



WALNUT HILL

SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS

Summer Reading 2018

Reading and discussion are just two of the ways we engage as a community of artists and learners. Take time this summer to read the Community Read and the assigned texts for your English course. Then, we will come together at Walnut Hill for discussion, work, and action sparked by the works we read. Happy reading!

The Community Read

The Community Read is an opportunity for us to reflect in-depth about a text and a theme. Programming and conversation related to the Community Read will enable us to creatively examine our own community and to look beyond our own experiences. It is a book club on a grand scale with an important purpose.

***[The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope](#)* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer**

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind is the immensely engaging and inspiring true account of an enterprising African teenager who constructed a windmill from scraps to create electricity for his entire community. William Kamkwamba shares the remarkable story of his youth in Malawi, Africa—a nation crippled by intense poverty, famine, and the AIDS plague—and how, with tenacity and imagination, he built a better life for himself, his family, and his village.

Required Reading for English Courses

The first weeks of class will include discussion and writing related to the assigned book below. Students beginning English courses in the second term should review this assignment thoroughly before classes begin in January. All books should be available from any major bookstore or web retailer. New international students should read the text for the grade they will be entering. All summer reading for English courses should be done in English. Happy reading!

Freshman Humanities Seminar

The assignment for the Freshman Humanities Seminar is in two parts. Come to class in the fall prepared to share your wrecked journal and to join in conversation about the book that you read:

1. Complete at least 20 pages from ***[Wreck This Journal](#)* by Keri Smith**
2. Read **one** of these books:

***[The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time](#)* by Mark Haddon**

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.

[The Hate U Give](#) by Angie Thomas

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she was born and her posh high school in the suburbs. The uneasy balance between them is shattered when Starr is the only witness to the fatal shooting of her unarmed best friend, Khalil, by a police officer. Now what Starr says could destroy her community. It could also get her killed. (**Note:** *This novel contains complex themes of institutional racial bias and some strong language*).

[The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates](#) by Wes Moore

Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question.

[Written in the Stars](#) by Aisha Saeed

Naila's conservative immigrant parents have always said the same thing: She may choose what to study, how to wear her hair, and what to be when she grows up—but they will choose her husband. Following their cultural tradition, they will plan an arranged marriage for her. And until then, dating—even friendship with a boy—is forbidden. When Naila breaks their rule by falling in love with Saif, her parents are livid. Convinced she has forgotten who she truly is, they travel to Pakistan to visit relatives and explore their roots. But Naila's vacation turns into a nightmare when she learns that plans have changed—her parents have found her a husband and they want her to marry him, now! Her only hope of escape is Saif . . . if he can find her before it's too late.

English 10: The Individual in Society

[The House on Mango Street](#) by Sandra Cisneros

Acclaimed by critics, beloved by readers of all ages, taught everywhere from inner-city grade schools to universities across the country, and translated all over the world, *The House on Mango Street* is the remarkable story of Esperanza Cordero. Told in a series of vignettes – sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous – it is the story of a young Latina girl growing up in



Chicago, inventing for herself who and what she will become. Few other books in our time have touched so many readers.

American Literature & Culture

Students in American Literature & Culture will work with Community Read text:

[The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope](#) by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

Writing & Thinking – all juniors & seniors who are new to Walnut Hill: please see [this document](#) for your Summer Reading project.

This summer project presents a group of books, articles, podcasts, and videos that address this question: “What does it mean to experience difference based on race, color, ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, body type, and other personal factors in America in 2018-2019?”

English 11: Writing & the Self – all returning juniors: please see [this document](#) for your Summer Reading project.

This summer project presents a group of books, articles, podcasts, and videos that address this question: “What does it mean to experience difference based on race, color, ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, body type, and other personal factors in America in 2018-2019?”

English 12: Art & Response – returning seniors

[Hunger: a Novella and Short Stories](#) by Lan Samantha Chang

These stories illuminate how first-generation immigrants from China, culturally and emotionally uprooted from their homeland, mistrust connection even as they hunger for attachment -- and how the past affects and shapes their children. The title novella is narrated by a woman whose love for an exiled musician compels her into a tragic marriage in which her husband's unfulfilled desires nearly destroy their children. In other stories, a ghost seduces a young girl into a flooded river; a mother commands a daughter to avenge her father's death. Again and again in these stories, Lan Samantha Chang asks us to consider the nature of love as an inhuman burden and a life-affirming necessity. (**Note:** Be sure to read the Chang book, not a novel of the same title by Norwegian author Knut Hamsun).

Senior Seminar in Literature – for seniors by application

[Exit West: A Novel](#) by Mohsin Hamid



In a country teetering on the brink of civil war, two young people meet—sensual, fiercely independent Nadia and gentle, restrained Saeed. They embark on a furtive love affair, and are soon cloistered in a premature intimacy by the unrest roiling their city. When it explodes, turning familiar streets into a patchwork of checkpoints and bomb blasts, they begin to hear whispers about doors—doors that can whisk people far away, if perilously and for a price. As the violence escalates, Nadia and Saeed decide that they no longer have a choice. Leaving their homeland and their old lives behind, they find a door and step through ... *Exit West* follows these remarkable characters as they emerge into an alien and uncertain future, struggling to hold on to each other, to their past, to the very sense of who they are. Profoundly intimate and powerfully inventive, it tells an unforgettable story of love, loyalty, and courage that is both completely of our time and for all time.

Questions about course Summer Reading related to English courses can be directed to Jason Stumpf at jstumpf@walnuthillarts.org. Questions about the Community Read should be directed to Zach Roberson at zroberson@walnuthillarts.org.

Looking for something else to read? Check out book recommendations from faculty and staff in this summer's issue of *Behind Stowe!*

