

Summer Reading Book Tasting Menu (9th Grade)



Directions: Welcome to the **Freshman Summer Reading Book Tasting!**

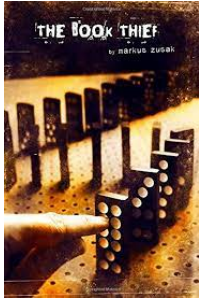
- First Course:
 - Book of Your Choice (see below)
 - In order to make the right selection for you, start by reading the menu **DESCRIPTION** of each book. The **RECIPE** lists the major themes found in the novel, and **PAIRS WELL WITH** names of what other types of media are similar to that book.
- Second Course:
 - Task 1: Complete a dialectical journal while reading
 - Task 2: Create a chosen project for your book selection. See each project listing for more details.

This project is your FIRST TEST GRADE of Freshman year. Your dialectical journal and your project are due on the day of Freshman Orientation.

First COURSE (Choose one novel from the menu choices below!)

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

- **Description:** It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.



- **Recipe:** the power of language; kindness and cruelty; Nazi-era Germany; life and death
- **Pairs Well With:** *Life is Beautiful* (film); *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (novel and film); *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* (novel)

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

- **Description:** Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.



- **Recipe:** race and identity; social justice; community activism
- **Pairs Well With:** *When They See Us* (series); *Dear Martin* (novel); *All American Boys* (novel)

Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo

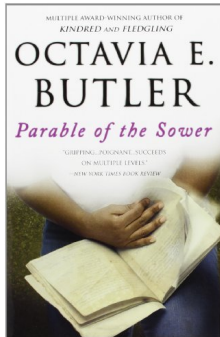
- **Description:** Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people...In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance—and Papi's secrets—the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered.



- **Recipe:** grief; sexual assault; sisterhood; cultural identity
- **Pairs Well With:** *With the Fire on High* (novel); *In the Heights* (musical)

The Parable of the Sower by Octavia E. Butler

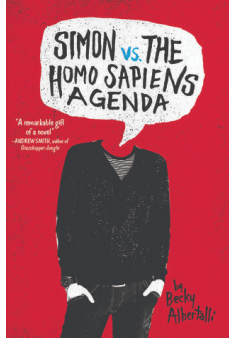
- **Description:** In 2025, with the world descending into madness and anarchy, one woman begins a fateful journey toward a better future. Lauren Olamina and her family live in one of the only safe neighborhoods remaining on the outskirts of Los Angeles. Behind the walls of their defended enclave, Lauren's father, a preacher, and a handful of other citizens try to salvage what remains of a culture that has been destroyed by drugs, disease, war, and chronic water shortages. While her father tries to lead people on the righteous path, Lauren struggles with



hyperempathy, a condition that makes her extraordinarily sensitive to the pain of others. When fire destroys their compound, Lauren's family is killed and she is forced out into a world that is fraught with danger. With a handful of other refugees, Lauren must make her way north to safety, along the way conceiving a revolutionary idea that may mean salvation for all mankind.

- **Recipe:** power; race and gender; speculative fiction; post apocalyptic; dystopia; fantasy
- **Pairs Well With:** *Kindred* (novel); *Harriet* (film); *13th* (documentary film)

Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli

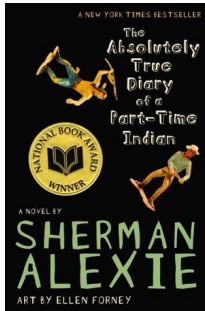


- **Description:** Sixteen-year-old and not-so-openly gay Simon Spier prefers to save his drama for the school musical. But when an email falls into the wrong hands, his secret is at risk of being thrust into the spotlight. Now change-averse Simon has to find a way to step out of his comfort zone before he's pushed out—without alienating his friends, compromising himself, or fumbling a shot at happiness with the most confusing, adorable guy he's never met.

- **Recipe:** coming-of-age; personal identity; LGBTQ+; social media

- **Pairs Well With:** *Like A Love Story* (novel); *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* (novel); *Heartstopper* (graphic novel and TV series)

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie



- **Description:** Bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

- **Recipe:** alienation; grief; cultural and personal identity; friendship

- **Pairs Well With:** *Reservation Blues* (novel); *The Marrow Thieves* (novel); *Gather* (documentary film)

We Hunt the Flame by Hafsa Faizal

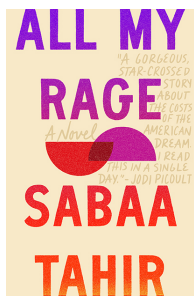


- **Description:** Zafira is the Hunter, disguising herself as a man when she braves the cursed forest of the Arz to feed her people. Nasir is the Prince of Death, assassinating those foolish enough to defy his autocratic father, the sultan. If Zafira was exposed as a girl, all of her achievements would be rejected; if Nasir displayed his compassion, his father would punish him in the most brutal of ways. Both Zafira and Nasir are legends in the kingdom of Arawiya—but neither wants to be. War is brewing, and the Arz sweeps closer with each passing day, engulfing the land

in shadow. When Zafira embarks on a quest to uncover a lost artifact that can restore magic to her suffering world and stop the Arz, Nasir is sent by the sultan on a similar mission: retrieve the artifact and kill the Hunter. But an ancient evil stirs as their journey unfolds—and the prize they seek may pose a threat greater than either can imagine.

