

Summer Reading English 9 - Pulsinelli

Incoming ninth graders must read two texts over the summer:

1. *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley

Brave New World is a famous dystopia (imagined version of a terrible future) written in 1932. At first, you may feel confused, because Huxley's version of the future is different from the world in which we live. But as you read, think about the ways in which our world may be heading in that direction. Ask yourself if anybody in the novel is trying to be a hero, and if so, whether or not they succeed.

2. *Song of Achilles* OR *Circe*, both by Madeline Miller

For your second book, you get a choice. *Song of Achilles* (2011) is a retelling of the relationship between Patroclus and Achilles, two figures from Greek mythology. Next year we will read Homer's *Iliad*, where Patroclus and Achilles are key characters in the Trojan War. Miller's book covers more than just the *Iliad*, but reading this book will help you when we start that unit. The book won several awards and has been notably celebrated by the LGBTQ community.

Circe (2018) is a retelling of Circe's story from Greek mythology. She is an immortal sorceress with a deep and interesting story. Next year we will also read Homer's *Odyssey*, where Circe is a character that the hero Odysseus meets on his travels. As with *Song of Achilles*, *Circe* covers more than just the one chapter where she appears in the *Odyssey*, but reading this book will help you when we get to that unit. This book has also received much critical acclaim and has been notably celebrated by the feminist community.

Any paper or electronic versions are fine for summer reading. In August, you should bring a signed letter from your parent(s) listing the books you read and the dates you finished them. I encourage you to read these texts throughout the summer and not to wait until the last minute. Reading is enjoyable... don't make it work.

In August, you will be given a timed writing assignment based upon these texts, so I strongly advise you to take notes (observations, comments, favorite passages, questions, and so forth) that you may return to later. In addition to keeping the basic plot and names straight, you should pay special attention to the development of character and themes.

Naturally, you do not have to limit your summer reading to this assignment. Read more if you like. Summer is a time to set your own schedules, but I encourage you to keep your mind alive and your days filled with profitable activity.