

2009 English Summer Reading List

Ninth Grade

My Family and Other Animals, Gerald Durrell

Gifted Hands, Ben Carson

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle, Avi

I am David, Anne Holm

The Killing Sea, Richard Lewis

Rifles for Waite, Harold Keith

A Single Shard, Linda Sue Park

Through Gates of Splendor, Elisabeth Elliot

Steps to Christ, 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: 250 words minimum. For each book write down your thoughts, questions, reactions and personal connections to what you read.
2. Essay on one book: 250 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.

Ninth Grade Summer Reading Annotated Book List

My Family and Other Animals

By Gerald Durrell

When the unconventional Durrell family can no longer endure the damp, gray English climate, they do what any sensible family would do: sell their house and relocate to the sunny Greek isle of Corfu. *My Family and Other Animals* was intended to embrace the natural history of the island but ended up as a delightful account of Durrell's family's experiences, from the many eccentric hangers-on to the ceaseless procession of puppies, toads, scorpions, geckoes, ladybugs, glowworms, octopuses, bats, and butterflies into their home. *Barnesandnoble.com*

Gifted Hands

By Ben Carson

In 1987, Dr. Benjamin Carson gained worldwide recognition for his part in the first successful separation of Siamese twins joined at the back of the head. The extremely complex and delicate operation, five months in the planning and twenty-two hours in the execution, involved a surgical plan that Carson helped initiate. Carson pioneered again in a rare procedure known as hemispherectomy, giving children without hope a second chance at life through a daring operation in which he literally removed one half of their brain. But such breakthroughs aren't unusual for Ben Carson. He's been beating the odds since he was a child. Raised in inner-city Detroit by a mother with a third grade education, Ben lacked motivation. He had terrible grades. And a pathological temper threatened to put him in jail. But Sonya Carson convinced her son that he could make something of his life, even though everything around him said otherwise. Trust in God, a relentless belief in his own capabilities, and sheer determination catapulted Ben from failing grades to the top of his class — and beyond to a Yale scholarship . . . the University of Michigan Medical School . . . and finally, at age 33, the directorship of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. Today, Dr. Ben Carson holds twenty honorary doctorates and is the possessor of a long string of honors and awards, including the Horatio Alger Award, induction into the "Great Blacks in Wax" Museum in Baltimore, Maryland, and an invitation as Keynote Speaker at the 1997 President's National Prayer Breakfast. *Gifted Hands* is the riveting story of one man's secret for success, tested against daunting odds and driven by an incredible mindset that dares to take risks. This inspiring autobiography takes you into the operating room to witness surgeries that made headlines around the world — and into the private mind of a compassionate, God-fearing physician who lives to help others. Through it all shines a humility, quick wit, and down-to-earth style that make this book one you won't easily forget. --*This text refers to the Hardcover edition. Amazon.com.uk*

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

By Avi

A vicious captain, a mutinous crew --
and a young girl caught in the middle

Not every thirteen-year-old girl is accused of murder, brought to trial, and found guilty. But I was just such a girl, and my story is worth relating even if it did happen years ago. Be warned, however: If strong ideas and action offend you, read no more. Find another companion to share your idle hours. For my part I intend to tell the truth as I lived it. *Barnesandnoble.com*

I am David

By Anne Holm

David's entire twelve-year life has been spent in a grisly prison camp in Eastern Europe. He knows nothing of the outside world. But when he is given the chance to escape, he seizes it. With his vengeful enemies hot on his heels, David struggles to cope in this strange new world, where his only resources are a compass, a few crusts of bread, his two aching feet, and some vague advice to seek refuge in Denmark. Is that enough to survive?

David's extraordinary odyssey is dramatically chronicled in Anne Holm's classic about the meaning of freedom and the power of hope. *Barnesandnoble.com*

The Killing Sea

By Richard Lewis

From School Library Journal

Grade 6–10—Ruslan falls for Sarah when her family's sailboat docks in his Indonesian town for mechanical assistance, but Sarah, a self-absorbed American, fails to notice him. Both teens are then caught in the disastrous 2004 tsunami. Sarah makes it to safety, but her mother is killed and her father is missing, leaving her to care for her younger brother. Ruslan also survives and immediately begins to search for his father, who had left their coastal home before the storm. The two meet again, this time forging a relationship. The action never slows, though some dangerous encounters seem unnecessary. Other predicaments are resolved too easily. For example, when Sarah is stranded on an island without a knife, she conveniently finds a boat and machete. Too many conflicts—death, romance, Sarah's anger toward her mother, Ruslan's relationship with relatives who are rebel fighters—muddle the plot. To his credit, the author treats cultural differences with a gentle and honest touch. He also creates a vivid picture of the many horrors and challenges faced in the immediate aftermath of a large-scale natural disaster. Despite drawbacks, this book will appeal to fans of survival adventures like Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* (Macmillan, 1986).—*Jayne Damron, Farmington Community Library, MI*
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Rifles for Watie

By Harold Keith

Review

"This full-length junior novel should hold a place with the best Civil War fiction for young people. The fighting takes place in the West. . . . A young farm boy joins the Union forces, becomes a scout, and thus temporarily part of Stand Watie's Cherokee Rebels. There is suspense in the telling and many a colorful character." -- "H."

A Single Shard

Linda Sue Park

From Publishers Weekly

Park (*Seesaw Girl*) molds a moving tribute to perseverance and creativity in this finely etched novel set in mid- to late 12th-century Korea. In Ch'ul'po, a potter's village, Crane-man (so called because of one shriveled leg) raises 10-year-old orphan Tree Ear (named for a mushroom that grows "without benefit of "parent-seed"). Though the pair reside under a bridge, surviving on cast-off rubbish and fallen grains of rice, they believe "stealing and begging... made a man no better than a dog." From afar, Tree Ear admires the work of the potters until he accidentally destroys a piece by Min, the most talented of the town's craftsmen, and pays his debt in servitude for nine days. Park convincingly conveys how a community of artists works (chopping wood for a communal kiln, cutting clay to be thrown, etc.) and effectively builds the relationships between characters through their actions (e.g., Tree Ear hides half his lunch each day for Crane-man, and Min's soft-hearted wife surreptitiously fills the bowl). She charts Tree Ear's transformation from apprentice to artist and portrays his selflessness during a pilgrimage to Songdo to show Min's work to the royal court he faithfully continues even after robbers shatter the work and he has only a single shard to show. Readers will not soon forget these characters or their sacrifices.

Through the Gates of Splendor

By Elisabeth Elliot

Product Description

Five men entered the jungle in search of a savage tribe . . . and never returned.

In January 1956, a tragic story flooded headlines around the world. Five men, spurred by a passion to share the good news of Jesus Christ, ventured deep into the jungles of Ecuador. Their goal: to make contact with an isolated tribe whose previous response to the outside world had been to attack all strangers.

At an agreed-upon time, their five young wives sat by their radios, waiting for a message that never came.

. . .

Through Gates of Splendor, the story of Nate Saint, Roger Youderian, Ed McCully, Pete Fleming, and Jim Elliot, was first recorded in 1956 by Jim's widow, Elisabeth. Decades later, its story of unconditional love and complete obedience to God still inspires new readers.

Steps to Christ

By Ellen G. White

Put the pieces of your puzzled heart together and find peace above life's storm as you digest this clear, remarkable little volume of two books in one. See how to become, and then remain, a Christian. This Christian classic has been published in nearly 150 languages with over 100 million copies in circulation. Aside from the Bible itself, no book ever written has shown so unmistakably how to become and remain a Christian. Discover the secrets to successful Christian living and experience true Christian maturity.

Amazon.com