- **Recipe:** fantasy; romance; adventure
- **Pairs Well With:** *We Free the Stars* (novel); *Wadjda* (film); *Shadow and Bone* (book and TV series)

All My Rage by Sabaa Tahir



- **Description:** *Lahore, Pakistan. Then.* Misbah is a dreamer and storyteller, newly married to Toufiq in an arranged match. After their young life is shaken by tragedy, they come to the United States and open the Cloud's Rest Inn Motel, hoping for a new start.

Juniper, California. Now. Salahudin and Noor are more than best friends; they are family. Growing up as outcasts in the small desert town of Juniper, California, they understand each other the way no one else does. Until *The Fight*, which destroys their bond with the swift fury of a star exploding. Now, Sal scrambles to run the family motel as his mother Misbah's health fails and his grieving father loses himself to alcoholism. Noor, meanwhile, walks a harrowing tightrope: working at her wrathful uncle's liquor store while hiding the fact that she's applying to college so she can escape him—and Juniper—forever. When Sal's attempts to save the motel spiral out of control, he and Noor must ask themselves what friendship is worth—and what it takes to defeat the monsters in their pasts and the ones in their midst.

- **Recipe:** cultural and personal identity; family divides; immigrant stories; Islamophobia; prejudice and discrimination
- **Pairs Well With:** *Only This Beautiful Moment* (novel); *Zara Hossain Is Here* (novel); *I'll meet You There* (film)

White Smoke by Tiffany D. Jackson



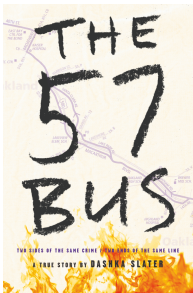
- **Description:** Mari, our main character, is prickly, imperfect, and has a dark history, including intrusive thoughts and severe anxiety. When she and her blended family move to a new home in an area being redeveloped — modeled after Detroit — it's a chance

for her mother to pursue her dream and for them as a family to get a new, fresh, and exciting start. Except, there's a lot of weird stuff going on in the house, as well as in the community. No one seems to live around them. All of the houses seem to be haunted. Their own house is definitely Not Right. What's the deal?

- **Recipe:** mass incarceration; gothic literature; social commentary; mental health; isolation
- **Pairs Well With:** *The Haunting of Hill House* (novela); *Just Mercy: Adapted for Young Adults* (non-fiction book); *Get Out* (film)

The 57 Bus by Dashka Slater

- **Description:** If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met.



Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.

- **Recipe:** true story; gender identity and expression; race; class; crime and punishment
- **Pairs Well With:** *I Wish You All the Best* (novel); *We Exist: Beyond the Binary* (documentary); *The Central Park Five* (non-fiction book)

Patron Saints of Nothing by Randy Ribay

- **Description:** A coming-of-age story about grief, guilt, and the risks a



Filipino-American teenager takes to uncover the truth about his cousin's murder. Jay Reguero plans to spend the last semester of his senior year playing video games before heading to the University of Michigan in the fall. But when he discovers that his Filipino cousin Jun was murdered as part of President Duterte's war on drugs, and no one in the family wants to talk about what happened, Jay travels to the Philippines to find out the real story. Hoping to uncover more about Jun and the events that led to his death, Jay is forced to reckon with the

many sides of his cousin before he can face the whole horrible truth -- and the part he played in it.

- **Recipe:** *identity; grief; family; poverty; family; trauma survival; social injustice*
- **Pairs Well With:** *Something In Between* (novel); *Duterte's Drug War* (documentary); *An Inconvenient Love* (movie)

Reader's Choice!

- You can choose a book you'd like to read, you just need to follow the following steps:



- 1. Pick a book that is on grade level.
- 2. Email Ms. Scism, the 9th grade ELA teacher, at jscism@belovedccs.org by June 30 with your pitch for why you should be allowed to read this book for your project.
- 3. Read your book and complete the dialectical journal and project!

Second COURSE: Summer Reading Tasks

★ **Task 1:** Read one of the fiction options from the attached **Book Tasting Menu**. While you read, complete the attached **Dialectical Journal**. This journal will help you prepare for a writing activity we will be working on during the first few weeks of school.

★ **Task 2:** Complete **ONE** of the following assignments based on your chosen novel.

