



## Honors English 10 Summer Reading

Welcome to Honors English 10! I am excited to have you in class next year! We will be reading two books this summer-- one fiction and one non-fiction. The books below list the title, the author, and then the social justice topic that the book addresses. I encourage you to research the books ahead of time. On the next page are short summaries of the books. You do not need to purchase the books; feel free to check them out of the library. When you return to school after summer break, we will do a few things with the books you chose, including literary analysis activities, presentations, and an essay. To help you with, please do a few things. First, PLEASE READ THE BOOKS. If you are not able to read two books, Honors English 10 is NOT the class for you! Second, for each book, I would like for you to find five quotes from the book that illustrate the social justice topic. These do not need to be dialogue-- they can be from anywhere in the book. You can keep them on a Google doc or you can use this packet (see the last pages). We will use these when we come back after break.

If you have questions over summertime, please feel free to reach out to me: [eketch@cjeagles.org](mailto:eketch@cjeagles.org). If you have questions before school ends, please come and see me in room 300!

Titles with social justice issues in parentheses-- choose ONE fiction and ONE non-fiction book to read over the summer.

### Fiction

The Help by Kathryn Stockett (racism)  
The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead (slavery)  
Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng (pressure to conform to expectations)  
Small Great Things by Jodi Picoult (racism)  
Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver (global warming)  
An American Marriage by Tayari Jones (wrongful imprisonment)  
Monster by Walter Dean Myers (youth in prison)  
The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas (police brutality)  
Dear Martin by Nic Stone (race relations)  
Copper Sun by Sharon Draper (slavery)  
The Sun is Also a Star by Nicola Yoon (immigration)

## Non-fiction

I'll Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives by Martin Ganda and Caitlin Alifirenka (race/economic differences)

Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women by Kate Moore (worker's rights)

Janesville: An American Story by Amy Goldstein (economic justice)

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond (housing and equality)

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot (medical ethics)

The Death and Life of the Great Lakes by Dan Egan (ecological sustainment)

No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the US Surveillance State by Glenn Greenwald (national security)

Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover (abuse)

Overachievers: The Secret Life of Driven Kids by Alexandra Robbins (conforming to society)

The 57 Bus by Dashka Slater (LGBT, hate crimes)

American Prison: A Reporter's Undercover Journey into the Business of Punishment by Shane Bauer (incarceration)

Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company that Addicted America by Beth Macy (drug abuse)

## Book Summaries (all taken from Amazon.com)

### Fiction

#### **The Help by Kathryn Stockett (racism)**

Aibileen is a black maid in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, who's always taken orders quietly, but lately she's unable to hold her bitterness back. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue but now must somehow keep secrets about her employer that leave her speechless. White socialite Skeeter just graduated college. She's full of ambition, but without a husband, she's considered a failure.

Together, these seemingly different women join together to write a tell-all book about work as a black maid in the South, that could forever alter their destinies and the life of a small town...

#### **The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead (slavery)**

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.

#### **Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng (pressure to conform to expectations)**

"Lydia is dead. But they don't know this yet." So begins this exquisite novel about a Chinese American family living in 1970s small-town Ohio. Lydia is the favorite child of Marilyn and James Lee, and her parents are determined that she will fulfill the dreams they were unable to pursue. But when Lydia's body is found in the local lake, the delicate balancing act that has been keeping the Lee family together is destroyed, tumbling them into chaos. A profoundly moving story of family, secrets, and longing, *Everything I Never Told You* is both a gripping page-turner and a sensitive

family portrait, uncovering the ways in which mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and husbands and wives struggle, all their lives, to understand one another.

### **Small Great Things by Jodi Picoult (racism)**

Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse at a Connecticut hospital with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene? Ruth hesitates before performing CPR and, as a result, is charged with a serious crime. Kennedy McQuarrie, a white public defender, takes her case but gives unexpected advice: Kennedy insists that mentioning race in the courtroom is not a winning strategy. Conflicted by Kennedy's counsel, Ruth tries to keep life as normal as possible for her family—especially her teenage son—as the case becomes a media sensation. As the trial moves forward, Ruth and Kennedy must gain each other's trust, and come to see that what they've been taught their whole lives about others—and themselves—might be wrong.

