

Summer Reading List 2010

The books listed below are required reading for students entering and returning to Ojai Valley School. It is the student's responsibility to purchase the books. It should be possible to obtain inexpensive copies of these books at Borders, Barnes & Noble, online at Amazon.com or other websites. Please read them over the summer and bring them to school in September prepared to discuss and write about them.

The intent is for students to experience reading worthwhile literature in a non-school environment. It is hoped that the reading will stimulate questions and ideas that will lead to thoughtful discussion and writing at the beginning of the school year. In addition, there is nothing more important to developing critical thinking and writing skills than actually reading well-written literature.

This year the entire school, faculty included, will be reading *1984* by George Orwell. We will be discussing this book during the first week of school and using issues raised by it for discussion and reflection.

All Grades	<i>1984</i>	George Orwell
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In addition to *1984*, the following books are required summer reading for each grade level:

Advanced ESL:	<i>The Pearl</i>	John Steinbeck
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ENGLISH 9: Weidlich	<i>Into the Wild</i>	Jon Krakauer
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ENGLISH 10: Wilson	<i>Two novels of choice from Mrs. Wilson's list</i>	
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ENGLISH 10 HONORS: Wilson	<i>Two novels of choice from Mrs. Wilson's list</i>	
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ENGLISH 11: Oberlander	<i>Slaughterhouse Five</i>	Kurt Vonnegut
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ENGLISH 11 HONORS: Wilson	<i>Two novels of choice from Mrs. Wilson's list of Pulitzer Prize winning novels</i>	
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ENGLISH 12: Weidlich	<i>Zetioun</i>	Dave Eggers
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AP ENGLISH:	<i>Things Fall Apart</i> <i>Slaughterhouse Five</i>	Chinua Achebe Kurt Vonnegut
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English 10 and English 10 HONORS – Mrs. Wilson’s Book List

Required all-school book is **1984** by George Orwell. Additionally, all English 10 and English 10 honors students must read **two novels** from this reading list:

Alchemist by Paulo Coelho is an allegorical novel. Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, journeys from the markets of Tangiers across the Egyptian desert to fulfill his Personal Legend and find his Treasure at the Pyramids. His discoveries along the way and his fateful encounter with the alchemist reveal the wisdom of listening to our hearts and following our dreams.

All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot is a non-fiction account of the experiences of a country veterinarian in Yorkshire, England. Both the farmers and the animals are unique, often humorous and sometimes heartbreaking.

Angela’s Ashes by Frank McCourt recounts his childhood experiences as a poor Irish immigrant during the depression first in New York and then in Ireland.

Bless Me Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya is centered on Antonio, a young boy in the village of Guadalupe, and his Aunt Ultima, a *curandea* (legendary healer). This novel focuses on Chicano culture, family tradition and the power of myth.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne is about two boys in Germany during the Holocaust of World War II. Bruno, the son of a Nazi officer, befriends a boy in striped pajamas who lives behind the wire fence of a concentration camp.

Cry the Beloved Country by Alan Paton depicts the racial ferment in South Africa in 1948 before apartheid. The protagonist, a black Anglican priest, goes to Johannesburg to search for his son, Absalom, who has been arrested for murdering a white activist for racial justice. The novel is a social protest against the structures of society and the disintegration of the tribal community.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan is a story of four Chinese-American immigrant women and their daughters who start the “Joy Luck Club” while playing Mahjong, a Chinese game.

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini traces the friendship of a wealthy Afghani youth and a servant’s son from the final days of the monarchy through the atrocities of the present day.

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri follows the Ganguli family’s traditional life in Calcutta to their transformation into Americans. Gogol Ganguli suffers from the burden of his heritage, but he slowly learns to define himself.

Playing the Enemy by John Carlin is a journalist’s rendition of Nelson Mandela’s rise to power in South Africa. “This wonderful book describes Mandela’s methodical, improbable and brilliant campaign to reconcile resentful blacks and fearful whites around a sporting event, the rugby World Cup.” (New York Times book Review)

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingslover is a powerful story of a Baptist missionary family’s struggles in the Belgian Congo during the Congo’s battle for independence.

