



## OAK RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

### Level English III

In Conroe ISD, we encourage all students to read over the summer in order to enrich learning and provoke thought. Summer reading strengthens reading skills, increases academic achievement, fosters a love for reading, and empowers students to become lifelong learners.

Dear Future Level English III Students,

Students at Oak Ridge High School who enroll in English III are expected to complete a summer reading assignment. Summer reading assignments provide several advantages for you, including maintaining skills over the summer, fostering independent learning, understanding course expectations, creating an initial common framework for discussion and study, supporting college-readiness standards, and promoting lifelong learning.

You are scheduled to take English III for the 2017-2018 school year. For the summer of 2017, students will be required to carefully read one of the following novels of their choice:

Rot and Ruin by Jonathan Maberry

Looking for Alaska by John Green

Band of Brothers by Stephen Ambrose

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

The Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard (this novel is also on the Eng. II list for students enrolled in both)

Life as We Knew It by Suzanne Beth Pfeffer

One of our focuses for the beginning of school will be characterization. The culminating assessment over the summer reading assignment will be a character analysis essay. In preparation for this essay, you will need to identify the two most important characters in the novel. You must provide six quotes for each character showing why the character is significant and how they changed throughout the novel. The quotes must be evenly distributed throughout the novel: four from the beginning, four from the middle, and four from the end. The total of twelve quotes (six for each character) is due August 28<sup>th</sup>. In order to successfully complete this assignment, you will need to have a copy of the book for several months in order to complete all of the assignments (all of these titles can be found at various new and used bookstores around town, as well as ordered online). Please research the novel choices, and seek your parents' guidance in making this decision.

All students enrolled in English III for the upcoming school year are expected to have the novel read prior to the first day of school, August 16, 2017. Since there will be several assignments over the summer reading text during the first weeks of school, you should come to class prepared to discuss the text using their notes and personal observations on the first day of class. Thank you for your cooperation and continuing interest in your education and we look forward to seeing you in our classrooms next year!

Sincerely,

The ORHS English III Team

## Novel Summaries

*Mrs. Varnell recommends: **The Red Queen** by Victoria Aveyard*

What if you discovered that several of the core beliefs that you held about yourself were wrong? And that these discoveries made you question everything you thought you knew and understood about the world? Mare Barrow experiences this on an epic scale in Aveyard's opening installment of her Red Queen trilogy. Mare's entire existence is shaken when she accidentally learns a frightening truth about who, and what, she is. If you enjoy intrigue, surprises, danger, and rebellion then you will love this fast-paced adventure.

*Coach Ulbricht recommends: **Band of Brothers** by Stephen Ambrose:*

If you're looking for a book that might put hair on your chest then look no further than *Band of Brothers*. This is the book your parents don't want you to read, a book so American that it's probably banned in at least 11 countries. This is the sort of book that when you carry it around in public people simply avoid you because you're so awesomely American.

This amazing book changed my life when I was in high school and it will change yours too. This book is about the greatest generation. They came together, citizen soldiers, in the summer of 1942, drawn to Airborne by the \$50 monthly bonus and a desire to be better than the other guy. And at its peak—in Holland and the Ardennes—Easy Company was as good a rifle company as any in the world.

*Mrs. J. Jones recommends: **Looking for Alaska** by John Green:*

This is John Green's first novel, published in March of 2005. It is the story of Pudge, an awkward teen who is tired of his safe life at home, so he ventures out to a boarding school where he meets Alaska Young. Clever, screwed-up, funny, and dead sexy, Alaska pulls Pudge into her labyrinth and catapults him into the "Great Perhaps." I recommend this book because it addresses issues that teens can relate to – loneliness, heart ache, teen love, mischief, and what really happens to us after we die. The characters are so believable that you will find yourself cheering them on and commiserating their failures.

*Ms. C. Jones recommends: **Rot & Ruin** by Jonathan Maberry*

If you have ever felt that you've had to grow up too fast, that you are suffocated with responsibility, or even wonder why you belong to the family you do, you will understand the angst and frustration of Benny Imura. He was a baby when it happened. His first memory is of his mother handing him to his older half-brother as she is being dragged to her death by his newly "turned" zombie father. He resents his brother, Tom, for leaving his mother, for running away, for being a coward. It doesn't help that the community thinks **Tom** is the best zombie killer since sliced bread, but he's the only family he has left. With his 15th birthday approaching, Benny must find a job or lose half of his food rations, so he reluctantly agrees to work as Tom's apprentice in the "Family Business." When they travel out into the Rot and Ruin where action, violence and terror await them, Benny witnesses things that change his opinion of his brother and forever alter his perception of the world and what it means to be human. He also learns that flesh-eating zombies aren't the scariest or most dangerous monsters around. You will not be able to put this book down and will be racing to get the next in the series!

*Mrs. Bellows recommends: **Life as We Knew It** by Suzanne Beth Pfeffer*

*Life As We Knew It* is the first of a trilogy series. I originally found this book for free on Kindle, became hooked with the story, and purchased the remaining books in the series. This novel is written as a diary by the main character Miranda, a normal sixteen-year-old girl who attends high school and thinks about friends and boys. At the beginning of the novel, an asteroid hits the moon, which in turn, knocks it closer to the earth's orbit causing many natural disasters to occur, changing the world forever. Tidal waves destroy coastal cities, killing millions of people, thunderstorms knock out the electricity, stores run out of food and supplies, and a nuclear winter is caused by the multiple volcanic eruptions around the world. Without shops, food or electricity, how long can Miranda and her family survive with minimal water, a dwindling food supply, no heat or electricity, and subzero temperatures?

*Mrs. Cook recommends: **The Perks of Being a Wallflower** by Stephen Chbosky*

This popular book is an excellent coming of age story that will appeal to both reluctant and enthusiastic readers. Written in the form of letters from Charlie to an anonymous recipient, it is a quick, easy, and compelling read. High school freshman Charlie has a reputation for being a freak. He is socially awkward, cries easily, and his only friend just killed himself. Things turn around for Charlie when he meets seniors Sam and Patrick, who take him under their wing. They introduce him to their diverse, free-thinking, and sometimes wild group of friends. It is through these kids that Charlie is able to learn about friendship, love, and feeling safe, until a repressed secret from his past begins to emerge, threatening to destroy everything. This book does need a disclaimer, as there are adult situations that take place throughout this novel. Readers learn that Charlie was molested by a family member, he passively witnesses a rape, has a girlfriend he doesn't really like, takes drugs and alcohol others give him, and even lets his grieving gay friend Patrick kiss him just to make Patrick feel better. Homophobia is present, some teens have sex, the characters also smoke pot, drink, and take LSD, and there is some graphic language. We recommend that parents talk to their teens about such abuse, alcoholism, and socioeconomic class, and how we have the power to change our legacies, as many of the characters do in this book.