

# PILLOW ACADEMY 2019 SUMMER READING

## 2019 Pillow Academy Summer Reading 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors (English IV/Dual Enrollment)



### 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors (English IV/Dual Enrollment) textbook for 2019-2020:

Honors English IV/DE students will need to purchase the textbook listed below by the end of the first full week of school in August.

Books can be ordered through the MDCC bookstore, and Mrs. Jenni Hargett can deliver to Pillow Academy.

### *For Our Students*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Ed. Laura Hammons

ISBN: 978-073808822-8

### 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors (English IV/Dual Enrollment) Summer Reading for 2019-2020:

Rising 12<sup>th</sup> grade Honors students will read three books this summer: Two books (one fiction and one nonfiction) are required, and the other selection is a book of choice. A test will be given on the required books on the first full day of school in August, and an assignment to be completed over the summer for all three books will be due on the first half day of school.

### Required books:

Choose ONE fiction AND one nonfiction selection from the works listed below for your two required books.

- A test on your fiction and nonfiction selections will be given on the first full day of school in August.
- Annotations on your fiction and nonfiction selections will be due on the first half day of school in August. Directions for the annotations are below.

Required fiction selection: Read *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel OR *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead.

- In *Station Eleven*, Kirsten Raymonde will never forget the night Arthur Leander, the famous Hollywood actor, had a heart attack on stage during a production of *King Lear*. That was the night when a devastating flu pandemic arrived in the city, and within weeks, civilization as we know it came to an end. Twenty years later, Kirsten moves between the settlements of the altered world with a small troupe of actors and musicians. They call themselves The Traveling Symphony, and they have dedicated themselves to keeping the remnants of art and humanity alive. But when they arrive in St. Deborah by the Water, they encounter a violent prophet who will threaten the tiny band's existence. And as the story takes off, moving back and forth in time, and vividly depicting life before and after the pandemic, the strange twist of fate that connects them all will be revealed.

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- In *The Underground Railroad*, Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted. In Whitehead’s ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor—engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar’s first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city’s placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom. Like the protagonist of *Gulliver’s Travels*, Cora encounters different worlds at each stage of her journey—hers is an odyssey through time as well as space. As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the unique terrors for black people in the pre-Civil War era, his narrative seamlessly weaves the saga of America from the brutal importation of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. *The Underground Railroad* is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman’s ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share.

Required nonfiction selection: Read *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance OR *Educated* by Tara Westover.

- In *Hillbilly Elegy*, readers encounter a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. The disintegration of this group, a process that has been slowly occurring now for more than forty years, has been reported with growing frequency and alarm, but has never before been written about as searingly from the inside. J. D. Vance tells the true story of what a social, regional, and class decline feels like when you were born with it hung around your neck. The Vance family story begins hopefully in postwar America. J. D.’s grandparents were “dirt poor and in love,” and moved north from Kentucky’s Appalachian region to Ohio in the hopes of escaping the dreadful poverty around them. They raised a middle-class family, and eventually one of their grandchildren would graduate from Yale Law School, a conventional marker of success in achieving generational upward mobility. But as the family saga of *Hillbilly Elegy* plays out, we learn that J.D.’s grandparents, aunt, uncle, sister, and, most of all, his mother struggled profoundly with the demands of their new middle-class life, never fully escaping the legacy of abuse, alcoholism, poverty, and trauma so characteristic of their part of America. With piercing honesty, Vance shows how he himself still carries around the demons of his chaotic family history. A deeply moving memoir, with its share of humor and vividly colorful figures, *Hillbilly Elegy* is the story of how upward mobility really feels. And it is an urgent and troubling meditation on the loss of the American dream for a large segment of this country.
- In *Educated*, readers discover an unforgettable memoir about a young girl who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a PhD from

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Cambridge University. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

### **12th Grade Honors (English IV/Dual Enrollment) options for book of choice:**

Choose ONE book from the [2019-2020 Pillow Academy Summer Reading Book of Choice List for Grades 10-12](#). Your book of choice should NOT be a book that you have read before.

- As you read each of your three books, you will need to develop active reading skills by thoughtfully annotating each of your books. The assignment for EACH of the THREE books is the same: book annotations.
- Print and carefully review the [Directions for Book Annotations](#) and "[How to Mark a Book](#)" by Mortimer J. Adler BEFORE you begin your annotations.
- Print (not electronic) copies of your three selections are required in order for you to provide evidence of clear annotations (see directions).
- These annotations will count for 50% of your summer reading grades; the other 50% of your summer reading grades will come from tests/assignments after school resumes in August.
- Book annotations will be turned in on the first half day of school in August. You will be turning in each of your three books with annotations inside of each, so be sure to write your full name inside the front cover of each book.

*\* Please Note: Summer reading selections are chosen based on literary merit and with high academic standards in mind. The books assigned by the English department at Pillow Academy represent a mix of classic and contemporary literature. Many books address complex situations and may contain adult themes and language. The attempt to expose students to challenging topics and issues is intended to serve as opportunities for students to think, theorize, question, and explore.*