

Welcome to World Literature, your sophomore English class at LHS!

Like all English classes at Libertyville High School, we would love to encourage you to read a book over the summer! We all love to read so much and we're hoping our enthusiasm for reading will spread to you as well. Because of that, we have put together a list of book suggestions of some titles that will introduce you to many themes and ideas presented throughout the course, and hopefully if you read any of them you will enjoy them as much as we have. This summer, here are some cool books you could check out. We have included their names, authors, and brief summaries for each:

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai. (memoir) Summary: When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize. *I Am Malala* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

Anansi Boys by Neil Gaiman (fantasy) Summary: Charles Fat Charlie Nancy leads a normal, boring existence in London. However, when he calls the U.S. to invite his estranged father to his wedding, he learns that the man just died. After jetting off to Florida for the funeral, Charlie not only discovers a brother he didn't know he had, but also learns that his father was the West African trickster god, Anansi. Charlie's brother, who possesses his own magical powers, later visits him at home and spins Charlie's life out of control, getting him fired, sleeping with his fiancée, and even getting him arrested for a white-collar crime. Charlie fights back with assistance from other gods, and that's when the real trouble begins. They lead the brothers into adventures that are at times scary or downright hysterical. At first Charlie is overwhelmed by this new world, but he is Anansi's son and shows just as much flair for trickery as his brother. Anansi is also a story about fathers, sons, and brothers and how difficult it can be to get along even when they are so similar.

Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference by Warren St. John (nonfiction) Summary: Clarkston, Georgia, was a

typical Southern town until it was designated a refugee settlement center in the 1990s, becoming the first American home for scores of families in flight from the world's war zones—from Liberia and Sudan to Iraq and Afghanistan. Suddenly Clarkston's streets were filled with women wearing the hijab, the smells of cumin and curry, and kids of all colors playing soccer in any open space they could find. The town also became home to Luma Mufleh, an American-educated Jordanian woman who founded a youth soccer team to unify Clarkston's refugee children and keep them off the streets. These kids named themselves the Fugees.

Set against the backdrop of an American town that without its consent had become a vast social experiment, *Outcasts United* follows a pivotal season in the life of the Fugees and their charismatic coach. Warren St. John documents the lives of a diverse group of young people as they miraculously coalesce into a band of brothers, while also drawing a fascinating portrait of a fading American town struggling to accommodate its new arrivals. At the center of the story is fiery Coach Luma, who relentlessly drives her players to success on the soccer field while holding together their lives—and the lives of their families—in the face of a series of daunting challenges.

Daughter of War by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch (historical fiction) Summary: Betrothed teens Kevork and Marta have been apart since being removed from their orphanage in Marash, Turkey, during the Armenian Genocide of 1915 when they were marched into the Syrian Desert without food or water. Separated by distance and the necessity of hiding, neither of them knows if the other is still alive. Kevork, rescued by nomads and now disguised as an Arab, is determined to return to the orphanage but faces many obstacles, including the opportunity to help smuggle funds and resources to the Armenians in concentration camps. Marta, meanwhile, had been taken in by a Muslim family in Aintab and forced to be a concubine. Now pregnant, she returns to the orphanage and helps protect its residents, still hoping to be reunited with Kevork. Because the story is told in alternating perspectives, readers know that both teens have survived, which removes some dramatic tension but allows the author to explore the development of the characters. Such is the universality of their feelings that a deep understanding of the historical context is not necessary, but would be helpful. Fortunately, a fairly detailed historical note and map provide context for readers who have likely heard very little about the second-largest genocide in history.

We hope that you enjoy your summer. We look forward to seeing all of you in August.

Sincerely,
The World Literature Team