



English IV Ms. Seifert
Summer Reading List 2026 - 2027
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Dear student,

I'm so excited to get to teach most of you for the 2nd time. Truly, it's my honor and privilege to work with you again for your senior year of high school. I'm looking forward to helping you make this the BEST year at Beechwood yet!

While you do not have a required summer assignment, below is a list of suggested books to consider reading leading up to English IV. These books will prepare you for the course, engage you with new ideas, and entertain you. Please note that some book choices may contain mature language and/or situations. Please see my message to students and parents on the next page, and feel free to contact me if you have any questions. If you do not love any of these choices, feel free to choose your own literature to read over the summer or reach out to me if you need more book recommendations.

<i>Title of Book</i>	Author (Date Published) Genre/Notes
<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>	Khaled Hosseini (2007) Novel set in Afghanistan; strong friendship themes
<i>Sing, Unburied, Sing</i>	Jesmyn Ward (2017) A magical-realist novel set in rural Mississippi, following 13-year-old Jojo as he navigates family trauma, poverty, and systemic racism
<i>Catch-22</i>	Joseph Heller (1961) Satirical war novel
<i>Jane Eyre</i>	Charlotte Bronte (1847) Victorian Romantic coming-of-age novel dealing with class and gender roles
<i>The Road</i>	Cormac McCarthy (2006) Post-apocalyptic novel that details the grueling journey of a father and his young son; this book explores the best and worst that humanity has to offer
<i>Invisible Man</i>	Ralph Ellison (1952) African American literature; addresses many of the social and intellectual issues faced by African Americans in the early 20th century
<i>In the Time of the Butterflies</i>	Julia Alvarez (1994) Historical fiction; relating a fictionalized account of the Mirabal sisters during the time of the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic
<i>All the Light We Cannot See</i>	Anthony Doerr (2014) Historical fiction, novel set in France during World War II
<i>Between Shades of Gray</i>	Ruta Sepetys (2011) Coming-of-age novel set during World War II and dealing with the genocide of the Baltic people

*****A message about the book choices:**

Good literature challenges us. It not only challenges our reading abilities, but it also challenges our sense of empathy, our understanding of the world, and sometimes even our willingness to stretch our thinking beyond familiar perspectives.

Literature invites us to more fully understand human experience, to think beyond what we already know and are comfortable with. So if you come across language or ideas in these (or any) books that make you feel uncomfortable, please do not immediately dismiss the books as threatening -- instead, approach the situation as an opportunity to grow towards adulthood and broaden your understanding of what it means to be one of the nearly 8 billion people sharing this planet.

Enjoy your summer, and I'm so excited to see you in August!

Sincerely,

Ms. Molly Seifert

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