### **Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver (global warming)**

In fictional Feathertown, Tennessee, in rural Appalachia, Dellarobia Turnbow--on the run from her stifling life--charges up the mountain above her husband's family farm and stumbles onto a "valley of fire" filled with millions of monarch butterflies. This vision is deemed miraculous by the town's parishioners, then the international media. But when Ovid, a scientist who studies monarch behavior, sets up a lab on the Turnbow farm, he learns that the butterflies' presence signals systemic disorder--and Dellarobia's in-laws' logging plans won't help. Readers who bristle at politics made personal may be turned off by the strength of Kingsolver's convictions, but she never reduces her characters to mouthpieces, giving equal weight to climate science and human need, to forces both biological and biblical. Her concept of family encompasses all living beings, however ephemeral, and *Flight Behavior* gracefully, urgently contributes to the dialogue of survival on this swiftly tilting planet.

### **An American Marriage by Tayari Jones (wrongful imprisonment)**

Newlyweds Celestial and Roy are the embodiment of both the American Dream and the New South. He is a young executive, and she is an artist on the brink of an exciting career. But as they settle into the routine of their life together, they are ripped apart by circumstances neither could have imagined. Roy is arrested and sentenced to twelve years for a crime Celestial knows he didn't commit. Though fiercely independent, Celestial finds herself bereft and unmoored, taking comfort in Andre, her childhood friend, and best man at their wedding. As Roy's time in prison passes, she is unable to hold on to the love that has been her center. After five years, Roy's conviction is suddenly overturned, and he returns to Atlanta ready to resume their life together. This stirring love story is a profoundly insightful look into the hearts and minds of three people who are at once bound and separated by forces beyond their control.

**Monster by Walter Dean Myers (youth in prison)**

This *New York Times* bestselling novel from acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers tells the story of Steve Harmon, a teenage boy in juvenile detention and on trial. Presented as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives.

**The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas (police brutality)**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.

**Dear Martin by Nic Stone (race relations)**

Justyce McAllister is a good kid, an honor student, and always there to help a friend—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. Despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out. Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

**Copper Sun by Sharon Draper (slavery)**

*Copper Sun* is the epic story of a young girl torn from her African village, sold into slavery, and stripped of everything she has ever known—except hope.

Non-fiction**I'll Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives by Martin Ganda and Caitlin Alifirenka (race/economic differences)**

It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. Martin was lucky to even receive a pen-pal letter. There were only ten letters, and fifty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one. That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives. In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends --and better people--through their long-distance exchange. Their story will inspire you to look beyond your own life and wonder about the world at large and your place in it.

### **Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women by Kate Moore (workers' rights)**

The Curies' newly discovered element of radium makes gleaming headlines across the nation as the fresh face of beauty, and wonder drug of the medical community. From body lotion to tonic water, the popular new element shines bright in the otherwise dark years of the First World War. Meanwhile, hundreds of girls toil amidst the glowing dust of the radium-dial factories. The glittering chemical covers their bodies from head to toe; they light up the night like industrious fireflies. With such a coveted job, these "shining girls" are the luckiest alive — until they begin to fall mysteriously ill. But the factories that once offered golden opportunities are now ignoring all claims of the gruesome side effects, and the women's cries of corruption. And as the fatal poison of the radium takes hold, the brave shining girls find themselves embroiled in one of the biggest scandals of America's early 20th century, and in a groundbreaking battle for workers' rights that will echo for centuries to come.

### **Janesville: An American Story by Amy Goldstein (economic justice)**

This is the story of what happens to an industrial town in the American heartland when its main factory shuts down—but it's not the familiar tale. Most observers record the immediate shock of vanished jobs, but few stay around long enough to notice what happens next when a community with a can-do spirit tries to pick itself up.

