



CARL SANDBURG HIGH SCHOOL

13300 S. LaGrange Road, Orland Park, IL 60462 Phone: 708.671.3100 Fax: 708.361.9714 <http://sandburg.d230.org>

Deborah D. Baker
PRINCIPAL

Freshman Honors English Summer Reading 2017-2018

Carl Sandburg High School

Dear Incoming Freshman Honors students and parents,

Welcome to Freshman Honors English! This advanced-level class requires you to read extensively both inside and outside of the classroom as we begin to solidly create the foundations needed for your future AP Language and Literature classes. Therefore, you are required to read and respond to a variety of texts. We recognize that you are eagerly anticipating your success as a freshman honors student, and so, in order to better assist your preparations, we are sending a preview of the required reading list as well as the required outside reading assignment.

The summer reading list introduces students to the themes prevalent during the course of FHE as well as the text complexity of the honors curriculum. **Because students will begin story analysis in class in September, it is necessary that the following reading assignment is completed before the start of the school year.** An essay and an oral presentation will be due in November. Students will have the choice of one novel from list A *and* one selection from list B. Novels should be read and annotated by the first week of September. Annotations should consist of marginal notes identifying key information about characters and their motives and their relationships with other characters, settings, conflicts, thematic ideas, personal reactions to key ideas and events. Readers may also want to highlight or underline key lines and phrases.

A: Choose one (from the 2 options)

❖ ***Symphony for the City of The Dead*** by M. T. Anderson

In September 1941, Adolf Hitler's Wehrmacht surrounded Leningrad in what was to become one of the longest and most destructive sieges in Western history—almost three years of bombardment and starvation that culminated in the harsh winter of 1943–1944. More than a million citizens perished. Survivors recall corpses littering the frozen streets, their relatives having neither the means nor the strength to bury them. Residents burned books, furniture, and floorboards to keep warm; they ate family pets and—eventually—one another to stay alive. Trapped between the Nazi invading force and the Soviet government itself was composer Dmitri Shostakovich, who would write a symphony that roused, rallied, eulogized, and commemorated his fellow citizens—the *Leningrad* Symphony, which came to occupy a surprising place of prominence in the eventual Allied victory.

This is the true story of a city under siege: the triumph of bravery and defiance in the face of terrifying odds. It is also a look at the power—and layered meaning—of music in beleaguered lives. *Symphony for the City of the Dead* is a masterwork thrillingly told and impeccably researched by National Book Award-winning author M. T. Anderson.



❖ ***Unbroken*** by Laura Hillenbrand

In boyhood, Louis Zamperini was an incorrigible delinquent. As a teenager, he channeled his defiance into running, discovering a prodigious talent that had carried him to the Berlin Olympics. But when World War II began, the athlete became an airman, embarking on a journey that led to a doomed flight on a May afternoon in 1943. When his Army Air Forces bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean, against all odds, Zamperini survived, adrift on a foundering life raft. Ahead of Zamperini lay thousands of miles of open ocean, leaping sharks, thirst and starvation, enemy aircraft, and, beyond, a trial even greater. Driven to the limits of endurance, Zamperini would answer desperation with ingenuity; suffering with hope, resolve, and humor; brutality with rebellion. His fate, whether triumph or tragedy, would be suspended on the fraying wire of his will.

B: Choose one (from the 2 options)

❖ ***The Bear and the Nightingale*** by Katherine Arden

At the edge of the Russian wilderness, winter lasts most of the year and the snowdrifts grow taller than houses. But Vasilisa doesn't mind—she spends the winter nights huddled around the embers of a fire with her beloved siblings, listening to her nurse's fairy tales. Above all, she loves the chilling story of Frost, the blue-eyed winter demon, who appears in the frigid night to claim unwary souls. Wise Russians fear him, her nurse says, and honor the spirits of house and yard and forest that protect their homes from evil.

After Vasilisa's mother dies, her father goes to Moscow and brings home a new wife. Fiercely devout, city-bred, Vasilisa's new stepmother forbids her family from honoring the household spirits. The family acquiesces, but Vasilisa is frightened, sensing that more hinges upon their rituals than anyone knows.

And indeed, crops begin to fail, evil creatures of the forest creep nearer, and misfortune stalks the village. All the while, Vasilisa's stepmother grows ever harsher in her determination to groom her rebellious stepdaughter for either marriage or confinement in a convent.

As danger circles, Vasilisa must defy even the people she loves and call on dangerous gifts she has long concealed—this, in order to protect her family from a threat that seems to have stepped from her nurse's most frightening tales.

❖ ***Girl at War*** by Sara Novic

Zagreb, 1991. Ana Jurić is a carefree ten-year-old, living with her family in a small apartment in Croatia's capital. But that year, civil war breaks out across Yugoslavia, splintering Ana's idyllic childhood. Daily life is altered by food rations and air raid drills, and soccer matches are replaced by sniper fire. Neighbors grow suspicious of one another, and Ana's sense of safety starts to fray. When the war arrives at her doorstep, Ana must find her way in a dangerous world.

New York, 2001. Ana is now a college student in Manhattan. Though she's tried to move on from her past, she can't escape her memories of war—secrets she keeps even from those closest to her. Haunted by the events that forever changed her family, Ana returns to Croatia after a decade away, hoping to make peace with the place she once called home.

As she faces her ghosts, she must come to terms with her country's difficult history and the events that interrupted her childhood years before.

Moving back and forth through time, *Girl at War* is an honest, generous, brilliantly written novel that illuminates how history shapes the individual. Sara Nović fearlessly shows the impact of war on one young girl—and its legacy on all of us. It's a debut by a writer who has stared into recent history to find a story that continues to resonate today.

* Novel reviews from Amazon.

The following list includes the selections we will be studying during the course of the year in Freshman Honors English. You may choose to obtain these books before the semester begins, **but it is NOT recommended that you read them before the semester begins.** If you read these selections during the course of the summer, you will be required to reread and/or review these texts as they are studied during the year.

The Alchemist

Mythology

Odyssey

Antigone

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

T.B.A.

Jane Eyre

Paulo Coelho

Edith Hamilton

Homer (**Robert Fagles translation**)

Sophocles

translated by Simon Armitage

William Shakespeare **Folgers Edition**

C. Bronte

If you should have any questions or concerns regarding the reading selections or the project, please do not hesitate to contact one of us. We wish you a pleasant and productive summer. We look forward to meeting you and learning with you next year.

Sincerely,

Freshman Honors English Team

Romana Kovacevic

rkovacevic@d230.org

Dave Wierzal

dwierzal@d230.org

Anna McBride

amcbride@d230.org