

**Saint Francis High School  
Honors American Literature  
Summer Reading 2018**

**Honors American Literature students are required to read John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Check the ISBN number when you purchase your copy so you bring to class the correct edition: 0143039431. In the first week of school, you will be tested on your understanding of the novel. The book will also be discussed in seminars and you will write a formal essay on the novel.**

**For the 2nd book, pick one selection from the list below. You will complete a creative assignment about this novel and will also discuss it with your classmates.**

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables* – Greedy, piratical Colonel Pyncheon builds his mansion on ill-gotten ground, setting the stage for generations of suffering. Years later, a country cousin and an enigmatic young boarder attempt to reverse the tide of misfortunes surrounding the house in Hawthorne's evocative blend of mystery and romance

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* - Stowe's powerful abolitionist novel fueled the fire of the human rights debate in 1852. Denouncing the institution of slavery in dramatic terms, the incendiary novel quickly draws the reader into the world of slaves and their masters.

Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima* - Antonio Marez is six years old when Ultima comes to stay with his family in New Mexico. She is a curandera, one who cures with herbs and magic. Under her wise wing, Tony will probe the family ties that bind and rend him, and he will discover himself in the magical secrets of the pagan past—a mythic legacy as palpable as the Catholicism of Latin America.

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* - "... The outcry that followed its publication forced the banning of DDT and spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. Carson's passionate concern for the future of our planet reverberated powerfully throughout the world, and her eloquent book was instrumental in launching the environmental movement. It is without question one of the landmark books of the twentieth century." \*\*description courtesy of Amazon.com

Willa Cather, *My Antonia* - Set in Nebraska, the novel has five sections that correspond roughly to stages of Antonia's life, through marriage and motherhood, except the middle volume, "Lena Lingard," is about Jim Burden in college and his affair with Lena, Antonia's friend.

Frank Herbert, *Dune* - Set on the desert planet Arrakis, *Dune* is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, who would become the mysterious man known as Muad'Dib. He would avenge the traitorous plot against his noble family—and would bring to fruition humankind's most ancient and unattainable dream. A stunning blend of adventure and mysticism, environmentalism and politics, *Dune* ... formed the basis of what is undoubtedly the grandest epic in science fiction. \*\*description courtesy of Amazon.com

Michael Lewis, *Moneyball* - "*Moneyball* is a quest for the secret of success in baseball. Following the low-budget Oakland Athletics, their larger-than-life general manager Billy Beane, and the strange brotherhood of amateur baseball enthusiasts,.. *Moneyball* is a quest for something as

elusive as the Holy Grail, something that money apparently can't buy: the secret of success in baseball... In a narrative full of fabulous characters and brilliant excursions into the unexpected, Michael Lewis shows us how and why the new baseball knowledge works.” \*\*description courtesy of Amazon.com

Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* - This has been called a “spiritual conversion narrative” since it shows the evolution of Malcolm X's influential views on black pride, black nationalism, and pan-Africanism.

Anthony Doerr, *All The Light We Cannot See* - “Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure’s reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum’s most valuable and dangerous jewel.” \*\*description courtesy of Amazon.com

Jonathan Safran Foer, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* - “Nine-year-old Oskar Schell has embarked on an urgent, secret mission that will take him through the five boroughs of New York. His goal is to find the lock that matches a mysterious key that belonged to his father, who died in the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11. This seemingly impossible task will bring Oskar into contact with survivors of all sorts on an exhilarating, affecting, often hilarious, and ultimately healing journey.” \*\*description courtesy of Amazon.com

Sue Monk Kidd, *The Invention of Wings* - “Hetty “Handful” Grimke, an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, yearns for life beyond the suffocating walls that enclose her within the wealthy Grimke household. The Grimke’s daughter, Sarah, has known from an early age she is meant to do something large in the world, but she is hemmed in by the limits imposed on women. This exquisitely written novel is a triumph of storytelling that looks with unswerving eyes at a devastating wound in American history, through women whose struggles for liberation, empowerment, and expression will leave no reader unmoved.”  
\*\*description courtesy of Amazon.com