

Middletown Township Public Schools

High School North and South English Departments

Middletown, NJ 07748



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Parents and Senior Students, Class of 2010:

All **senior** students entering High School North or High School South in September 2009 are required to read **two novels** this summer. Read and follow the directions below:

12 Honors' students must read: *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel
All other grade 12 levels must read: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

For the above stated novels, all students **must submit** a completed **reader response journal** to their English teacher **on or before the first Monday of school**. The student is to:

- Choose ten (10) quotations from the text and respond to each, explaining their significance in the overall context of the novel and/or give a personal response to the quote.
- Quotes must be spread out over the entirety of the book (i.e., the quotes cannot come from the first few chapters).
- Students may use the attached reader-response form or type their responses in the same format.

In addition, all senior students, **must choose and read one book*** from the following list. English teachers will assess the second book in September.

Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris
Blink by Malcolm Gladwell
Reviving Ophelia by Dr. Mary Pipher
Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

The Time Traveler's Wife by Audrey Niffenegger
Angels and Demons by Dan Brown
The Once and Future King by T.H. White
Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser

Books may be borrowed from the Middletown Public Library. The books may, also, be purchased at Barnes and Noble (in Holmdel or Eatontown) or at Borders (in Eatontown). All locations have received requests from us to have the books in stock.

Please address any questions to the Assistant Principals of Curriculum indicated below.

Sincerely yours,

Carol Buckley, Assistant Principal
High School North

Marie D. Caldaro, Assistant Principal
High School South

*See attached page for book descriptions.

CC: Karen Bilbao
Fred Carrigg

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

Yann Martel's imaginative and unforgettable *Life of Pi* is a magical reading experience, an endless blue expanse of storytelling about adventure, survival, and ultimately, faith. The precocious son of a zookeeper, 16-year-old Pi Patel is raised in Pondicherry, India, where he tries on various faiths for size, attracting "religions the way a dog attracts fleas." "Planning a move to Canada, his father packs up the family and their menagerie, and they hitch a ride on an enormous freighter. After a harrowing shipwreck, Pi finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean, trapped on a 26-foot lifeboat with a wounded zebra, a spotted hyena, a seasick orangutan, and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker ("His head was the size and color of the lifebuoy, with teeth"). It sounds like a colorful setup, but these wild beasts don't burst into song as if co-starring in an anthropomorphized Disney feature. After much gore and infighting, Pi and Richard Parker remain the boat's sole passengers, drifting for 227 days through shark-infested waters while fighting hunger, the elements, and an overactive imagination. In rich, hallucinatory passages, Pi recounts the harrowing journey as the days blur together, elegantly cataloging the endless passage of time and his struggles to survive.

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

The Kite Runner follows the story of Amir, the privileged son of a wealthy businessman in Kabul, and Hassan, the son of Amir's father's servant. As children in the relatively stable Afghanistan of the early 1970s, the boys are inseparable. They spend idyllic days running kites and telling stories of mystical places and powerful warriors until an unspeakable event changes the nature of their relationship forever, and eventually cements their bond in ways neither boy could have ever predicted. Even after Amir and his father flee to America, Amir remains haunted by his cowardly actions and disloyalty. In part, it is these demons and the sometimes impossible quest for forgiveness that bring him back to his war-torn native land after it comes under Taliban rule.

Reviving Ophelia by Mary Pipher, Ph.D.

In *Reviving Ophelia*, Dr. Mary Pipher takes the reader through riveting accounts of the trials, successes, and losses experienced by adolescent girls. A clinical psychologist who has treated girls for more than 20 years, Pipher describes the therapeutic process through which these accounts unfold. More importantly, she draws our attention to what adolescent girls of our time have to say about their relationships, their lives, and their futures.

Angels and Demons by Dan Brown

When world-renowned Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon is summoned to a Swiss research facility to analyze a mysterious symbol -- seared into the chest of a murdered physicist -- he discovers evidence of the unimaginable: the resurgence of an ancient secret brotherhood known as the Illuminati... Embarking on a frantic hunt through sealed crypts, dangerous catacombs, deserted cathedrals, and even to the heart of the most secretive vault on earth, Langdon and Vetra follow a 400-year old trail of ancient symbols that snakes across Rome toward the long-forgotten Illuminati lair... a secret location that contains the only hope for Vatican salvation.

Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Tuesdays with Morrie is a series of lessons a former (and now current) student has with his teacher (and now mentor) about facing one's death and living one's life. The author, Mitch Albom, is an award-winning sports columnist with the [Detroit Free Press](#). A chance encounter propels Albom, guiltily and fearfully, to the bedside of Morrie Schwartz, his sociology teacher at Brandeis University nearly twenty years ago. Once together again, teacher and student decide to extend the visit over the remaining months of Morrie's life. Their Tuesday "seminars" explore perennial value issues of everyday life: "Family," "Emotions," "Money," "Marriage," "Our Culture," "Fear of Aging," etc. The interchanges, fortunately, are studded with "pearls of wisdom" from Morrie.

The Once and Future King by T.H.White

The whole world knows and loves this book. It is the magical epic of King Arthur and his shining Camelot; of Merlin and Owl and Guinevere; of beasts who talk and men who fly, of wizardry and war. It is the book of all things lost and wonderful and sad. It is the fantasy masterpiece by which all others are judged.

Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris

Me Talk Pretty One Day contains far more than just the funniest collection of autobiographical essays - it quite well registers as a manifesto about language itself. Wherever there's a straight line, you can be sure that Sedaris lurks beneath the text, making it jagged with laughter; and just where the fault lines fall, he sits mischievously perched at the epicenter of it all. No medium available to mankind is spared his cultural vision; no family member (even the dynasties of family pets) is forgotten in these pages of sardonic memories of Sedaris's numerous incarnations in North Carolina, Chicago, New York, and France.

Blink by Malcolm Gladwell

Blink is about the first two seconds of looking--the decisive glance that knows in an instant. Gladwell, the best-selling author of *The Tipping Point* campaigns for snap judgments and mind reading with a gift for translating research into splendid storytelling. Building his case with scenes from a marriage, heart attack triage, speed dating, choking on the golf course, selling cars, and military maneuvers, he persuades readers to think small and focus on the meaning of "thin slices" of behavior.

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

Journalist Schlosser argues that the fast food industry has triggered the growth of malls in America's landscape, widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and propelled American cultural imperialism abroad. He discusses facts about food production and preparation, the ingredients and taste-enhancers in the food, the chains' efforts to reel in young, susceptible consumers, and other unsettling facts.

The Time Traveler's Wife by Audrey Niffenegger

A dazzling novel in the most untraditional fashion, this is the remarkable story of Henry DeTamble, a dashing, adventuresome librarian who travels involuntarily through time, and Clare Abshire, an artist whose life takes a natural sequential course. Henry and Clare's passionate love affair endures across a sea of time and captures the two lovers in an impossibly romantic trap, and it is Audrey Niffenegger's cinematic storytelling that makes the novel's unconventional chronology so vibrantly triumphant. An enchanting debut and a spellbinding tale of fate and belief in the bonds of love, *The Time Traveler's Wife* is destined to captivate readers for years to come.

Reader Response Journal

Page #	Quote	Significance/Reaction
Quote 1		
Quote 2		
Quote 3		

Quote 4		
Quote 5		
Quote 6		
Quote 7		

Quote 8		
Quote 9		
Quote 10		