Saint Francis High School  
Honors American Literature  
Summer Reading 2019

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.

**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**

**Kurt Vonnegut, Cat’s Cradle** - An apocalyptic tale of this planet’s ultimate fate, it features a midget as the protagonist, a complete, original theology created by a calypso singer, and a vision of the future that is at once blackly fatalistic and hilariously funny. A book that left an indelible mark on an entire generation of readers, *Cat’s Cradle* is one of the twentieth century’s most important works—and Vonnegut at his very best. **description courtesy of Amazon.com**
Barbara Kingsolver, *The Bean Trees* - “The Bean Trees ... is the charming, engrossing tale of rural Kentucky native Taylor Greer, who only wants to get away from her roots and avoid getting pregnant. She succeeds, but inherits a 3-year-old native-American little girl named Turtle along the way, and together, from Oklahoma to Tucson, Arizona, half-Cherokee Taylor and her charge search for a new life in the West. Written with humor and pathos, this highly praised novel focuses on love and friendship, abandonment and belonging as Taylor, out of money and seemingly out of options, settles in dusty Tucson and begins working at Jesus Is Lord Used Tires while trying to make a life for herself and Turtle.” **description courtesy of Amazon.com**