

Required Summer Reading for 11th grade College-Bound and General English

All in-coming juniors are required to read a certain number of novels sometime throughout the summer months, before September. You are to select two of the five novels identified below and read them before the first day of school of your junior year. You may borrow these reading materials from our library. You may of course prefer to purchase your own copies. As **you will be tested on the novels that you have selected**, it is strongly advised that you take notes on your readings so that the information remains fresh and can be easily referenced. The tests that you take will be in-class essays.

We have attempted to provide you with the selections that are fun, interesting, and that will challenge you in some way. We hope that you enjoy your choices and we look forward to meeting you in September.

Choose **2** from the following list:

- *Murder on the Orient Express* – by Agatha Christi

En route to Paris, Belgian detective Hercule Poirot has booked winter passage on the fabled Orient Express. Among the assortment of fellow passengers, one wealthy American holds a unique distinction: he has been found dead of multiple stab wounds in the night compartment of the Calais coach. By dawn, thirteen travelers, each bearing a secret, will find themselves suspect in the most ingenious crime Poirot has ever solved.

- *The Island of Dr. Moreau* – by H.G. Wells

In the novel a shipwrecked gentleman named Edward Prendick, stranded on a Pacific island lorded over by the notorious Dr. Moreau, confronts dark secrets,

strange creatures, and a reason to run for his life. While this riveting tale was intended to be a commentary on evolution, divine creation, and the tension between human nature and culture, modern readers familiar with genetic engineering will marvel at Wells's prediction of the ethical issues raised by producing "smarter" human beings or bringing back extinct species. These levels of interpretation add a richness to Prendick's adventures on Dr. Moreau's island of lost souls without distracting from what is still a rip-roaring good read.

- *Dracula* – by Bram Stoker

Count Dracula sleeps in a lordly tomb in the vaults beneath his desolate castle. His stony eyes are open. His cheeks have the flush of life beneath their pallor. On his lips – a mocking, sensuous smile and scarlet-fresh blood. He has been dead for centuries, yet he may never die...Here begins the story of an evil ages old and forever new. It is the story of those who feed a diabolic craving into the veins of their victims, into the men and women from whose blood they draw their only sustenance. It is a novel of peculiar power, of hypnotic fascination. The reader is warned that he who enters Castle Dracula may not escape its baleful spell, even when he closes this book.

- *Return of the Native* – by Thomas Hardy

This fine novel sets in opposition two of Thomas Hardy's most unforgettable creations: his heroine, the sensuous free-spirited Eustacia Vye and the solemn, majestic stretch of upland in Dorsetshire he called Egdon Heath. The famous opening reveals the haunting power of that dark, forbidding moor where proud Eustacia fervently awaits a clandestine meeting with her lover, Damon Wildeve.

But Eustacia's dreams of escape are not to be realized – neither Wildevine nor the returning native Clym Yeobright can bring her salvation.

- *The Hobbit* – by J.R.R. Tolkien

Bilbo Baggins was a hobbit who wanted to be left alone in quiet comfort. But the wizard Gandalf came along with a band of homeless dwarves. Soon Bilbo was drawn into their quest, facing evil orcs, savage wolves, giant spiders, and worse, unknown dangers. Finally, it was Bilbo – alone and unaided – who had to confront the great dragon Smaug, the terror of an entire countryside... This stirring adventure fantasy begins the tale of the hobbits that was continued by the bestselling epic *The Lord of the Rings*.

Good luck and enjoy the reading.