

# DeMatha Catholic High School

## Freshmen Summer Reading 2019

Greetings!

With the warmer months upon us, it is time to think about what to read as you bridge the gap from middle school to high school. We don't intend summer reading as a cringe-inducing first assignment to be hanging over our students' heads. Nor do we intend to cram in a couple of "classics" that we would otherwise not have time to cover during the school year. Instead, we keep the following guiding principles in mind as we find high-interest books for our students' summer reading:

**Summer reading should be interesting—even fun.** Many researchers note that boys don't read as much as girls. Failure to account for this in summer reading at an all-boys school misses the opportunity to instill a love of reading in boys on their way to adulthood. A "classics" only summer reading list misses boys for whom ESPN.com or *The Players' Tribune* is go-to reading.

**Summer reading creates a common culture.** Every summer, the faculty reads a book in common that helps us create community. We discuss it as we get ready for the new school year and it enables lively conversation and new connections. Similarly, our students are part of our community, and we ask them to belong to each other by reading some things in common.

**Summer reading should keep the mind nimble.** The school year is composed of rhythms of intense effort followed by reflection. The school year is composed of the introduction of the new and the review of the familiar. Summer reading should fit into that rhythm.

Please see the book choices and descriptions on the back of this sheet. Happy reading, Class of 2023, and welcome to DeMatha!

-DeMatha English Department

# Summer Reading Options

For your summer reading, you will read two books: *Unbroken* AND your choice of one of the other titles below. Please complete a note chart (attached) for each text as you read. This chart must be turned in the first week of school. These charts will help you complete your first writing assignment in your English 9 class.

***Unbroken (The Young Adult Adaptation), Laura Hillenbrand.*** Louis Zamperini, mischievous and willful son of Italian immigrants, was headed toward a life of crime when his brother convinced him to join the track team. Zamperini discovered he had world-class talent, but the determination and toughness that made him so hard to handle as a child became invaluable traits for him in his roles as Olympic athlete, World War II pilot, and eventually a Japanese prisoner of war in appalling conditions. This is a true story of surviving incredible physical and emotional trials.

**For your second book, choose ONE of the the following:**

1. ***Black Ice, Andrew Lane.*** Sherlock Holmes is a teenager in this adventure, and, while smart, he is not yet "the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen." With the help of his mentor, Amyus Crowe, he must now save his brother from a murder conviction. The room was locked, only two people were inside—one ended up dead and Mycroft was discovered with a knife. Sherlock will have to travel the streets of London and Moscow to unravel the sinister set-up.

2. ***Maus, Vol 1 & 2: A Survivor's Tale, Art Spiegelman.*** Artie is a comic book artist who interviews his father to get information about the Holocaust (also known as the *Shoah*) and learns an enormous amount about his family and himself. The artwork acts as visual cue to help us identify people. How history continues to have an impact on the present is always at the heart of this work and reading something so serious handled in a genre that usually deals with superheroes or the comic causes us to think about the way we categorize art—are comic books literature? How do we know what art and literature are?

3. ***The Boys Who Challenged Hitler, Phillip Hoose.*** The Nazi war machine has over-run much of Europe, and a group of 15-year-old Danish boys can't stand the thought that their country has let the Germans occupy their towns without a fight. Armed with only their bicycles and their bravery, the boys launch a series of sabotage efforts and guerilla-style attacks on the Nazi occupiers. Their exploits—which include escaping from prison to continue their nightly raids—inspire the adults of their country to begin resisting the Nazis at every turn.

4. ***Luka and the Fire of Life, Salman Rushdie.*** Rashid Khalifa, the legendary storyteller of Kahani, has fallen into deep sleep from which no one can wake him. To keep his father from slipping away entirely, Luka must travel to the Magic World and steal the ever-burning Fire of Life. Thus begins a quest replete with unlikely creatures, strange alliances, and seemingly insurmountable challenges as Luka and an assortment of enchanted companions race through peril after peril, pass through the land of the Badly Behaved Gods, and reach the Fire itself, where Luka's fate, and that of his father, will be decided.

5. ***Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team, Steve Sheinkin.*** More than a century ago, legendary football coach Pop Warner took a game that frequently featured fist fights and cracked craniums and modernized it with the forward pass, trick plays and the electric speed of his players at Carlisle Indian School. This is the true story of Jim Thorpe (often considered one of the best athletes of the 20th century), the evolution of football, and Native American cultures that refused to be erased.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Book/Author \_\_\_\_\_

## Freshmen Summer Reading – Note-Taking Chart

**Directions:** Read your chosen text carefully. Pay close attention to character development, theme, symbolism, and the writer's style. As you read, use the form below to take notes.

<p>What are your thoughts and questions about this story? You might reflect on the characters, the conflicts in the story, the author's use of symbolism, the title, or specific scenes in the book. <i>Support your thinking with specific details from the story.</i></p>	<p>Describe how the main character has changed through the story. <i>Support your thinking with specific details from the story.</i></p>
<p>What does this book say about people or life in general (theme)? In what ways does it remind you of people you have known or experiences you have had? You may also think about connections to stories or books you have read, or movies, works of art, or TV programs you have seen. <i>Support your thinking with specific details from the story.</i></p>	<p>Choose two or three important quotations from the book and explain why you think they are particularly eye-opening, memorable, and/or worth discussing further.</p>

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