

Royal West Academy

Grade 11

2015 Summer Reading List & Instructions

Selections:

East of Eden by John Steinbeck

Canada by Richard Ford

A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Marra

Alias Grace by Margaret Atwood

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry by Rachel Joyce

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

You may read as many books from the list as you wish, but you **must read two (2)**. You are expected to read the books carefully and take original notes; the notes will not be collected, but will help you prepare for your summer reading assessment which will take place over the course of September. You may use whatever format you're comfortable with for notes (ex: handwritten, typed, highlight passages, use Post-it notes, etc.).

Please be advised that your test will be on the first or second full day of school. In addition to the test, you will be required to complete a major writing piece on one of the books you read for summer reading.

Note that *The Great Gatsby* has a recent film version (2013 version directed by Baz Luhrmann). If you choose to read *The Great Gatsby*, you have the **option** to watch the film as well. **Keep in mind that you cannot just watch the film and disregard reading the book.**

For the grade 11 summer reading test, you will have to answer one question for each of the books you have read. **The test will include two (2) questions per book and you will choose one (1) to answer. Each question will be customized for the individual book.** In other words, rather than a general question about theme, there will be a specific question. For example, on the theme of *East of Eden* and how it relates to a specific event or character in that book etc. (*this is just an example; it does not mean that you must read *East of Eden*, nor that the question for *East of Eden* will be on theme).

Special note for books that have a film version: One of the two questions on the test pertaining to these books may be a novel/film comparison question.

You must read your books carefully and thoughtfully, considering the essential elements that you have been exploring in your English classes as well as your personal response to the book and how it speaks to you. Consider the following when taking notes:

Theme – the big ideas in the book about life, human behaviour, society and how they are explored and revealed, their impact on the reader, their relevance to our world

Characters – the principal characteristics of the main and secondary characters, why they do what they do, how they change, what they learn, what is interesting about them, their psychological make-up, what they teach us about human behaviour, human nature

Setting – how author conveys setting, how setting enhances the various elements of the novel, how it evokes atmosphere, how it reveals theme

Narration – the distinctive features of how the book is written – point of view, tone, reliability of narrator, and how that contributes to overall impact of book

Style - the writing style, imagery, description, humour, language, dialogue, how style enhances themes, character, impact of book