☐ **TikTok Journal**

- Create a TikTok account dedicated **only** to this project.
- Record a series of TikTok videos based on your novel. You should create a minimum of five (5) videos. Any additional videos you create would be appreciated and encouraged, but optional:
- **Once you are finished, share a link to view your TikTok with me at abongiorno@belovedccs.org.**
 - TikTok #1: Record a book review. What are your thoughts on the book as a whole? Thumbs up?

Thumbs down? What did you like or dislike? Check out other TikTok book reviews to see some models. #BookTok

- TikTok #2-TikTok #4: Reenact three favorite scenes from the novel. You may involve parents, siblings, friends--or even pets!--to take on the character roles, in addition to yourself. Or, if you want to do some inventive editing and costume work, you can play all the characters yourself.
- TikTok #5: Find an existing sound on TikTok that relates to your book in some way. Create a video that demonstrates how the sound ties into the novel.

❑ Graphic Novel

- Design and illustrate a graphic novel (comic book) version of an important scene from the novel.
- Your graphic novel should be at least five pages in length. If you are artistically gifted, this is an opportunity to show what you can do!
- You may use this Graphic Novel Template Kit: [Click here!](#)
- **Once you are finished, share your graphic novel with me at abongiorno@belovedccs.org.**

❑ Playlist

- Brainstorm ten (10) songs that would work as a “soundtrack” to the novel.
- Create a slideshow or a list of the songs. For each one, include the song’s title, musical artist, and a 2-3 sentence explanation of how it fits a scene or character in the novel. Your list or slideshow should be colorful and inviting for the viewer. All of your writing should be proofread. Be sure to include specific text evidence to support your choices.
- **Once you are finished, share your Google Slides presentation with me at abongiorno@belovedccs.org.**

❑ Poetry Journal

- Write a collection of original poetry inspired by the characters, events, and themes of your chosen novel.
- You should compose a minimum of five (5) poems. Any additional poems you write would be appreciated and encouraged, but optional.

- Each poem should be at least ten lines in length. Your poetry may rhyme, or not (or some combination). You have creative control!
- **Once you are finished, share your Google Doc with me at abongiorno@belovedccs.org.**

❑ Songbook

- Write a collection of original songs inspired by the characters, events, and themes of your chosen novel.
- If you are going to submit recording(s) or video(s) of your songs being performed, you should compose a minimum of three (3) songs. Your songs must include lyrics.
- If you are simply going to write the songs without recording any performance, you should compose a minimum of five (5) songs.
- **Once you are finished, share your Google Doc with me at abongiorno@belovedccs.org.**

❑ Social Media Profile

- Create social media profiles for three characters in your novel.
- Each character's social media profile should include captioned photos, a full character bio, and at least five (5) "posts." Should be based on *Instagram*, *Facebook*, or *Twitter*.
- There should be communication between the characters as if they are experiencing the events of the novel in real time.
- You may create actual accounts or simply create "mock" accounts on Google Docs or Google Slides.
- **Once you are finished, share the link to view your social media profiles or your Google Doc/Google Slides with me at abongiorno@belovedccs.org.**

❑ Trading Cards

- Create a collection of trading cards based on the characters from your novel.
- The front side of each card should feature a photo or illustration of the character. The back side of each card should feature a short bio, strengths, weaknesses, allies, and enemies. Also include one quote from the character, cited from the novel.

- Your collection should be well-designed, colorful, and detailed. Each card should be at least 3” x 5” in size.
- This project should be chosen for novels that have at least five major characters.

Dialectical Journal

The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the text you are reading this summer. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of your chosen novel. Later, you will use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the text and your ideas about its themes into our class discussions and writing activities. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you’re reading, prepare yourself for class discussions, and gather textual evidence.

PROCEDURE:

1. As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of the chart. Include the page number.
2. In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)
3. You must label your responses using the following **codes**:
 - (Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
 - (C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
 - (P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what’s in the passage
 - (CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
 - (R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
 - (E) Evaluate - make a judgment about what the author is trying to say
4. **Use this chart to analyze twenty (20) text passages minimum.** Passages should be from the novel as a whole, not just one section. Track the passages in order. **Also, use each response code 3-4 times so you are practicing all of the dialectical journal skills.**

Example

Quote	Page	Code	Response
“The Radley Place fascinated Dill. In spite of our warnings and explanations it drew him as the moon draws water, but drew him no	6	C	This reminds me of a house in my neighborhood, just around the block from mine. It looks old and abandoned. My friends and I used to be really fascinated by the mystery of it. We would tell

<p>nearer than the light-pole on the corner, a safe distance from the Radley gate. There he would stand, his arm around the fat pole, staring and wondering.”</p>			<p>stories about what had happened to the family who lived there. Now that I’m older, the house looks less frightening to me. Now it just makes me sad. I wish a new family would move in and spruce it up.</p>
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Novel Title:

Author:

Quote	Page	Code	Response