### **Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond (housing and equality)**

In this brilliant, heartbreaking book, Matthew Desmond takes us into the poorest neighborhoods of Milwaukee to tell the story of eight families on the edge. Arleen is a single mother trying to raise her two sons on the \$20 a month she has left after paying for their rundown apartment. Scott is a gentle nurse consumed by a heroin addiction. Lamar, a man with no legs and a neighborhood full of boys to look after, tries to work his way out of debt. Vanetta participates in a botched stickup after her hours are cut. All are spending almost everything they have on rent, and all have fallen behind. The fates of these families are in the hands of two landlords: Sherrena Tarver, a former schoolteacher turned inner-city entrepreneur, and Tobin Charney, who runs one of the worst trailer parks in Milwaukee. They loathe some of their tenants and are fond of others, but as Sherrena puts it, "Love don't pay the bills." She moves to evict Arleen and her boys a few days before Christmas. Even in the most desolate areas of American cities, evictions used to be rare. But today, most poor renting families are spending more than half of their income on housing, and eviction has become ordinary, especially for single mothers. In vivid, intimate prose, Desmond provides a ground-level view of one of the most urgent issues facing America today. As we see families forced into shelters, squalid apartments, or more dangerous neighborhoods, we bear witness to the human cost of America's vast inequality—and to people's determination and intelligence in the face of hardship.

### **The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot (medical ethics)**

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and more.

Henrietta's cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and

her family can't afford health insurance. This phenomenal New York Times bestseller tells a riveting story of the collision between ethics, race, and medicine; of scientific discovery and faith healing; and of a daughter consumed with questions about the mother she never knew.

**The Death and Life of the Great Lakes by Dan Egan (ecological sustainment)**

The Great Lakes—Erie, Huron, Michigan, Ontario, and Superior—hold 20 percent of the world's supply of surface fresh water and provide sustenance, work, and recreation for tens of millions of Americans. But they are under threat as never before, and their problems are spreading across the continent. *The Death and Life of the Great Lakes* is prize-winning reporter Dan Egan's compulsively readable portrait of an ecological catastrophe happening right before our eyes, blending the epic story of the lakes with an examination of the perils they face and the ways we can restore and preserve them for generations to come.

**No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the US Surveillance State by Glenn Greenwald (national security)**

In May 2013, Glenn Greenwald set out for Hong Kong to meet an anonymous source who claimed to have astonishing evidence of pervasive government spying and insisted on communicating only through heavily encrypted channels. That source turned out to be the 29-year-old NSA contractor and whistleblower Edward Snowden, and his revelations about the agency's widespread, systemic overreach proved to be some of the most explosive and consequential news in recent history, triggering a fierce debate over national security and information privacy. As the arguments rage on and the government considers various proposals for reform, it is clear that we have yet to see the full impact of Snowden's disclosures. Now for the first time, Greenwald fits all the pieces together, recounting his high-intensity ten-day trip to Hong Kong, examining the broader implications of the surveillance detailed in his reporting for *The Guardian*, and revealing fresh information on the NSA's unprecedented abuse of power with never-before-seen documents entrusted to him by Snowden himself. Going beyond NSA specifics, Greenwald also takes on the establishment media, excoriating their habitual avoidance of adversarial reporting on the government and their failure to serve the interests of the people. Finally, he asks what it means both for individuals and for a nation's political health when a government pries so invasively into the private lives of its citizens—and considers what safeguards and forms of oversight are necessary to protect democracy in the digital age.

**Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover (abuse)**

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

**Overachievers: The Secret Life of Driven Kids by Alexandra Robbins (conforming to society)**

In *The Overachievers*, Robbins uses [a] captivating style to explore how our high-stakes educational culture has spiraled out of control. During the year of her ten-year reunion, Robbins goes back to her high school, where she follows heart-tuggingly likeable students including "AP" Frank, who grapples with horrifying parental pressure to succeed; Audrey, whose panicked perfectionism overshadows her life; Sam, who worries his years of overachieving will be wasted if he doesn't attend a name-brand college; Taylor, whose ambition threatens her popular girl status; and The Stealth Overachiever, a mystery junior who flies under the radar. Robbins tackles teen issues such as intense stress, the student and teacher cheating epidemic, sports rage, parental guilt, the black market for study drugs, and a college admissions process so cutthroat that students are driven to suicide and depression because of a B.

### **The 57 Bus by Dashka Slater (LGBT hate crimes)**

One teenager in a skirt. One teenager with a lighter. One moment that changes both of their lives forever. If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. *The 57 Bus* is Dashka Slater's true account of the case that garnered international attention and thrust both teenagers into the spotlight. \*This story features a transgender student. If you or your family are not comfortable with this topic, this is not the book for you!\*

### **American Prison: A Reporter's Undercover Journey into the Business of Punishment by Shane Bauer (incarceration)**

In 2014, Shane Bauer was hired for \$9 an hour to work as an entry-level prison guard at a private prison in Winnfield, Louisiana. An award-winning investigative journalist, he used his real name; there was no meaningful background check. Four months later, his employment came to an abrupt end. But he had seen enough, and in short order he wrote an exposé about his experiences that won a National Magazine Award and became the most-read feature in the history of the magazine *Mother Jones*. Still, there was much more that he needed to say. In *American Prison*, Bauer weaves a much deeper reckoning with his experiences together with a thoroughly researched history of for-profit prisons in America from their origins in the decades before the Civil War. For, as he soon realized, we can't understand the cruelty of our current system and its place in the larger story of mass incarceration without understanding where it came from. Private prisons became entrenched in the South as part of a systemic effort to keep the African-American labor force in place in the aftermath of slavery, and the echoes of these shameful origins are with us still. The private prison system is deliberately unaccountable to public scrutiny. Private prisons are not incentivized to tend to the health of their inmates, or to feed them well, or to attract and retain a highly-trained prison staff. Though Bauer befriends some of his colleagues and sympathizes with their plight, the chronic dysfunction of their lives only adds to the prison's sense of chaos. To his horror, Bauer finds himself becoming crueler and more aggressive the longer he works in the prison, and he is far from alone.

**Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company that Addicted America by Beth Macy (drug abuse)**

In this masterful work, Beth Macy takes us into the epicenter of America's twenty-plus year struggle with opioid addiction. From distressed small communities in Central Appalachia to wealthy suburbs; from disparate cities to once-idyllic farm towns; it's a heartbreaking trajectory that illustrates how this national crisis has persisted for so long and become so firmly entrenched. Beginning with a single dealer who lands in a small Virginia town and sets about turning high school football stars into heroin overdose statistics, Macy endeavors to answer a grieving mother's question-why her only son died-and comes away with a harrowing story of greed and need. From the introduction of OxyContin in 1996, Macy parses how America embraced a medical culture where overtreatment with painkillers became the norm. In some of the same distressed communities featured in her bestselling book *Factory Man*, the unemployed use painkillers both to numb the pain of joblessness and pay their bills, while privileged teens trade pills in cul-de-sacs, and even high school standouts fall prey to prostitution, jail, and death. Through unsparing, yet deeply human portraits of the families and first responders struggling to ameliorate this epidemic, each facet of the crisis comes into focus. In these politically fragmented times, Beth Macy shows, astonishingly, that the only thing that unites Americans across geographic and class lines is opioid drug abuse. But in a country unable to provide basic healthcare for all, Macy still finds reason to hope-and signs of the spirit and tenacity necessary in those facing addiction to build a better future for themselves and their families.



### Quotes

Please find five quotes from EACH of the books you read. Keeping the social justice issue in mind, choose five quotes from the book that exemplify the social justice issue to you.

### Non-fiction

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### Fiction

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