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd is a humorous and poignant southern tale of a “motherless daughter’s discovery of what family really means – and of the strange and wondrous places we find love.” (Washington Post)

Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson follows a doomed love affair between a white boy and a Japanese girl set against a Japanese-American fisherman’s 1954 murder trial. The novel also explores the wartime internment of the Japanese residents.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini is a “riveting story of survival.” (Chicago Tribune) The novel focuses on the strength and courage of two women in Afghanistan during the upheavals in that nation.

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China is an autobiographical family history by Jung Chang. It describes the lives of three generations of Chinese women. Grandmother is a warlord’s concubine; mother is a member of the Communist elite during the Cultural Revolution. Jung works as a peasant, finally attends the University and eventually leaves China to study in England. The story captures the cycles of drama for the millions of Chinese caught in this whirlwind of history.

English 11 and English 11HONORS – Mrs. Wilson’s Book List

Required all-school book is **1984** by George Orwell. Additionally, all English 11 and English 11 honors students must read **two novels** from this reading list, which is compiled of American novels that have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for literature. There is a short summary of each novel so students will be better able to choose which books they wish to read. Dates are the award years.

Empire Falls by Richard Russo focuses on blue-collar characters in small-town America. It is both satiric and “laugh-out-loud” funny. “As the pace quickens and the disparate threads of the narrative draw tighter, you find yourself torn between the desire to rush ahead and the impulse to slow down.” (New York Times Book Review) 2002

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay by Michael Chabon features two boy geniuses who collaborate to create a comic book. Set in the period before America enters World War II, the novel brilliantly reveals this period of history. “Super-colossal – smart, funny and a continual pleasure to read.” (The Washington Post) 2003

Independence Day by Richard Ford is a sequel to ***The Sportswriter***. The novel is a “fully realized portrait of modern American life as filtered with the mind and heart of a unique yet typical American man.” Ford has created a funny, emotional study of a character and his world. (Christian Science Monitor) 1996

The Shipping News by E. Annie Proulx involves a man’s struggle to reclaim his life through the “unpredictable forces of nature and society” including interesting local characters and three generations of his family. Set on the Newfoundland coast, the novel is a “wildly comic, heart-thumping romance.” (Washington Post Book World) 1994

A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley is an Iowa farm family portrait, raising “profound questions about human conduct and moral responsibility.” (Publishers Weekly) 1992

Beloved by Toni Morrison is based on historical events. Like a slave narrative, the novel confronts the painful aspects of slavery and their psychological impacts on the characters. “Beloved”, who may be supernatural, challenges the reader to explore the concept of motherhood, manhood and human relationships. 1988

Lonesome Dove by Larry McMurtry focuses on the relationship of several retired Texas Rangers and their adventures driving a cattle herd from Texas to Montana. (Wikipedia) 1986

The Color Purple by Alice Walker is centered on Celie, a poor black woman whose letters tell the story of 20 years of her life. Abused by her father and her husband, Celie finally awakens to self-empowerment. 1983

The Angle of Repose by Wallace Stegner will be loved by outdoors enthusiasts. It is a “story of discovery – personal, historical, and geographical.” Lyman Ward starts to write his grandparents’ story of life on the frontier, and ends by revealing a portrait of four generations in the life of an American family. (The Atlantic Monthly) 1972

The Caine Mutiny by Herman Wouk is a war novel in which officers of the converted destroyer, USS Caine, take over the ship when they determine the captain is insane. The famous court-martial scene is followed by a dramatic speech explaining the menace of fascism. 1958

All the King's Men by Robert Penn Warren describes the career of Willie Stark, a Louisiana dictator and demagogue. Although roughly based on the career of Huey Long, the novel is not just a fictionalized portrait of a dictator. It is an intricate network of moral conflicts and psychological relationships between characters. (Recent American Literature) 1947

A Bell For Adano by John Hersey is set in Italy during World War II. Adano's 700-year-old bell has been melted down for Fascist guns and ammunition. When the Americans occupy the town, Major Joppolo must overcome huge obstacles to find a new bell. Hersey has written a "funny, serious, and deeply disturbing story." (The New Yorker) 1945

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck is the story of itinerant farmers, the "Oakies", during the Depression. The Joad family travels to California only to discover they are worse off than they were in the dust bowl of Oklahoma. Although the subject matter, including its violence and passion, is controversial, this is a remarkable book. 1940