

Dear Parents and Students of Language Arts 10 Honors Students,

You or your son or daughter has registered to take Language Arts Honors 10 during the 2023-2024 school year. This course is designed to be a challenging opportunity for student advancement within the English curriculum. Because of this, the requirements for the class **include at least two novels to be read (one MUST be *House on Mango Street*)** prior to the beginning of school. Listed below are short descriptions of summer reading books.

1. *Selection from the RHS Critical American Texts (See attached)*

There are four choices (you need to select ONE) that connect to influential American history/literature movements. Students need to choose ONE to read this summer.

Choice 1: *All My Rage* by Sabaa Tahir

Salahudin and Noor are more than best friends; they are family. Growing up as outcasts in the small desert town of Juniper, California, they understand each other the way no one else does. Until The Fight, which destroys their bond with the swift fury of a star exploding. When Sal's attempts to save the family's motel spiral out of control, he and Noor must ask themselves what friendship is worth--and what it takes to defeat the monsters in their pasts and the ones in their midst. From one of today's most cherished and bestselling young adult authors comes a breathtaking novel of young love, old regrets, and forgiveness--one that's both tragic and poignant in its tender ferocity.

Choice 2: *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley

Debut author Angeline Boulley has crafted an immersive and heart-stopping thriller told through the eyes of 18-year-old Daunis, a biracial, unenrolled member of the Ojibwe tribe. With crystal meth abuse on the rise in her community, Daunis uses her knowledge of science and native medicine to go undercover as a confidential informant with the FBI, but what she uncovers makes her question everything she's ever known. Boulley's authentic depictions of the complexities of Native communities and the trauma and strength of Native women, specifically, make this book a complete standout for YA and adult readers alike.

Choice 3: *Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, this #1 New York Times bestseller chronicles a young slave's adventures as she makes a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South. The basis for the acclaimed original Amazon Prime Video series directed by Barry Jenkins. Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. An outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is on the cusp of womanhood—where greater pain awaits. And so when Caesar, a slave who has recently arrived from Virginia, urges her to join him on the Underground Railroad, she seizes the opportunity and escapes with him.

Choice 4: *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi

One of Oprah's Best Books of the Year and a PEN/Hemingway award winner, Homegoing follows the parallel paths of these sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi's extraordinary novel illuminates slavery's troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

Choice 5 *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan

Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who's "saying" the stories. In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. "To despair was to wish back for something already lost. Or to prolong what was already unbearable." Forty years later the stories and history continue.

2. *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

Esperanza doesn't want to belong--not to her rundown neighborhood and not to the low expectations the world has for her. Esperanza's story is that of a young girl coming into her power and inventing for herself what she will become.

Students should treat these texts as **active reading novels**. They should include annotated passages, written notes etc. Traditionally, we have included a writing assignment before school begins however this year only the **reading is required along with your annotations. We will have an assignment during the first week of school that covers your summer reading.**

Details to annotate:

- Characterization
- Literary devices
- Figurative language
- Irony
- Plot dynamics
- Connection to the American dream
- Symbolism
- Theme
- Interesting passages
- Connection to the American identity

Also--please join our Remind (code: @39ch7d) for periodic updates and fill out this google form so we know that you have read and understood the instructions: <https://forms.gle/dYmTcnqmS4zd4HRs7>

Enjoy the summer, and happy reading ☺

In addition, we will be checking **only our email** periodically over the summer break:

kcusmano@rochester.k.12.mi.us (Kelley Cusmano) or myoungs@rochester.k12.mi.us (Michaela Youngs)

Sincerely,

Ms. Cusmano and Ms. Youngs