

2009 English Summer Reading List

Tenth Grade

The Ransom of Mercy Carter, Caroline B. Cooney

All Creatures Great and Small, James Herriot

The Hiding Place, Corrie Ten Boom

West with the Night, Beryl Markham

Peak, Roland Smith

The Robe, Lloyd C. Douglas

Under a War-torn Sky, L.M. Elliott

Flee the Captor, Herbert Ford

Desire of Ages, Ellen G. White

Assignments:

Choose two books to read from the list. Students planning to take honors English should read three.

1. Reading Journal for each book: 300 words minimum. For each book write down your thoughts, questions, reactions and personal connections to what you read.
2. Essay on one book: 300 words minimum. The essay should a) review the story, b) discuss how the author developed the story, c) give your opinion about the story and whether you would recommend it to anyone
3. Presentation in class over one book. This presentation will happen in the first week of school.

Annotated Book List

The Ransom of Mercy Carter

By Caroline B. Cooney

From Publishers Weekly

Based on actual events, this latest offering from the accomplished Cooney (*The Face on the Milk Carton*; *Driver's Ed*) is a gripping and thought-provoking account of the 1704 Indian raid on the English settlement of Deerfield, Mass. After their village is burned and many of its residents killed, Mercy and more than 100 other settlers are taken prisoner by the Kahnawake Mohawk, who have been converted to Catholicism by the French. Some of the novel's most riveting chapters describe the difficult winter trek that takes them 300 miles north to Canada, where Mercy settles into life in a traditional Indian village near Montreal. Uncertain whether she will be adopted by the Mohawk who captured her or whether the English will pay the ransom that would allow her to return to Massachusetts, Mercy struggles to balance loyalty to her own family and traditions with a growing appreciation for the Kahnawake way of life. Just how much her perspective broadens can be measured by the fact that, in addition to adopting many Indian ways, Mercy can find something sacred and comforting in the Catholic mass a rite she was raised to believe led straight to eternal damnation. Portrayed mostly as rigid, angry and dogmatic, the Puritans contrast poorly with the generally kind and commonsensical Indians, and Mercy's final choice is thus compelling. Though at times this account reads like the MTV version of the events (e.g., glancing over such important events as the death of Mercy's Indian father), the immediacy of Mercy's dilemma comes through despite its historical distance. Cooney's trademark staccato delivery keeps the pages turning. Ages 12-up.

All Creatures Great and Small

By James Herriot

From the back cover

Take an unforgettable journey through the English countryside and into the homes of its inhabitants—four-legged and otherwise—with the world's best-loved animal doctor. For over 25 years, since *All Creatures Great and Small* was first published—readers have delighted in the storytelling genius of James Herriot, the Yorkshire veterinarian whose fascinating vignettes brim with the wonder of life, animal and human. Whether struggling mightily to position a calf for birthing, or comforting a lonely old man whose beloved dog and only companion has died, Herriot's heartwarming and often hilarious stories of his first years as a country vet perfectly depict the wonderful relationship between man and animal—and they intimately portray a man whose humor, compassion and love of life are truly inspiring.

The Hiding Place

By Corrie Ten Boom

From the Publisher

Corrie Ten Boom stood naked with her older sister Betsie, watching a concentration camp matron beating a prisoner. "Oh, the poor woman," Corrie cried. "Yes. May God forgive her," Betsie replied. And, once again, Corrie realized that it was for the souls of the brutal Nazi guards that her sister prayed.

Here is a book aglow with the glory of God and the courage of a quiet Christian spinster whose life was transformed by it. A story of Christ's message and the courageous woman who listened and lived to pass it along -- with joy and triumph!

West with the Night

By Beryl Markham

From 500 Great Books by Women; review by Erica Bauermeister

West with the Night is an exceptional autobiography filled with a strong spirit, fascinating events, and beautiful words. Beryl Markham was raised by her father on a large farm in British East Africa in the early twentieth century; as a child she preferred spear hunting with the native Muranis to her school lessons. At seventeen, when her father lost their farm and went to Peru, she chose to stay in Africa and began a highly successful career as a race horse trainer. In her twenties she gave up horses and started flying

airplanes, becoming the first woman in East Africa to be granted a commercial pilot's license, then the first woman to fly the Atlantic from east to west. Lyrically and philosophically, **West with the Night** covers each of these parts of her life. Beryl Markham writes hunting stories filled with danger and tension, then turns and discusses the different qualities of silence or what it is like to fly alone over water for forty hours: "Being alone in an aeroplane for even so short a time as a night and a day, irrevocably alone, with nothing to observe but your instruments and your own hands in the semi-darkness, nothing to contemplate but your own small courage....such an experience can be as startling as the first awareness of a stranger walking by your side at night. You are the stranger. " This is the story of an extraordinary woman - and that alone might be enough to recommend it. The fact that it is also extraordinarily well-written makes it a gift.

Peak

By Roland Smith

From Booklist

Starred Review Fourteen-year-old New Yorker Peak ("It could have been worse. My parents could have named me Glacier, or Abyss, or Crampon.") Marcello hones his climbing skills by scaling skyscrapers. After Peak is caught climbing the Woolworth Building, an angry judge gives him probation, with an understanding that Peak will leave New York and live with his famous mountaineer father in Thailand. Peak soon learns, however, that his father has other plans for him; he hopes that Peak will become the youngest person to climb Mt. Everest. Peak is whisked off to Tibet and finds himself in the complex world of an Everest base camp, where large amounts of money are at stake and climbing operations offer people an often-deadly shot at the summit. This is a thrilling, multifaceted adventure story. Smith includes plenty of mountaineering facts told in vivid detail (particularly creepy is his description of the frozen corpses that litter the mountain). But he also explores other issues, such as the selfishness that nearly always accompanies the intensely single-minded. A winner at every level. *Todd Morning Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved*

The Robe

By Lloyd C. Douglas

A Roman soldier, Marcellus, wins Christ's robe as a gambling prize. He then sets forth on a quest to find the truth about the Nazarene's robe—a quest that reaches to the very roots and heart of Christianity and is set against the vividly limned background of ancient Rome. Here is a timeless story of adventure, faith, and romance, a tale of spiritual longing and ultimate redemption. *Barnesandnoble.com*

Under a War-Torn Sky

By L. M. Elliott

From Booklist

Gr. 6-9. It's packed with action, intrigue, and suspense, but this novel celebrates acts of kindness and heroism without glorifying war. American Henry Forester, a young flier with the RAF during World War II, is a complex mix of insecurities, unresolved feelings about his punitive father, and heroic aspiration. On his thirteenth bombing mission, he is shot down, having no idea where he has landed. His journey back through Nazi-occupied Europe and his involvement with members of the French resistance are depicted with chilling realism. Small details (bike wheels in France were made of wood because the Germans had confiscated all the rubber) add both credibility and appeal to this gripping adventure, inspired by stories told to the author by her father. An afterword concerns the resistance movement. *Connie Fletcher Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved*

Flee the Captor

By Herbert Ford

Herbert Ford succeeded to write an original book about World War II. His hero John Weidner created an underground network as soon as 1940 and saved a thousand people (Allied pilots gunned down by the Nazis and Jews) without ever wearing a weapon. The great originality of the network Dutch-Paris is its high morale standards and its efficiency in making fugitives escape occupied France, Belgium and Netherlands towards Switzerland and Spain. A great book about an unusual hero that deserves to be better known. *Amazon.com customer review.*

Desire of Ages

By Ellen G. White

"The most beautiful book ever written on the life of Christ." -- *Library of Congress*.