the Greek culture, women were not considered heroes in the same way that the men were. Do they deserve the title of “hero”?
2. Did reading the female perspective of this war change your view on the Trojan War or on war in general? Have you ever thought about the consequences of war on those left behind before reading this story?
3. Did you give the Gods and Goddesses stories more weight than the human stories? What did you think about the interactions between the Gods and Goddesses?

## **9th Grade: Literature and Composition**

*Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcolm Gladwell

“Why do some people succeed far more than others?” Malcolm Gladwell, acclaimed author and statistician, seeks to answer this question and delves into the science behind success. Gladwell examines elements such as one’s family, one’s birthplace, and even one’s birthdate as complex and essential factors that contribute to high levels of success.

Students in Literature and Composition should read through Chapter 4: “The Trouble with Geniuses, Part 2.”

Students in Honors Literature and Composition should read through Chapter 7: “The Ethnic Theory of Plane Crashes.”

All students will resume reading the rest of the book as a class. As you read, consider the following questions and ideas:

1. What’s the 10,000 hour rule? Do you believe this rule is realistic and achievable for all individuals? Discuss how you could apply this rule to your life.
2. Gladwell cites many privileges and advantages that contribute to one’s success. Which case/argument do you find the most convincing? Why?
3. What advantages have you benefitted from? Why haven’t they been enough to catapult you to the outlier level of success? Alternatively, if you consider yourself very successful, to what do you attribute your success?